# NEW BEDFORD HARBOR PCB FLUX STUDY 

Contract No. W912WJ-09-D-0001-0005-02


Prepared For:
United States Army Corps of Engineers
New England District
696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742

Prepared By:
Woods Hole Group, Inc.
81 Technology Park Drive
East Falmouth, MA 02536

August 2010

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Prepared for:<br>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 696 Virginia Road Concord, Massachusetts 01742

## Prepared by:

Woods Hole Group
81 Technology Park Drive
East Falmouth MA 02536
(508) 540-8080

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## List of Acronyms

ADCP - Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler<br>COC - Chain-Of-Custody<br>CSM - Conceptual Site Model<br>EMC - Event Mean Concentration<br>HADCP - Horizontal Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler<br>NOAA - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration<br>OU\#3 - Operable Unit \# 3, New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site<br>PCB - Polychlorinated Biphenyls<br>QAPP - Quality Assurance Project Plan<br>RI/FS - Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study<br>SNR - Signal-to-Noise Ratio<br>SOW - Statement of Work<br>TRDI - Teledyne RD Instruments<br>USGS - US Geological Survey<br>USACE - US Army Corps of Engineers<br>WHG - Woods Hole Group Inc.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the results from a flux study completed to quantify the transport of PCBs through the hurricane barrier at New Bedford Harbor. Flow-proportioned, composite water samples were collected and analyzed for PCBs in total and dissolved fractions. Samples were collected every half-hour at two stations, over three depths, throughout six separate tidal cycles. The six events included spring, neap, and abnormal weather conditions in April and May, 2010. The net rate of the total PCB mass flux ranged from $-24.7 \mathrm{~g}^{1}$ per tidal cycle (neap tide on April 21) to -82.8 g per tidal cycle (weather event on April 28 coinciding with spring tide). The mean net PCB mass flux for the six (6) sampling events was approximately -61 g per tidal cycle, which translates to approximately 118 g per day

These results indicate that the New Bedford Harbor area serves as an ongoing source of PCBs to Operable Unit \#3, the 17,000 acre area outside of the hurricane barrier. The methods established herein provide the basis for ongoing investigation of $\mathrm{OU} \# 3$, and provide the basis for future surveys if appropriate.

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site (Site), located in Bristol County, Massachusetts, extends from the shallow northern reaches of the Acushnet river estuary south through the commercial harbor of New Bedford and into 17,000 adjacent acres of Buzzards Bay. See the Statement of Work for RI/FS Report Field Work, Operable Unit No. 3 (OU3), New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site, New Bedford, MA, 14 August 2009 (SOW) for further information on site background and history. This report describes results from the sub-set of activities for Task 3 - Harbor Flux Study taken in Operable Unit III (OU\#3) located at, inside, and outside of the hurricane barrier. The study area is shown in Figure 1.


Figure 1. New Bedford OU\#3 Harbor Flux Study area.

The purpose of Task 3, Harbor Flux Study of OU\#3 is to quantify the transport of PCBs through the hurricane barrier. The Conceptual Site Model (CSM) and Data Gaps Analysis Report (Woods Hole Group, 2009a) recognized that although there may be multiple potential ongoing sources of PCBs to OU\#3, it is anticipated based on consultations with EPA and the project team that the primary ongoing source is from New Bedford Harbor via net flux of PCBs out through the hurricane barrier. PCB flux may be either in aqueous phase or attached to sediments, primarily suspended fine sediments. The ongoing remediation of New Bedford Harbor is intended to substantially reduce the PCB contamination within the Harbor, which also has the intended effect of reducing the export of PCBs throughout the system over time, including into OU\#3. Extensive ongoing studies and models
by the EPA and USACE are being conducted to quantify the anticipated long-term, time-varying reduction in pollutant loading and health risk reduction (i.e., reduction of contaminant of concern (COC) concentrations in fish tissue and resultant health risk reduction).

The current export of PCBs from the Harbor to OU\#3 poses a potential ecological risk (yet to be estimated). However, the estimates of the magnitude of this export are not well-understood. The objective of the Harbor Flux Study is to improve the estimates of present-day PCB flux from the Harbor to OU\#3, and establish a methodology that could be repeated in the future, if required, to evaluate the efficacy of remediation.

The approach to quantifying this export of PCB through the hurricane barrier includes a combination of:

- long-term velocity measurements to capture the time variations of water flow
- short-term current measurements over six (6) tidal cycles to capture the spatial variations in flow as well as water fluxes through the barrier, and
- short-term water sampling and analysis over six (6) tidal cycles to measure the water- and sediment-borne PCB concentrations under various tidal and weather conditions.

This report focuses on developing estimates of the net export of PCBs through the hurricane barrier from the Harbor to OU\#3 using these three data sets.

The Harbor Flux Study was performed in consecutive sub-tasks, as outlined below. Water current data were collected from December 09 through March 10 to help select locations for water column sampling and analysis

The sequence of the Harbor Flux Study sub-tasks for the 2009-2010 sampling is listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Sampling tasks/events for OU\#3 Harbor Flux Study field reconnaissance

| Event | Time |
| :--- | :--- |
| Mobilization | November 2009 |
| Sub-Task 1. Installation of HADCP | December 2009 |
| Sub-Task 2. Perform Real Time ADCP surveys - Qty 2 | January - February 2010 |
| Sub-Task 3. Interim Service and Data Retrieval from HADCP | February 2010 |
| Sub-Task 4. Data Analysis to Determine Water Column Sample | February - March 2010 |
| locations |  |
| Sub-Task 5. Water Column Sampling - Qty 6 | April-May 2010 |
| Sub-Task 6. Final Retrieval of HADCP | June 2010 |
| Sub-Task 7. Data Analysis and Reporting | July 2010 |

This report is organized as follows. Section 2 of the report describes sampling methods used during this study. The results are discussed in Section 3 and summarized in Section 4.

