Marie H. Marks

From: Joyce Tsai [jtsai@lowellsun.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 30, 2010 5:40 PM
To: FOIA@noaa.gov
Subject: FOIA Request

Joyce Tsai
The Lowell Sun
491 Dutton St.
Lowell, MA 01853
978-970-4675

July 1, 2010

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

FOIA REQUEST
Fee benefit requested
Fee waiver requested
Expedited processing requested

Dear FOIA Officer:

Pursuant to the federal Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, I request access to and copies of reports and documents issued on the results of a field test conducted by the NOAA earlier this year on commercially sorbent boom that determined that it absorbed more oil and much less water than hair boom, and discussed what pros and cons of using hair boom vs. commercially sorbent would be for cleaning up oil spills. Also I would like to know if there are other reports on the same issue from the past three years, and if so, obtain copies of them.

As a representative of the news media I am only required to pay for the direct cost of duplication after the first 100 pages. Through this request, I am gathering information on this issue of the merits of using commercial sorbent boom vs. hair boom in oil spills in the gulf and ocean that is of current interest to the public because of the current Gulf Oil Spill. This information is being sought on behalf of *The Lowell Sun* for dissemination to the general public.

Please waive any applicable fees. Release of the information is in the public interest because it will contribute significantly to public understanding of government operations and activities. It will contribute significantly to the public's understanding of the federal response by BP and the U.S. Coast Guard to the Gulf oil spill.

If my request is denied in whole or part, I ask that you justify all deletions by reference to specific exemptions of the act. I will also expect you to release all segregable portions of otherwise exempt material. I, of course, reserve the right to appeal your decision to withhold any information or to deny a waiver of fees. If the cost of fulfilling this FOIA request is more than $20, please notify me first before doing so, so we can discuss ways to reduce the cost.

As I am making this request as a journalist and this information is of timely value, I would appreciate your communicating with me by telephone, rather than by mail, if you have questions regarding this request.

Please provide expedited processing of this request which concerns a matter of urgency. As a journalist, I am primarily engaged in disseminating information. The public has an urgent need for information about the federal response to the Gulf Oil Spill, because any delay in information on this issue, while the federal response is still ongoing and the subject of public scrutiny, would rob the public of its ability to understand why hair boom is not being used in the Deepwater Horizon response - and is using the commercial sorbent boom instead. There is an immediate need to address the public's concern that wrongdoing or undue influence by special interests has been involved with the decision to exclude hair boom from the response. I certify that my statements concerning the need for expedited processing are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

I look forward to your reply within 20 business days, as the statute requires.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Joyce Tsai