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Department of Energy

Field Office, Oak Ridge P.O. Box 2001 Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831—8723

August 28, 1992

Mr. Bruce Fullen Division of Historic Preservation Agency Building 1 Albany, New York 12238

Dear Mr. Fullen:

CULTURAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT FOR NIAGARA FALLS STORAGE SITE DEMOLITION WORK

Enclosed please find the information you requested during our telephone conversation of July 24, 1992, covering the Department of Energy's planned activities at the Niagara Falls Storage Site (NFSS). This information is being submitted to assist your assessment in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800, of the significance of demolition work planned at the site.

In this document, I have included a discussion of the proposed demolition work, summary background on the site and the effected structures, general background on DOE's Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program that manages the site, and photographs and drawings of the structures and the surrounding area.

If additional information is required or you have any questions, please do not hesitate to give me a call at (615) 576-7477.

Sincerely,

Ronald E. Kirk, Site Manager

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Former Sites Restoration Division

Enclosures

NIAGARA FALLS STORAGE SITE DEMOLITION OF FOUR ON-SITE STRUCTURES

The following document provides informational background on four (4) structures, located at the Department of Energy's (DOE) Niagara Falls Storage Site (NFSS), which have been designated for demolition. The data presented here will enable a New York State Division for Historic Preservation review in determining the appropriateness of the intended action in respect to National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR Part 800) requirements.

Proposed action:

To facilitate the realignment of site security boundaries associated with a planned surplusing of NFSS property (figure 1), DOE is proposing to demolish four (4) buildings. The buildings to be removed are 401A, 402, 416, and 429 (figure 2).

General program information:

NFSS is located approximately 10 miles north of the City of Niagara Falls and lies within the Township of Lewiston, New York (figure 3). A DOE facility, it is operated under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP). It is one of many sites in the United States that was used by the Manhattan Engineer District (MED) and its successor Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) for processing and storing uranium and thorium ores in conjunction with the nation's program to develop the first atomic bomb.

As a result of the MED/AEC operations and the nature of subsequent cleanup activities, trace amounts of radioactive materials remained at some of the sites. Most of the sites were decontaminated and released for other uses under the regulations in effect at the time operations ceased. Subsequently, as radiological guidelines became more stringent, a number of sites were found to have residual contamination exceeding the revised guidelines. To assess and further remediate these sites, the federal government initiated FUSRAP in 1974. NFSS was among those sites designated for additional remediation.

NFSS general historical summary:

NFSS and adjacent vicinity properties were part of the U. S. Army's 7500 acre Lake Ontario Ordnance Works (LOOW) constructed to be used for trinitrotoluene (TNT) production early in World War II. TNT production was never initiated and the LOOW was reassigned to the MED.

From 1944 to 1947, MED used the LOOW as a storage facility for uranium ore processing residues from a ceramics plant operated by Linde Air Products in Tonawanda, New York. By 1948, 6000 acres of the LOOW had been transferred or sold by the War Assets Administration, with ownership on the remaining 1500 acres given to the newly formed AEC. The AEC continued to use the site to store additional residues from the Linde plant, as well as residues from Mallinckrodt Chemical Works in St. Louis, Missouri, and other sources.

In addition to storage of uranium ore processing residues, the LOOW was used for interim storage of uranium metal billets manufactured at the Simonds Saw and Steel Company's plant in Lockport, New York. It was also used as a disposal site for radioactive material wastes from the Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory in Schenectady, New York; the University of Rochester in Rochester, New York; and the MED/AEC Middlesex Sampling Plant in Middlesex, New Jersey. Other probable sources of radioactive materials at the LOOW include the Harshaw Chemical Company in Cleveland, Ohio; Electromet in Niagara Falls, New York; Eldorado Mining and Refining, Ltd. in Port Hope, Ontario; Allegheny Ludlum Steel Company in Watervliet, New York; and Vitro Corporation of America in Grand Junction, Colorado.