### 2.0 FIELD SAMPLING METHODS

The flow rate through the Hurricane Barrier Gate varies widely; therefore, water sampling was scheduled to characterize major conditions that contribute to flow variability. These conditions are associated with the fortnightly spring/neap tidal cycle, as well as weather patterns, including abnormal freshwater runoff and/or strong winds that can block or accelerate water exchange through the Hurricane Barrier. Therefore, six sampling events were planned to cover this range of conditions: two (2) surveys during neap tide, two (2) surveys during spring tide, and two (2) surveys during wet weather conditions. One of the wet weather sampling events took place on a windy day when the outflow from the inner harbor was accelerated due to strong northwesterly winds.

Two types of current data were collected during each sampling event. The horizontal ADCP (TRDI 300 kHz Workhorse Horizontal ADCP) deployed on the western wall of the Gate continuously recorded two-minute averages of long-channel and cross-channel velocities from 2-m horizontal bins across the channel at a depth of about $7 \mathrm{~m}+/-1 \mathrm{~m}$ or 4 m above the bottom. Current velocity data also were collected during each sampling event from the survey boat using a broadband 1200 kHz ADCP (TRDI 1200 kHz Workhorse Sentinel ADCP). This ADCP was configured to collect data from 1 m vertical bins every second to accurately describe the vertical velocity shear, if present. Bottom tracking was used to correct for boat movements in the raw velocity data.

Post-survey data processing and interpretation of the ADCP data collected on the survey boat revealed frequent occurrence of a sheared velocity profile (i.e., current speed and direction varied considerably over depth). The data revealed that the velocity shears developed as the density stratification of the water column increased in spring due to heating at the surface and increased freshwater runoff. Therefore, while data from the HADCP (mounted on the Hurricane Barrier) were valuable to select measurement locations and understand longer-term flow variability at the Hurricane Barrier, the HADCP data were not used for water flux calculations. Data from the vesselbased ADCP data collected during each survey event were used instead.

The mean current profile, $U(z)$, was calculated for each round of water sampling within the Gate These discrete current profiles were used to calculate integrated volumes of water transported through the Gate during ebb and flood for each sampling event:
$V o l_{\text {tide }}=S * \sum_{i=1}^{i=n}\left(\bar{U}_{i} * \Delta t_{i}\right)$,
where $S$ is the channel cross-section area The estimates of the water (volume) flux for ebb and flood were then multiplied by the mean concentrations of PCBs for each tidal phase to calculate fluxes of PCBs for each tidal phase. Total net PCB flux through the Gate was then calculated as the sum of: 1) the net flow PCB flux (i.e., estimated freshwater inflow rate times the ebb tidal PCB concentration), and; 2) the tide-corrected tidal pumping flux (i.e., mean tidal volume times the difference between the ebb and flood PCB concentration):

Total $_{\text {flux }}=$ Vol $_{\text {fresh }} * C_{e b b}+\overline{\text { Vol }_{\text {tıde }}} *\left(C_{e b b}-C_{\text {flood }}\right)$,
where $C_{e b b}$ and $C_{\text {flood }}$ are the concentrations of PCBs during ebb and flood tidal phases.

This method is consistent with that of a previous PCB flux study performed for New Bedford Harbor (see Teeter, 1988, page 25, section 53). Note that estimating the net-flow flux and tide-corrected tidal pumping flux would not be necessary if there were symmetry in the ebb and flood flows. In reality, although the mass flux of PCBs estimated for each tidal phase may be quite accurate, the estimate of the net flux of PCBs calculated as the difference between the ebb and flood fluxes contains an uncertainty related to tidal asymmetry and other factors. This uncertainty cannot be averaged out using data from just six surveys. A more extended sampling program would be required

Each survey was conducted throughout a full tidal cycle to estimate the flux in and out of the harbor, during flood and ebb tide, respectively. Two sets of water samples were collected during each sampling round, which typically lasted somewhere between 7 and 20 minutes. Each set included water samples taken from near the surface (approximately $1 m$ deep), mid-water column (approximately 5 m deep), and from near the bottom (approximately 10 m deep). The samples were taken using a Niskin bottle lowered on a rope using a small davit. The first sample was collected from the near-bottom layer. This sampling depth was determined using a lead weight hanging approximately 1 m below the Niskin bottle. At the time the Niskin bottle was lowered, a slack in the rope indicated when the weight hit the seabed. The rope was then pulled back to eliminate the slack and the messenger was sent to close the bottle about 10 seconds later to assure that any sediment suspended when the weight hit the seabed had cleared before the bottom sample was collected. After the first sample was drained into a measuring glass, the bottle was lowered to half of the total depth and the mid-water sample was collected. The depth of the bottle was evaluated visually when the surface sample was collected.

### 2.1 SAMPLING LOCATIONS

Two (2) preliminary full-tidal-cycle ADCP surveys of the area were conducted to select appropriate sampling locations for the subsequent six (6) flux sampling events. The two (2) preliminary (or reconnaissance) surveys provided data to guide the decision on the locations at which water samples had to be taken during the flux sampling events to exclude possible bias if quasi-stationary circulation patterns were observed in the OU\#3 area (e.g., eddies or other turbulence). The data from the two (2) preliminary events were analyzed together with data from the horizontal ADCP. The purpose of this analysis was to determine the extent of horizontal flow variability within (across or at depth) the channel.

Both types of current data revealed a rather homogeneous long-channel flow (Figures 2 and 3). The upper panel of Figure 2 shows a time series of the along-channel flow velocity (i.e., parallel to the Hurricane Barrier walls) during the time of the second reconnaissance survey. Time is represented along the horizontal axis and distance across the Hurricane Barrier is represented on the vertical axis (the 0 point is on the west side of the channel). The color bar represents the current speed (in $\mathrm{cm} / \mathrm{s}$ ) and direction (red represents flow out of New Bedford Harbor and blue represents flow into the Harbor). Moving from left to right across the top panel of Figure 2, each "stripe" represents a snapshot in time of the along channel currents. Although the data show the expected ebb and flood of the tidal currents over the 12 hour period, there is little evidence of cross-channel variation in the along-channel currents.

