

**Debbie Mans, NY/NJ Baykeeper Statement on
President Trump's Proposed Budget Cuts to Superfund Program**

March 16, 2017

This is a significant cut to the Superfund program and especially problematic for New Jersey, which leads the country with 114 Superfund sites.

Because there is little to no money available for the federal government to initiate cleanups, the EPA must negotiate with the polluters on settlements for the costs of the cleanups. Many of the Superfund sites in New Jersey do not have full cleanup settlements in place, including the lower Passaic River site and the Raritan Bay Slag site (located in Old Bridge).

The Passaic River Superfund site has lead to fish consumption advisories and a complete ban on the taking of blue claw crabs from the local waterways due to risk of cancer.

The Raritan Bay Slag Superfund site has lead to the closure of a public beach due to high levels of lead.

The budget states that it will prioritize the cleanup of sites with existing settlement funds, which implies many Superfund sites will continue to languish as EPA seeks (or more likely, does not seek) further settlements to cleanup these sites. Securing cleanup settlements will be further hindered by likely cuts in staff.

This places public health and the environment at risk, especially in a densely populated state, with multiple pollution sources, like New Jersey.

Budget Language:

Reins in Superfund administrative costs and emphasizes efficiency efforts by funding the Hazardous Substance Superfund Account at \$762 million, \$330 million below the 2017 annualized CR level. The agency would prioritize the use of existing settlement funds to clean up hazardous waste sites and look for ways to remove some of the barriers that have delayed the program's ability to return sites to the community.