On-site storage operations ceased by 1953, and an on-site steam plant was modified to separate nonradioactive isotopes of boron. The plant was in operation between 1953 and 1959 and again between 1965 and 1971. During the first period, a major cleanup of the site was performed consolidating soils and removing surface debris for shipping most of these waste to Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The remaining radioactively contaminated soils and residues were left at the site.

By 1968, most of the property acquired by the AEC had been disposed of through the General Services Administration as surplus, leaving 213 acres. In 1975, an additional 22 acres were transferred to the town of Lewiston, New York.

Since 1982, consistent with the purpose and mission of FUSRAP, a significant amount of remedial action has been conducted at the site and for its vicinity properties. As a result, the site is currently configured with a Waste Containment Structure (WCS) and is designated as a permanent storage site for radioactive residues and contaminated soil and rubble.

The site now covers approximately 191 acres and includes the WCS and 6 structures; buildings 401, 401A, 402, 403, 416, and 429.

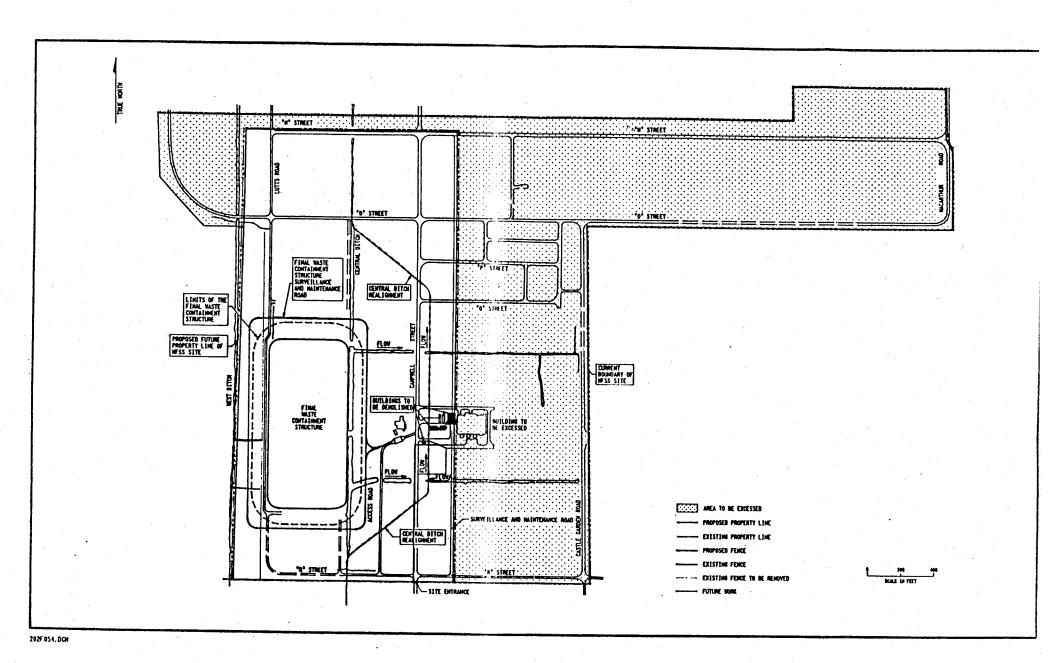
Building specific history:

There is no apparent specific significance to the buildings as they relate to the overall history of the site. Research into the use of the structures shows that building 401A (figures 4 and 5) was a general office area which had a hall passage to the more prominent