The lower panel of Figure 2 illustrates a slightly different perspective, however. It represents the small component of the current directed across the channel (i.e., perpendicular to the Hurricane

Barrier walls). At certain times (e.g., after 06:00 on February 2), the data show the cross-channel currents can be directed in different directions depending upon location across the channel. Although these cross-channel currents $(0-10 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s})$ are small as compared to the along-channel currents $(0-100 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s})$, these observations were used to select the sampling locations for the flux sampling events. The initial plan was to sample near each wall and in the middle of the channel. Based on reviewing the reconnaissance velocity data with the project team, samples were not collected in the near vicinity of the Hurricane Barrier walls. Instead, the flux event sampling scheme was refined to include one set of samples approximately one-third of the channel width distance off of each wall to avoid possible bias.

Figure 3 shows a plan view of the depth-averaged velocity vectors during ebb tide on the same day. The direction of the vector represents the flow direction, and the vector length is proportional to current speed. This plot is typical, and shows a relatively organized flow field draining from New Bedford Harbor out through the Hurricane Barrier.

The actual practice of holding the boat on-station during each round of sample collection at a fixed position was challenging due to currents, wind and vessel traffic, but a good faith effort was devoted to occupying the intended sampling stations. The boat drift introduced an element of randomness to the sampling location rather sampling strictly at two fixed locations. In view of the conclusion about the homogeneity of the long-channel flow, this random sampling did not compromise the quality of the composite sample. Two sets of samples were collected every 30 minutes.


Figure 2. Color-coded time series of long-channel and cross-channel current velocities from the HADCP during the spring tide reconnaissance survey ( $\mathbf{y}$-axis shows distance from the instrument, deployed on the western wall, across the channel).


Figure 3. Depth-averaged flow vectors: ebb tide

### 2.2 WATER SAMPLE COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

All samples collected during a certain tidal phase (ebb or flood) were mixed together to form a composite sample for the particular tidal phase. A flow-proportional sampling scheme was implemented. A flow-proportional composite is comprised of multiple water samples each representative of an equal flow volume through the Hurricane Barrier. During neap tide, a 100 ml sample of water was collected per $10 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s}$ flow velocity and a 50 ml water sample was collected per $10 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s}$ flow velocity during spring tide (to ensure appropriate water volume in the sample). Appendix A shows the volume of water collected during each sampling event. The principal advantage of flow-proportional composites is that flow-proportional composites are not biased by over- or under-sampling any part of the tidal cycle. Flow-proportional sampling allows for direct estimation of Event Mean Concentration (EMC) without making assumptions about the relationship between pollutant concentrations and flow rates. By collecting greater sample volumes at higher flow rates (and smaller volume at low flow rates), a flow-proportional composite water sample allows direct analysis of the composite sample to estimate the EMC, which is defined as the arithmetic average concentration of the pollutant in the total volume. This flow-proportional sampling was implemented in a manner consistent with other EPA and USACE studies (Teeter, 1988).

The method applied to sample surface water using a discrete sampler (Niskin bottle) onboard a boat to obtain a composite surface water sample is described below. More details are provided in the Field Sampling Plan.

- Have a set of six pre-cleaned intermediate sampling containers (clean, inert graduated cylinder).
- Approach the western side of the entrance to the Hurricane Barrier Gate, and start the ADCP.
- Lower Niskin bottle to the appropriate depth and trigger discrete bottom sample.
- Raise Niskin bottle using winch and davit
- Open Niskin bottle and drain sample in a clean inert graduated cylinder.
- Repeat sampling for mid-water depth.
- Repeat sampling for surface water sample.
- Repeat sampling on the eastern side of the channel.
- End ADCP data collection.
- Open ADCP data file and evaluate the ADCP data to determine the appropriate flowproportioned sample volume.
- Decant the graduated cylinder for each sample to the appropriate flow-proportioned sample volume.
- Dump the sample(s) into the clean compositing container.
- Repeat above steps until a composite sample from all the depths, locations, and times are obtained
- Mechanically mix the composite sample and remove a sub-sample using the appropriate new, labeled, pre-cleaned container with screw top provided by the laboratory - specific for each chemical analysis. Transfer the sample into a cooler with ice.
- Decontaminate sampling device and compositing basins between sampling rounds.


### 2.3 SAMPLE HANDLING AND CUSTODY

The following provides a brief description of sample handling and custody procedures. For details, please refer to the Woods Hole Group QAPP (Woods Hole Group, 2009b).

Samples were placed in coolers with the appropriate documentation and picked-up daily by a courier for Alpha Analytical. The temperature in the cooler was measured and recorded upon receipt at the laboratory.

Additional details regarding sample handling and custody include:

- Sample labels were hand-written at the time of sample collection and were affixed to the individual samples. Chain-Of-Custody (COC) forms were initiated in the field.
- Samples were in the custody of the survey Chief Scientist until relinquished to the laboratory.
- Custody forms accompanied the samples when transferred from the field to the laboratory.
- Each shipment included the original, signed custody forms. Copies of the custody forms were kept in the project files at WHG.
- When the samples arrived at the laboratory, custody was relinquished to the receiving Laboratory Sample Custodian. The Laboratory Sample Custodian examined the samples, verified that the COC forms were accurate and that the samples were intact, logged the samples into the laboratory tracking system, and completed and signed the custody forms.
- Copies of the original COC forms along with the comments and signature of the receiving Laboratory Sample Custodian were transferred to the WHG Task Manager.


### 2.4 ANCILLARY DATA

Multiple other sources of data were utilized for the flux study, including:

- Current data from the HADCP were used in post-processing to evaluate the accuracy of decisions made in the field regarding volumes of individual samples.
- Data from the USGS Paskamanset River flow gage were used to evaluate freshwater discharge into the upper harbor since direct freshwater discharge measurements are not available for New Bedford Harbor
- Weather forecasts from NOAA were used to guide decisions on the timing of sampling events.
- Wind data from the Hurricane Barrier meteorological station were used to help interpret study results on inflow and outflow volumes.


