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Buffalo District

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Public Affairs Contact: Bruce I. Sanders

716.879.4410

bruce.i.sanders@usace.army.mil

Niagara Falls Storage Site Remedial Investigation Report Available

BUFFALO -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Buffalo District is pleased to announce that the Niagara Falls Storage Site Remedial Investigation Report is complete and has been released for public availability. Copies of the report are available in the Town of Lewiston Public Library, 305 South Eighth Street, Lewiston, NY 14092, and the Youngstown Free Library, 240 Lockport Street, Youngstown, NY 14174. The executive summary of the report is available on the Buffalo District public website: www.lrb.usace.army.mil/fusrap/nfss/index.htm

“The Niagara Falls Storage Site Remedial Investigation Report is the first major technical product of an extensive eight-year, \$24 million investigation of the site.” said Bill Kowalewski, Project Manager. The report documents the results of three phases of field sampling and laboratory analysis to determine the nature and extent of radioactive and chemical contamination resulting from Manhattan Engineer District and Atomic Energy Commission activities. It includes the results from a groundwater model that was used to determine the fate and transport of these contaminants through the upper water bearing zone, the lower water bearing zone and the clay layer that separates them. An evaluation of the safe life expectancy of the site’s Interim Waste Containment Cell is also included in the report. The report also includes a comprehensive assessment of potential human health risks and ecological risks resulting from exposure to environmental contamination at the site.

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The Corps conducted this environmental investigation in accordance with the phased process required by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) following guidance established by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. This process required federal environmental agencies to conduct risk-based investigations and remedial responses. “There are currently no imminent hazards to safety or health from radiological or chemical exposure within the Niagara Falls Storage Site or to a member of the public outside the site,” continued Kowalewski. “Transport simulations indicate that the Interim Waste Containment Structure will adequately mitigate contaminant migration for 200 years as long as the site maintenance program is continued to prevent degradation of the clay cap.”

The Niagara Falls Storage Site is a 191-acre property located at 1397 Pletcher Road in the Town of Lewiston, NY. It was once part of the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works (LOOW). The former LOOW was a 7,500-acre explosives (TNT) manufacturing plant which was also used for a number of U. S. Army, Navy, and Air Force activities beginning in the 1940s. The Niagara Falls Storage Site has been in federal ownership since 1942 and has been contaminated by a variety of federal activities requiring environmental response actions under CERCLA. The site was entered into the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program by the U. S. Department of Energy. In the 1980s the U. S. Department of Energy consolidated radioactive wastes from the site into a ten-acre Interim Waste Containment Structure. The Corps gained the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program in October 1997 and initiated the comprehensive Remedial Investigation of the site in 1999.

Questions or comments regarding the report may be e-mailed to: fusrap@usace.army.mil or be phoned to: 1-800-833-6390. For information on this specific project contact Arleen Kreuzsch at 716.879-4438.

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