

Study urges leaving nuclear wastes where they are

LOCAL IMPACT:

The new report should not prevent cleanup of the Manhattan Project waste, an environmentalist says.

By Paul Barton

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — A new Congressional Budget Office

study suggests the Energy Department may be better off delaying cleanup at some of its former nuclear weapons sites and leaving radioactive materials right where they are.

Such a strategy would allow more time for the development of needed cleanup strategies while avoiding risks to the public and workers that can accompany removal actions.

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But the report didn't sit well with one local environmentalist, who has campaigned for the cleanup of the old Lake Ontario Ordnance Works site on Fletcher Road, where waste from the Manhattan Project is stored.

Timothy Henderson, president of ROLE (Residents Organized for Lewiston's Environment) is

concerned the new proposal will allow the Department of Energy to leave the radioactive material buried at the Niagara Falls Storage Site, formerly the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works.

"I have a problem with equating dollars with health factors," he said. "To me, it's a non-decision and it's something bureaucrats pick up at bureaucrat school. The fact remains (the

radioactive material) shouldn't have come here in the first place. The clock's been ticking since the 1940s. They said they would move it and if they don't, they lied to us."

"Delaying these projects would save money in the short term and, if more effective technology became available, could also reduce long-term costs," the CBO study said.

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