### 3.0 RESULTS

This section reviews flow and sea level variability in the OU\#3 study area (Section 3.1) and provides estimates of water and PCB fluxes through the Hurricane Barrier during the six sampling events (Section 3.2)

### 3.1 FLOW AND SEA LEVEL VARIABILITY AT THE GATE OF THE HURRICANE BARRIER

The data recorded by the pressure sensor of the HADCP were used to calculate parameters of major tidal constituents that describe about $92 \%$ of the total energy associated with tidal-driven sea level variability at the location of the sensor; that is, at the western wall of the Gate. A portion of the total record was selected for tidal harmonic analysis that did not have gaps that sometimes occurred due to gate closing. There were no gate closings after April $27^{\text {th }} 2010$, so the 51.5 -day time series beginning on April $27^{\text {th }}$ was used to calculate the water surface tidal constituents, as well as tidal constituents derived from current time series. The results are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

The tables list the names of tidal harmonics that were reliably resolved by the tidal harmonic analysis; that is, the harmonics for which the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR), shown in the last column, is greater than 2. All tidal harmonics characterized by a lower SNR had negligible amplitudes. Other parameters listed in the tables are the period of a harmonic, its amplitude and phase. Both amplitude and phase are shown with $95 \%$ confidence limits (indicated as Amplitude error and Phase error in Table 2). The superposition of these harmonics describes tidal oscillation of the water level and of the flow at any time. Thus, the parameters shown in the tables do not only reveal the range of tidal variability but also they can be used for prediction of water level and current at the Gate at any time. The $95 \%$ confidence intervals provided in the table for the amplitude and phase of each harmonic indicate how accurate such a prediction may be

The major harmonics have amplitudes that exceed the noise level by an order of two or three, as for M2 harmonic, for example, indicating the results are accurate. As expected, the major tidal harmonic is M2, which is the primary semi-diurnal (twice daily) tidal constituent resulting from the interaction between the moon and the earth's oceans. Its amplitude is 52 cm . The amplitude of the primary semi-diurnal solar constituent, S 2 , is only 8 cm . Since M2 ( 12.42 hrs ) and S 2 ( 12 hrs ) have slightly different periods, the spring/neap tidal cycle is typically a result of the interaction between M2 and S2. Because S2 is only a minor contributor at this site, tidal variations within the usual spring/neap tide cycle are relatively small. The amplitude of N 2 harmonic, which is due to the noncircularity of the moon's orbit, is 12 cm . The combination of M2 and N 2 harmonics causes variations of the tide with a 27.5 -day period. The role of the diurnal (once-daily) harmonics (which take into account the earth's equatorial plane with respect to the plane of the moon's orbit) is relatively small at this site. The amplitude of K 1 is 8 cm and the amplitude of O 1 is 5 cm . Among high-frequency harmonics, M4 (created primarily by non-linear interactions of the tide within the system) is the most energetic with an amplitude about 8 cm .

Table 2. Amplitudes and phases of major tidal constituents: Water Level

| Tidal <br> harmonic | Period <br> (hours) | Amplitude <br> $(\mathrm{m})$ | Amplitude <br> error* $(\mathrm{m})$ | Phase <br> (degrees) | Phase error* <br> (degrees) | SNR $^{* *}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{O}_{1}$ | 25.82 | 0.05 | 0.009 | 135 | 10 | 33 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{NO}_{1}$ | 24.83 | 0.01 | 0.007 | 173 | 30 | 4 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{~K}_{1}$ | 23.94 | 0.08 | 0.009 | 78 | 7 | 67 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{~N}_{2}$ | 12.66 | 0.12 | 0.010 | 214 | 4 | 150 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{M}_{2}$ | 12.42 | 0.52 | 0.009 | 223 | 1 | 3700 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{~S}_{2}$ | 12.00 | 0.08 | 0.010 | 236 | 6 | 75 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{MO}_{3}$ | 8.39 | 0.02 | 0.006 | 144 | 18 | 7 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{MK}_{3}$ | 8.18 | 0.02 | 0.005 | 153 | 18 | 11 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{MN}_{4}$ | 6.27 | 0.03 | 0.007 | 65 | 14 | 16 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{M}_{4}$ | 6.21 | 0.08 | 0.008 | 111 | 5 | 100 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{MS}_{4}$ | 6.10 | 0.01 | 0.007 | 166 | 31 | 4 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{MK}_{5}$ | 4.93 | 0.01 | 0.005 | 289 | 28 | 4 |

* 95\% confidence interval
** Signal-to-Noise Ratio (only constituents with SNR $>2$ are shown)

Current data from the HADCP were used to examine tidal variations of the mid-depth throughchannel flow, which describe about $80-85 \%$ of the total flow variability, depending on the time period used to calculated tidal constituents. The major tidal harmonic of the current regime at the Hurricane Barrier is M2. Its amplitude is $50 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s}$, and it accounts for approximately $50 \%$ of the total flow variability. The amplitude of S 2 is $8 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s}$, and the amplitude of N 2 is $11 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s}$. The amplitude of M4 is $15 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s}$. The role of diurnal harmonics in the currents is small. The combined amplitude of O 1 and K 1 is $7 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s}$ only. It is common for currents to have a different tidal constituent variability than the water surface.

In addition to tidal-driven circulation, there can be substantial non-tidal, residual motions resulting from climatological conditions, interaction of flow within the system, and other forcings and responses. At the New Bedford Hurricane Barrier, there are occasional unique residual events. Analysis of the residual variations of the flow revealed the occurrence of transient high-amplitude (up to $150 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s}$ ) oscillations with a period of about 80 minutes. The most significant events resulted in currents through the Barrier that were swifter than the tidal currents. With a period of 80 minutes, there were occasions when these residual currents actually caused a reversal in the tidal current direction - a unique circumstance. An example of such variations in the long-channel flow is shown in Figure 4. The alternating red and blue stripes around 1800 hrs on January 25 and after 0600 hrs on January 26 show reversing current directions with speeds approaching $150 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{sec}(\sim 3 \mathrm{kts})$.