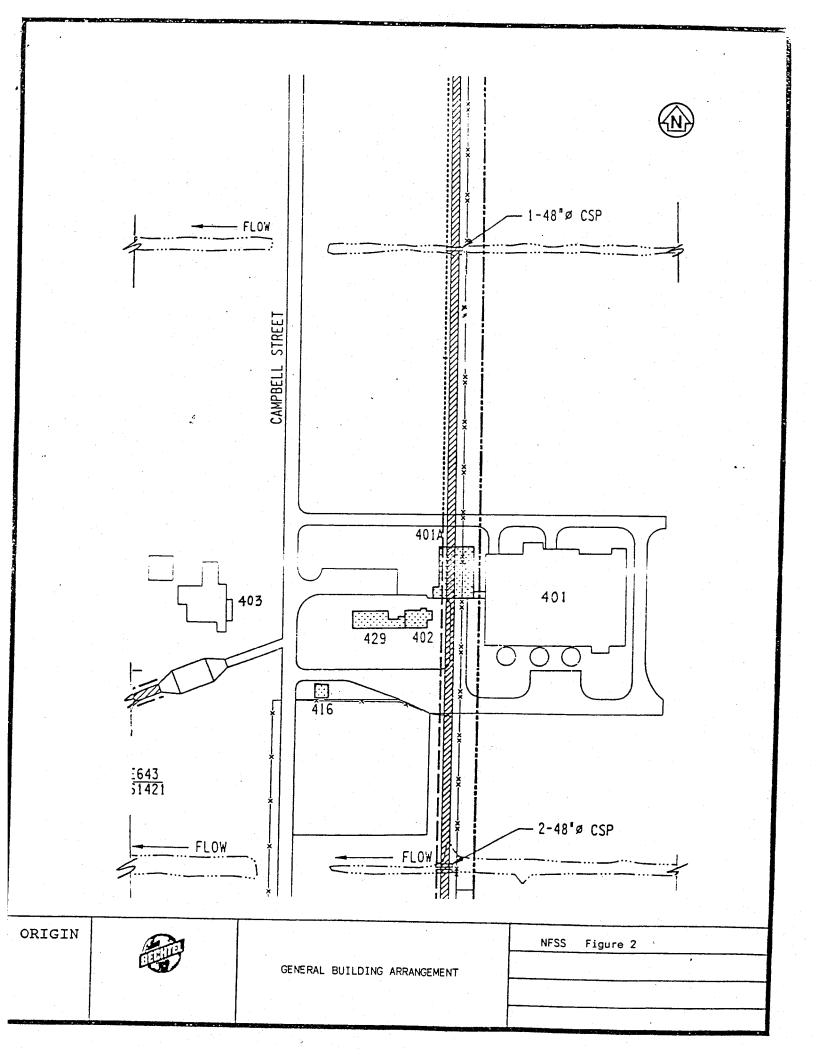
building 401. Contiguous buildings 402 and 429 (figure 6) were also used for office space and are believed to have been assigned to an accounting group. Building 416 (figure 5) was used as an access/egress point guard station. Buildings 401A, 402, and 429 are slab-on-grade, concrete block, and built up roof construction. Building 416 is also slab-on-grade and built up roof, but constructed of wood siding. Interior photos of the respective buildings are also shown in figures 5 and 6. Investigation of buildings materials, in preparation for demolition, has determined that all buildings are constructed with asbestos containing materials (ACM). The ACM is typically found in floor tile, transite wall siding, ceiling tile, pipe lagging, and roof tar paper. The demolition will include the proper removal and disposal of the ACM.

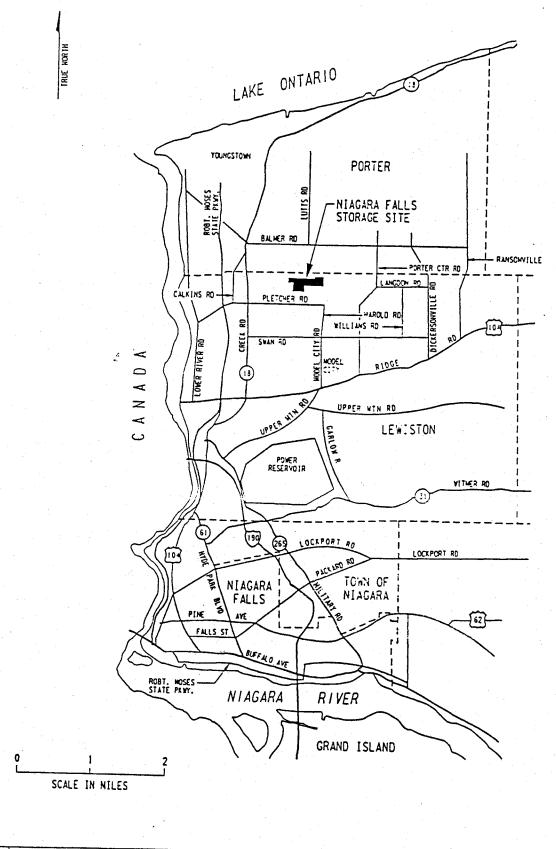
Summary:

