

Your assignment for Week 9 Wednesday (Mar 5) is to turn in a first draft of your group's section of the report. The recommended page length is between 4 and 6 pages double-spaced.

Since it is a draft, turn in what you have – even if this means turning in questions or comments about disappointments, frustrations, confusions, or further work needing to be done.

Here are some of the questions that should be relevant for your sections of the report:

Group 1: Role of Government Officials:

- Why was U.S. House member Fred **Upton** (R-MI) the central target of the activists' political mobilization? That is, why did the community leaders, city commissioners, and other environmental leaders come to the conclusion that Upton was the person the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would listen to? What did it take to influence Upton? Was he immediately sympathetic, or did it take a great deal of pressure to persuade him to formally oppose disposing of the Kalamazoo River PCBs from the Plainwell Superfund site in the former-Allied Paper Superfund site in Kalamazoo?
- What role did Michigan's Democratic Governor Jennifer **Granholtz** and Democratic U.S. Senators Carl **Levin** and Debbie **Stabenow** play?
- What role did Democratic State Representative (and former Kalamazoo mayor) Robert **Jones** play? What role did Republican State Senators Tom **George** and Jack **Hoogendyk** play?
- What role did Kalamazoo City Commissioners – including current mayor Bobby **Hopewell**, then-mayor (and current Vice Mayor plus K College economics professor) Hannah **McKinney**, and former mayor Robert **Jones** (see above) – play? Commissioner Don **Cooney** also was a central player in opposing the EPA disposal plan.
- What role did non-elected city officials – including City Manager Ken **Collard**, Public Services Director Bruce Merchant, and then-city-attorney Lee **Kirk** play?

Group 2: Role of citizens:

- Describe the various demographic profiles of citizens who were active. Coalitions included such broad ranges of groups as K College student activists, professors; working-class middle-class, and upper-middle-class African American, Hispanic and white residents.
- Some of the neighborhood residents were very anti-EPA from a conservative populist, distrust-the-experts-in-D.C. angle. This fed into anti-government rhetoric. Others were instead critical of the way the Bush administration has underfunded the agency and stacked it with anti-environmental appointees. The solution for the former group is to get the EPA off our backs and let the people (via state and local governments) decide how to dispose of their wastes. The solution for the latter group is to get the anti-environmental Bush White House off of the back of the EPA, increase EPA's funding and give the EPA professionals the power back to protect the environment. How did the anti-regulatory conservative populist segments and the pro-regulatory progressive segments negotiate their message and movement?
- Who were the community organizers? How did they go about organizing? How did the neighborhood organization leaders, the university professionals and students, the environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other active groups coordinate their strategies and clash among one another?

Group 3: Scientific knowledge about PCBs:

- Briefly explain the properties of PCBs that make them useful for industrial processes (but Group 4 will do this to, so be brief).
- Explain how and why PCBs in rivers end up in river sediment especially just upstream from dams.
- Explain how PCBs bioaccumulate up the food chain from fish to humans. Explain the danger of PCBs to the health of rivers, to the health of fish, and to the health of humans.
- Explain the properties of PCBs when in landfills and rivers. When in landfills, how great is the risk of them sinking down into the soil and eventually polluting groundwater? When in open-air landfills or being transported in trucks, what is the risk of PCBs traveling in the air and harming humans by landing in soil or by inhalation?
- Explain the various proposals to keep PCBs from harming humans. Is capping PCBs in the riverbed the least-worst option? Is placing them in regular landfills appropriate? Should PCB-laced soil be disposed of in certified hazardous waste facilities? How do these facilities minimize the risk of PCB exposure to humans?
- What are the greatest misunderstandings ordinary citizens have about PCBs? In what respects do ordinary citizens correctly understand the risk of PCBs? What are the most egregious examples of environmentalists over-exaggerating the risk of PCBs to humans? What are the most egregious examples of the EPA and/or the Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs – a.k.a. the polluting industries) underestimating the risk of PCBs to humans?

Group 4: History of paper mills:

- How central to the local and national economy were paper mills in the middle of the 20th century?
- Why were paper mills located near rivers?
- What did the paper mills use PCBs for? Do paper mills still use PCBs today, and what do they use instead to serve the functions PCBs once served?
- How did paper mills dispose of PCBs? How do modern paper mills dispose of PCBs today?
- Why did most of the paper mills leave river towns in the upper Midwest like Kalamazoo? Where are they located today, and why did they choose to move to these locations?

Group 5: State of Michigan budgets and funding for hazardous waste removal and disposal:

- Why are so many vacant paper mills and other industrial sites in disarray? Why hasn't the state demolished the factories, removed the hazardous wastes, and restored the sites as green spaces or industrial brownfield developments? Provide the reader with a sense of how well/poorly the state is doing its job of cleaning up such polluted sites compared with other states, and compared to previous decades here in Michigan.
- How are the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and other related departments such as the Michigan Department for Natural Resources (DNR) funded? How much money do they receive in the annual state budgets (the money from which largely comes from state taxpayers)? Where else do they receive their money besides such appropriations from state budgets?
- What would it take to increase the funding of the DEQ and DNR? How likely is it that the Michigan legislature would vote to increase taxes (as a way of increasing DEQ and DNR funding)? How else might funding for DEQ and DNR be increased? More hunters and fishermen? More unclaimed bottle deposits (that is, fewer Michigan consumers recycling their bottles, meaning more of them throwing them in landfills!)?

- How does federalism operate in practice for this issue of hazardous waste cleanup? That is, describe how state government agencies (DEQ, DNR) and federal government agencies (EPA) overlap, compete, etc. Is the DEQ a subset of the EPA? Or are they largely independent? Does the DEQ have to follow orders from the EPA?
- Who has the most influence over DEQ actions and funding? Taxpayers? Democrats or Republicans? Industry groups or environmental groups? The governor or the legislature?

Group 6: Superfund law, the EPA, and U.S. government's role in cleaning up hazardous wastes:

- Describe the historical and political context of when and why the Superfund law was passed by Congress and signed by the President.
- How was the Superfund law designed to work? How was it funded? What powers did the federal government have? Which executive agencies (e.g. EPA) have, and how much leeway did they have to (or to what extent did Congress) devise cleanup strategies and prioritize which sites to cleanup first?
- What happened to the "fund" in Superfund? Why didn't Congress reauthorize the Superfund law? When did the "fund" deplete? Where does the funding for Superfund come from now?
- Who is funding the cleanup of the Plainwell Superfund site of the Kalamazoo River now? Who decided that the location for disposal of the Plainwell PCBs would be the Kalamazoo site (that is, the former Allied Paper mill site)? On what basis was this decision made? Why did the EPA agree to this plan?
- Would President Clinton's Environmental Justice executive order have been an effective way to block the EPA from dumping the PCBs in the Kalamazoo former-Allied Paper site? Since there are significant African American and Hispanic populations surrounding this site, perhaps his executive order would require an environmental justice analysis of the racial impact of disposing the PCBs at this site?
- What should/could be done differently? Should the Superfund law be reauthorized? Should the EPA be given a larger budget (via taxpayer dollars) for cleanup of Superfund sites? Should polluting industries be once again taxed to provide additional revenues for Superfund cleanups? What other changes in federal policy would be effective at improving how Superfund works?
- Who has the most influence over EPA actions and funding for Superfund? Taxpayers? Democrats or Republicans? Industry groups or environmental groups? The president or Congress?