Using current data from the HADCP and meteorological data from the Hurricane Barrier, Woods Hole Group conducted a process-oriented analysis to better understand the importance of these observed residual motions. The analysis was focused on the following questions:

- Can these strong transient currents play a role in transport of PCBs?
- Can the occurrence of such an event be predicted using meteorological data?

The analysis of the data did not reveal any meaningful correlation between the occurrence of such high-frequency high-amplitude current oscillations and specific wind events. For example, these transient flow oscillations were observed to occur over a wide range of wind conditions. However, the residual motions did not consistently occur during any particular wind direction or speed. Wind conditions during the observed residual events occur quite frequently at other times, but the occurrence of high-amplitude flow oscillations was rare. Furthermore, the amplitude of this nontidal motion exceeded $50 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s}$ approximately only $1 \%$ of the time (Figure 5). Therefore, it is logical to suggest that the role of such flow oscillations in the total flux of PCBs through the Hurricane Barrier is episodic, and small as compared to the ongoing tidal circulation. Based on the lack of a correlation with specific wind conditions, the events also could not be readily predicted based on the available information. Thus, the field sampling scheme was not modified. It was assumed that the major contributors to the flux of PCB through the Hurricane Barrier may be semi-diurnal tidal oscillations, wind-driven flows, and freshwater runoff.

Table 3. Amplitudes and phases of major tidal constituents: Currents

| Tidal <br> harmonic | Period <br> (hours) | Amplitude, <br> $\mathrm{cm} / \mathrm{s}$ | Amplitude <br> error* <br> $(\mathrm{cm} / \mathrm{s})$ | Phase, deg | Phase <br> error* <br> $(\mathrm{deg})$ | SNR $^{* *}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{O}_{1}$ | 25.82 | 3 | 0.6 | 221 | 15 | 16 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{~K}_{1}$ | 23.94 | 4 | 0.7 | $\mathbf{1 7 2}$ | 10 | 32 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{~N}_{2}$ | 12.66 | $\mathbf{1 1}$ | 1.1 | 300 | 6 | 100 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{M}_{2}$ | 12.42 | 50 | 1.1 | 315 | 1 | 2100 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{~L}_{2}$ | 12.19 | 3 | 1.2 | 279 | 28 | 5 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{~S}_{2}$ | 12.00 | 8 | 1.0 | 326 | 7 | 62 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{MO}_{3}$ | 8.39 | 2 | 0.8 | 228 | 25 | 6 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{MK}_{3}$ | 8.18 | 2 | 0.9 | 226 | 30 | 3 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{MN}_{4}$ | 6.27 | 6 | 1.8 | 15 | 17 | 9 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{M}_{4}$ | 6.21 | 15 | 1.3 | 207 | 6 | 130 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{MS}_{4}$ | 6.10 | 3 | 1.5 | 267 | 31 | 3 |
| ${ }^{*} \mathrm{MK}_{5}$ | 4.93 | 3 | 1.6 | 14 | 35 | 3 |

* $95 \%$ confidence interval
** Signal-to-Noise Ratio (only constituents with SNR > 2 are shown)


Figure 4. Color-coded time series of long-channel velocity for January 25th and 26th 2010 ( $\mathbf{y}$-axis shows distance from the instrument, deployed on the western wall, across the channel).


Figure 5. Empirical distribution of the magnitude of high-frequency current oscillations. The amplitude of such oscillations exceeds $50 \mathrm{~cm} / \mathrm{s} 1 \%$ of the time.

### 3.2 WATER AND PCB FLUXES DURING SAMPLING EVENTS

This section focuses on the discussion of tidal volumes (Table 4) and PCB fluxes (Table 5) through the Hurricane Barrier during each sampling event. Table 4 shows tidal volumes and water flux for the six sampling events. Table 5 summarizes measured PCB flux for each ebb and flood tide during each survey. All PCB data (209 congeners and homologues) are provided in Appendix B.

Measured flux was calculated based upon the measured PCB concentration and the measured flow volume for the particular tide based on the ADCP data. The difference between the measured flood and ebb PCB flux is not representative of the net flux, however, because of the tidal asymmetry (i.e., there are higher high and lower low tides each day). Therefore, Table 5 also lists estimated net PCB flux for each event due to tidal pumping and net freshwater inflow, as described in Section 2.0 [total net PCB flux (last column of Table 5) is the sum of these two parameters]. PCB concentrations measured in the flow-proportional composite samples for ebb and flood tides for the six sampling events are shown in Figure 6. Sections 3.2.1 through 3.2.6 describe conditions and detailed results for each sampling event.

Table 4. Tidal volumes and water fluxes for the six sampling events.

| Event | Flood volume, <br> $10^{6} \mathrm{~m}^{3}$ | Ebb volume, <br> $10^{6} \mathrm{~m}^{3}$ | Mean tidal <br> volume, $10^{6} \mathrm{~m}^{3}$ | Freshwater flux, <br> $\mathrm{m}^{3} / \mathrm{s}$ |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 001-weather $(04 / 02)$ | 3.27 | 3.97 | 3.3 | 14 |
| 002-neap $(04 / 21)$ | 3.02 | 2.73 | 2.8 | 0.8 |
| 003-weather $(04 / 28)$ | 3.66 | 4.98 | 4.3 | 0.8 |
| 004-neap $(05 / 07)$ | 2.48 | 2.08 | 2.3 | 0.5 |
| 005-spring $(05 / 13)$ | 3.39 | 3.74 | 3.6 | 0.4 |
| 006-spring $(05 / 26)$ | 4.97 | 3.71 | 4.3 | 0.5 |



Figure 6. PCB concentration in composite samples for ebb and flood for the six sampling events.