A New York State Division of Historical Preservation assessment of the historical significance of four (4) buildings (401A, 402, 416 and 429) is being requested in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800 and in preparation for the planned demolition activities. The demolition is necessary to provide a clear pathway for the realignment of the central ditch, a new fence, and required security road. Once the new boundary line is in place, the federal government can then surplus approximately 136 acres of the property, including the site's most prominent structure, building 401. The surplusing action will potentially return the property to public use via the General Services Administration, and will significantly reduce the government's cost for properly maintaining the balance of the site.



LONG TERM PLANS FOR NFSS

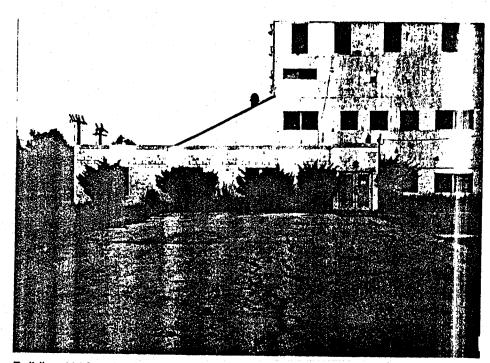




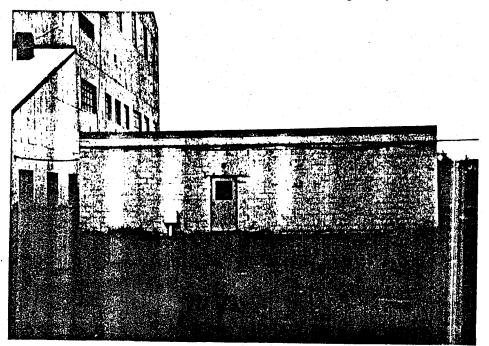
ORIGIN

NFSS Figure 3

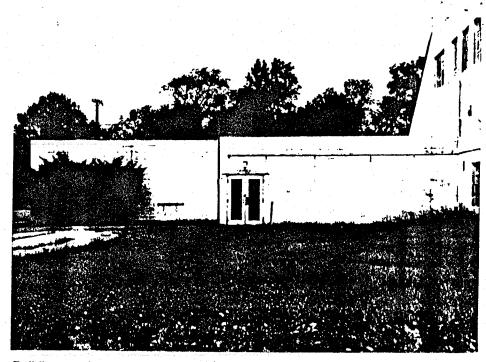
SITE LOCATION



Building 401A — Looking east (Building 401 seen in background)