Table 5. PCB fluxes

| Event | Measured PCB Mass Flux |  | Estimated Net PCB Mass Flux |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\qquad$ | Total mass flux of PCBs: ebb, g | Tidal-pumping PCB mass flux, g per tidal cycle | Net-flow PCB mass flux, $g$ per tidal cycle | Total PCB mass flux, $g$ per tidal cycle |
| 001-weather | 62.1 | -123.1 | -39.6 | -19.4 | -59.0 |
| 002-neap | 25.4 | -46.4 | -24.1 | -0.6 | -24.7 |
| 003-weather | 39.6 | -149.4 | -81.7 | -1.1 | -82.8 |
| 004-neap | 32.2 | -83.2 | -62.1 | -0.9 | -63.0 |
| 005-spring | 78.0 | -145.9 | -57.6 | -0.8 | -58.4 |
| 006-spring | 119.3 | -155.8 | -77.4 | -0.9 | -78.3 |

### 3.2.1 Sampling event \#1: April $2^{\text {nd }} 2010$ (wet weather event)

Sampling on April 2nd 2010 was conducted after a prolonged period of torrential rains and was selected to represent a wet weather event. The sampling started at low water, approximately at $05: 30$, and ended around $16: 20$ when the tide turned to flood again (Figure 7). High water was observed at about 11:00 this day. The range of tidal variability was about 110 cm . Wind conditions (Figure 8) were characterized by weak northerly winds during the first half of the day (flood) followed by a persistent southwesterly breeze, with wind speeds around $4 \mathrm{~m} / \mathrm{s}$, during the ebb . Figure 9 compares long-channel current velocities recorded by the HADCP mounted on the Hurricane Barrier with the velocity estimates measured using the ADCP on the boat to determine the volume of each individual sample. This comparison shows good agreement between these data, which helps confirm the validity of the flow-proportional sampling for this sampling event.

Freshwater discharge data are not available for the Acushnet River, which flows into New Bedford Harbor. To estimate the volume of freshwater runoff for the period of the sampling, flow data from the USGS Paskamanset River gage were used. This is the nearest watershed basin to the Acushnet River basin, located to the west from the Aushnet River. The approach was dependent upon the major assumption that inflow from the Acushnet River could be scaled in proportion to inflow in the Paskamanset River given their close proximity. The Acushnet River and Paskamanset River watersheds cover areas approximately of the same size and shape, though land use may be slightly different in these areas since the Acushnet River includes the city of New Bedford while the Paskamanset River area includes the smaller city of Dartmouth.

The daily data for the Paskamanset River reveal that, in the beginning of April, the discharge of that river was approximately 14 times the mean annual discharge. Based on work by Jason M. Cortell and Associates (Jason M. Cortell and Associates 1982, in Teeter et al 1988), the mean annual Acushnet River discharge can be estimated as approximately $1 \mathrm{~m}^{3} / \mathrm{s}$. Assuming linear proportionality between the flow in the two rivers, the freshwater discharge of the Acushnet River in the beginning of April was estimated to be $14 \mathrm{~m}^{3} / \mathrm{s}$. This value of freshwater inflow and the mean concentration of PCBs during the ebb were used to calculate net-flow PCB flux [per methods outlined in Section 2.0, equations (1), (2)] through the Hurricane Barrier on April 2nd 2010. This net-flow PCB flux was equal to -19.4 g per tidal cycle, or approximately -37 g per day. The minus sign defines a flux out of the harbor. At the same time, the difference in the PCB concentrations reported by the laboratory for
the ebb and flood ( $12 \mathrm{ng} / \mathrm{l}$ ) resulted in the outflow of PCBs due to tidal pumping at a rate of -39.6 g per tidal cycle. The total flux of PCBs was about -59 g per tidal cycle during this period.


Figure 7. Time series of the actual water level (blue) and predicted water level (green) during the first sampling event (02-Apr-10).


Figure 8. Time series of wind speed and direction at the Hurricane Barrier for 02-Apr-10.


Figure 9. Long-channel flow velocity from selected HADCP bins for 02-Apr-10. Magenta stars (*) show flow velocities (measured from the ADCP on the boat) used for estimation of sample volumes in the field during April 2nd sampling.

### 3.2.2 Sampling event \#2: April $21^{s t} 2010$ (neap tide)

Sampling on April 21 2010, which was a neap tide sampling event, started at low water, approximately at 09:00, and ended around 19:15 when the tide turned to flood (Figure 10). High water was observed at about $14: 00$. The range of tidal variability was equal to 90 cm . The sea level change during ebb was slightly less than sea level change during flood. This tidal asymmetry may offer an explanation to why the flood tidal volume was slightly greater than the ebb tidal volume during this sampling period. Wind conditions (Figure 11) were characterized by weak northerly winds in the morning, and a persistent southwesterly breeze (wind speeds around $5 \mathrm{~m} / \mathrm{s}$ ) during most of the day. The comparison between long-channel current velocities with the velocity estimates made in the field to determine the volume of each individual sample (Figure 12) shows good agreement between these data, which is a confirmation of the validity of flow-proportional sampling for this sampling event.

Freshwater discharge into the harbor for April 21st was estimated under the assumption of similarity between the hydrographs of the Acushnet River and Paskamanset River. The discharge for the Acushnet River was estimated to be around $0.8 \mathrm{~m}^{3} / \mathrm{s}$, which is small compared with the tidal flow rates. This value of freshwater runoff was used to calculate net-flow PCB flux through the

Hurricane Barrier on April 21st 2010. This net-flow PCB flux was equal to -0.6 g per tidal cycle. The difference in the PCB concentrations during ebb and flood $(8.6 \mathrm{ng} / \mathrm{l})$ resulted in the tidecorrected outflow of PCBs at a rate of -24.1 g per tidal cycle. The total flux of PCBs was about 24.7 g per tidal cycle during this period.


Figure 10. Time series of the actual water level (blue) and predicted water level (green) during the second sampling event (21-Apr-10).


Figure 11. Time series of wind speed and direction at the Hurricane Barrier for 21-Apr-10.


Figure 12. Long-channel flow velocity from selected HADCP bins for 21-Apr-10. Magenta stars (*) show flow velocities (measured from the ADCP on the boat) used for estimation of sample volumes in the field during April 21st sampling.

### 3.2.3 Sampling event \#3: April $28^{\text {th }} 2010$ (weather event)

Sampling on April 28th 2010 was conducted after a day of heavy rainfall, so it was planned as a wet weather sampling event. However, the discharge of the Paskamanset River did not show any notable increase during this time, but the sampling period was characterized by strong northwesterly winds, so this sampling event was characteristic of an abnormal weather condition. The sampling started at high water, approximately at 09:00, and ended around 20:15 when the tide turned to ebb (Figure 13). Low water was observed at about 14:00. The range of tidal variability was equal to 150 cm , which is characteristic of spring tide. The sea level change during ebb was approximately the same as sea level change during flood. However, even without a notable tidal asymmetry, the volume of the outflow exceeded the volume of the inflow by about $26 \%$ during the sampling period. This asymmetry in the volumes of the inflow and outflow that day may be attributed to the strong northwesterly winds that were driving the water out of the harbor during ebb tide and blocking the inflow during flood. Wind conditions (Figure 14) were characterized by strong, up to $15 \mathrm{~m} / \mathrm{s}$, gusty northwesterly winds. The comparison between long-channel current velocities with the velocity estimates made in the field to determine the volume of each individual sample (Figure 15) shows good agreement between these data, which is a confirmation of the validity of flow-proportional sampling for this sampling event.

Freshwater discharge into the harbor for April 28st was estimated under the assumption of similarity between the hydrographs of the Acushnet River and Paskamanset River. The discharge for the Acushnet River was estimated to be around $0.8 \mathrm{~m}^{3} / \mathrm{s}$, which is small compared with the tidal flow rates. This value of freshwater runoff was used to calculate net-flow PCB flux through the Hurricane Barrier on April 28th 2010. This net-flow PCB flux was equal to -1.1 g per tidal cycle. The difference in the PCB concentrations during ebb and flood ( $19 \mathrm{ng} / \mathrm{l}$ ) resulted in the tide-corrected outflow of PCBs at a rate of -81.7 g per tidal cycle. The total flux of PCBs was about -82.8 g per tidal cycle during this period.


Figure 13. Time series of the actual water level (blue) and predicted water level (green) during the first sampling event (28-Apr-10).


Figure 14. Time series of wind speed and direction at the Hurricane Barrier for 28-Apr-10.


Figure 15. Long-channel flow velocity from selected HADCP bins for 28-Apr-10. Magenta stars (*) show flow velocities (measured from the ADCP on the boat) used for estimation of sample volumes in the field during April 28th sampling.

### 3.2.4 Sampling event \#4: May $7^{\text {th }} 2010$ (neap tide)

Sampling on May 7th 2010, which was a neap tide sampling event, started at low water, approximately at $09: 15$, and ended around $21: 15$ when the tide turned to flood (Figure 16). High water was observed at about $15: 50$. The range of tidal variability was equal to 80 cm . The sea level change during ebb was slightly less than sea level change during flood. This tidal asymmetry may
explain why the flood tidal volume was slightly greater than the ebb tidal volume. Wind conditions (Figure 17) were characterized by northwesterly winds during flood. The wind direction changed at about 14:00. During ebb, the wind was from the west. The comparison between long-channel current velocities with the velocity estimates made in the field to determine the volume of each individual sample (Figure 18) shows good agreement between these data, which is a confirmation of the validity of flow-proportional sampling for this sampling event.

The freshwater discharge into the harbor for May 7th was estimated under the assumption of similarity between the hydrographs of the Acushnet River and Paskamanset River. The discharge for the Acushnet River was estimated to be around $0.5 \mathrm{~m}^{3} / \mathrm{s}$, which is small compared with the tidal flow rates. This value of freshwater runoff was used to calculate net-flow PCB flux through the Hurricane Barrier on May 7th 2010. This net-flow PCB flux was equal to -0.9 g per tidal cycle. The difference in the PCB concentrations during ebb and flood ( $27 \mathrm{ng} / \mathrm{l}$ ) resulted in the tide-corrected outflow of PCBs at a rate of -62.1 g per tidal cycle. The total flux of PCBs was about -63 g per tidal cycle during this period.


Figure 16. Time series of the actual water level (blue) and predicted water level (green) during the first sampling event (07-May-10).


Figure 17. Time series of wind speed and direction at the Hurricane Barrier for 07-May-10.


Figure 18. Long-channel flow velocity from selected HADCP bins for 07-May-10. Magenta stars show flow velocities (measured from the ADCP on the boat) used for estimation of sample volumes in the field May 7th sampling.

### 3.2.5 Sampling event \#5: May $13^{\text {th }} 2010$ (spring tide)

Sampling on May 13th 2010, which was a spring tide sampling event, started at high water, approximately at $08: 15$, and ended around 19:30 (Figure 19). Low water was observed at about $13: 00$. The range of tidal variability was equal to 110 cm during ebb and 130 cm during flood. The tidal asymmetry suggested that the flood tidal volume would be greater than the ebb tidal volume. This was not the case however, perhaps due to northwesterly winds that were driving surface water out of the harbor during ebb. Wind conditions (Figure 20) were characterized by northerly winds during the ebb and southwesterly and westerly winds during the flood. The comparison between long-channel current velocities with the velocity estimates made in the field to determine the volume of each individual sample (Figure 21) shows good agreement between these data, which is a confirmation of the validity of flow-proportional sampling for this sampling event.

Freshwater discharge into the harbor for May 13th was estimated under the assumption of similarity between the hydrographs of the Acushnet River and Paskamanset River. The discharge for the Acushnet River was estimated to be around $0.4 \mathrm{~m}^{3} / \mathrm{s}$, which is small compared with the tidal flow rates. The net-flow PCB flux was equal to -0.8 g per tidal cycle. The difference in the PCB concentrations during ebb and flood ( $16 \mathrm{ng} / \mathrm{l}$ ) resulted in the tide-corrected outflow of PCBs at a rate of -57.6 g per tidal cycle. The total flux of PCBs was about -58.4 g per tidal cycle during this period.


Figure 19. Time series of the actual water level (blue) and predicted water level (green) during the first sampling event (13-May-10).