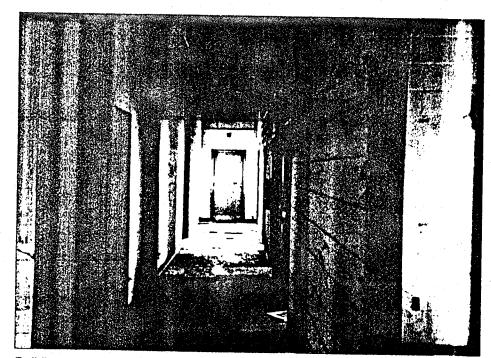
Building 401A — Looking south



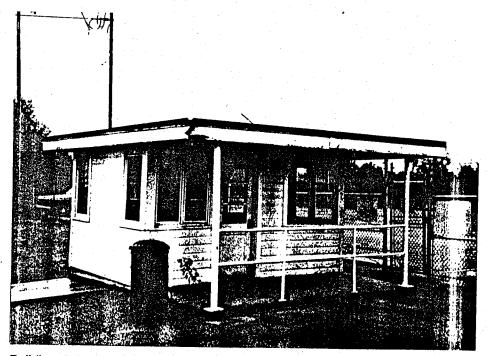
Building 401A — Looking north



Building 401A — East face with access hall to Building 401



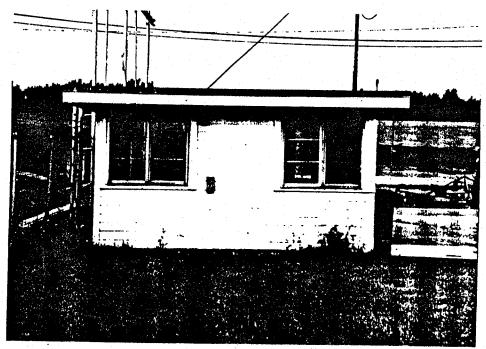
Building 401A — Typical interior view



Building 416 — Looking east

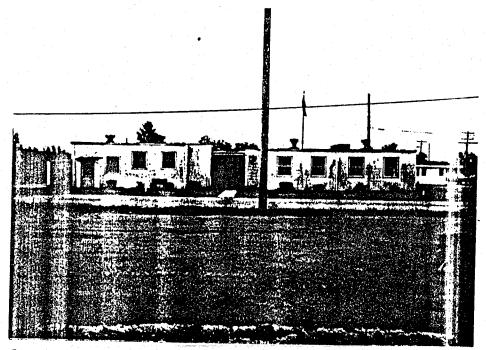


Building 401A — Typical interior

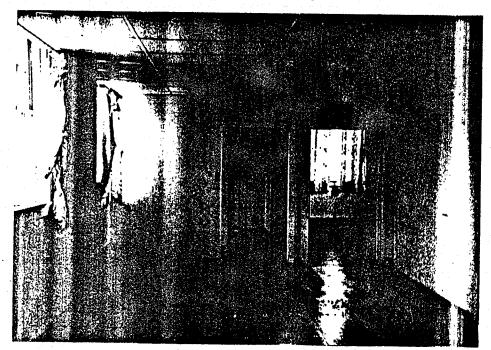


Building 416 — Looking west

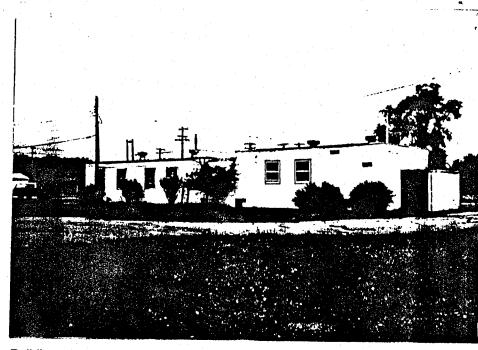




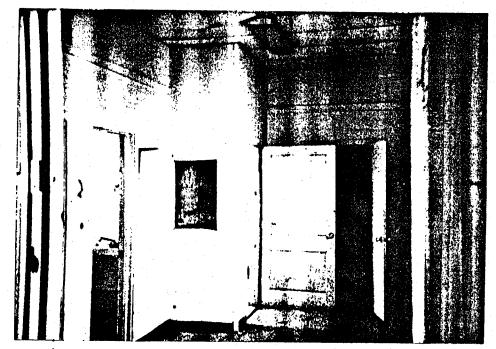
Contiguous Buildings 429 (left) and 402 — Looking south



Typical Building 429 — Interior



Buildings 429 and 402 — Looking north



Typical Building 402 — Interior