Figure 20. Time series of wind speed and direction at the Hurricane Barrier for 13-May-10.


Figure 21. Long-channel flow velocity from selected HADCP bins for 13-May-10. Magenta stars show flow velocities (measured from the ADCP on the boat) used for estimation of sample volumes in the field May 13 sampling.

### 3.2.6 Sampling event \#6: May $26^{\text {th }} 2010$ (spring tide)

Sampling on May 16th 2010, which was a spring tide sampling event, started at high water, approximately at 07:30, and ended around 19:15. Low water was observed at about 13:15 (Figure 22). The range of tidal variability was equal to 120 cm during ebb and 150 cm during flood. The
tidal asymmetry suggested that the flood volume would be greater than the ebb volume. Indeed, the flood volume exceeded ebb volume by about $25 \%$. Wind conditions (Figure 23) were characterized variable and light winds during the ebb and mostly southerly winds, with speeds around $4 \mathrm{~m} / \mathrm{s}$, during the flood. The comparison between long-channel current velocities with the velocity estimates made in the field to determine the volume of each individual sample (Figure 24) shows good agreement between these data, which is a confirmation of the validity of flow-proportional sampling for this sampling event.

The freshwater discharge into the harbor for May 26th was estimated under the assumption of similarity between the hydrographs of the Acushnet River and Paskamanset River. The discharge for the Acushnet River was estimated to be around $0.5 \mathrm{~m}^{3} / \mathrm{s}$, which is small compared with the tidal flow rates. The net-flow PCB flux was equal to -0.9 g per tidal cycle. The difference in the PCB concentrations during ebb and flood ( $18 \mathrm{ng} / \mathrm{l}$ ) resulted in the tide-corrected outflow of PCBs at a rate of -77.4 g per tidal cycle. The total flux of PCBs was about -78.3 g per tidal cycle during this period.


Figure 22. Time series of the actual water level (blue) and predicted water level (green) during the first sampling event (26-May-10).


Figure 23. Time series of wind speed and direction at the Hurricane Barrier for 26-May-10.


Figure 24. Long-channel flow velocity from selected HADCP bins for 26-May-10. Magenta stars show flow velocities (measured from the ADCP on the boat) used for estimation of sample volumes in the field during May 26th sampling.

### 4.0 SUMMARY

The results of the six sampling surveys intended to estimate the PCB flux to the OU\#3 area show a persistent flux of PCBs through the Hurricane Barrier out from New Bedford Harbor. In the spring of 2010 , the net rate of the total PCB mass flux ranged from -24.7 g per tidal cycle (neap tide on April 21) to -82.8 g per tidal cycle (weather event on April 28 coinciding with spring tide). The mean net PCB mass flux for the six (6) sampling events was approximately -61 g per tidal cycle, which translates to approximately -118 g per day.

The prevailing mechanism for PCB net flux through the Hurricane Barrier is tidal pumping, with net freshwater discharge providing small contributions during five (5) of the six (6) events. PCB concentrations were always lower on the flood tide than on the ebb tide, and it is the magnitude of this concentration difference that contributed most to the rate of the net PCB outflow from New Bedford Harbor to OU\#3. Average tidal pumping PCB net mass flux was 57.1 g per tidal cycle (range: -24.1 to -81.7), whereas average net PCB mass flux due to freshwater inflow [for the five (5) events when freshwater inflow was low] was -0.9 g per tidal cycle (range: -0.6 to -1.1 ). The estimated net PCB mass flux for the high freshwater inflow event (April 2 flood) was -19.4 g per tidal cycle, which was less than half of the tidal pumping PCB mass flux for that particularly rare event. No meaningful correlation was established between PCB concentrations in the flood and ebb composite samples and such parameters as flow velocities, sea conditions, and freshwater runoff.

PCB flux varied considerably over the six sampling events. On the flood tides, flux varied by a factor of almost 5 (range 25.4 to 119.3 g ). On ebb tides, flux varied by a factor of about 3 (range 46.4 to 155.8 g ). Similarly, the fraction of dissolved to total (dissolved plus particulate) PCBs varied by approximately a factor of more than 3 . The total PCB concentration, as well as partitioning in the dissolved vs particulate phase in the water at any given time are affected by a number of variables. These include the amount of particulate and dissolved organic carbon in water, differences in solubility of various PCB compounds (Adzeel et al. 1997; Garton et al. 1996), and suspended sediment concentrations in water column. These in turn depend on a variety of physical, biological, and chemical processes including seawater mixing, sediment scour, microbial and other biological activity, input of dissolved organic matter from surface- or groundwater inflow; and other factors. These issues, as they relate to fate, transport, and bioavailability of PCBs will be further investigated as part of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study for OU\#3

This study indicates that the New Bedford Harbor sediments and water serve as a source of PCBs to OU\#3, the 17,000 acre area outside the hurricane barrier. The measured flux rate compares with earlier modeled estimates of PCB flux through the barrier (Battelle, 1990), which estimated an outflux of PCBs through the barrier of 150 g per tidal cycle in 1990 and forecasted an out flux of 110 g per tidal cycle for simulation year 10 (this would have been 2000 , as the model was completed in 1990). The net PCB mass flux export values from the 2010 campaign outlined in this report are in a similar range, but lower on average. The average calculated net PCB mass flux in 2010 is slightly more than half (55\%) of the Battelle modeled value for year 2000. Note that the PCB flux estimates from (Battelle, 1990) were based on field and laboratory studies that provided input to a physical/chemical model interfaced with a food chain model, while the estimates of the fluxes provided in this report are entirely empirical.

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## APPENDIX A. TABLES SHOWING SAMPLE VOLUME FOR EACH COMPOSITE SAMPLE (6 TABLES)





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## APPENDIX B. SPREADSHEETS SHOWING VALUES FOR TOTAL PCB (SUM OF 209 CONGENERS AND SUM OF HOMOLOGUES)








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[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ The negative value indicates flux outward from the harbor to Upper Buzzard's Bay

