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## PRESS RELEASE

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### RAB CALLS ON U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR INPUT ON RADIOACTIVE STORAGE SITE REPORT

The Lake Ontario Ordnance Works ("LOOW") Restoration Advisory Board ("RAB") announced today that it has asked the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ("Corps") for an opportunity to comment on a DRAFT Remedial Investigation Report ("Report") on the Niagara Falls Storage Site, prior to the issue of a Final Report.

The Niagara Falls Storage Site, or "NFSS," is a 191-acre site in the Town of Lewiston which houses a 31-acre storage area containing radioactive waste from atomic bomb production in the 1940's and 1950's. The waste includes nearly 2,000 curies, a massive amount of Radium-226, which is a very high-activity radioactive material mixed in a damp powdered mineral waste. The NFSS is located approximately ½ mile east of the Lewiston-Porter Central School District.

According to Walt Garrow, Chair of the RAB, "The NFSS Report will be the culmination of more than a decade of investigation and analysis of soils and geology around the NFSS. The findings of this Report will form the basis for analyses which will determine whether the federal government intends to remove some or all of the radioactive material in Interim containment at the NFSS."

Garrow went on to say, "While the RAB has seen data that will be considered in the Report, it has not seen how the data will be used to reach conclusions about the safety of the facility. Once a Report is Final, it becomes extremely difficult for public input to influence the findings."

From the 1950's to the early 1980's, much of the radioactive material was stored in a 130-foot high vented silo on the NFSS property. In the early 1980's, the federal government decided to transfer the powdered radioactive material to underground storage called the, "Interim Waste Containment Structure," at the NFSS.

According to RAB Radiological Committee Chair Bill Boeck, "The Interim Structure is an abandoned WWII water treatment plant foundation at the NFSS. During transfer of the material from the silo in the early 1980's, engineered clay for side walls and a cap were added to make an underground containment structure. However, beneath the foundation is a natural layer of clay. We do not know if there was any damage to or penetration of the natural clay bottom during construction of the water treatment plant in the 1940's."

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Dr. Boeck went on to indicate that the Corps has not taken data that would indicate whether the Radium-226 has moved from the foundations where it was placed, or would determine whether groundwater has come in contact with the damp powdered material. The RAB Radiological Committee would like to view and comment on the Corps' modeling of potential public exposure pathways for releases from the structure, prior to issuance of the Final Report.

The RAB also seeks Draft comments on this key Report from the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, the NYS Dept. of Health, and the U.S. EPA. All of these agencies and the RAB have provided comments on Drafts of other Corps investigation reports at the LOOW site, but inexplicably, comments have not been solicited by the Corps on this pivotal NFSS investigation Report.

RAB Membership Committee Chair Bill Choboy added, "Discussions between the agencies about this investigation have taken place to the exclusion of the RAB and should be brought out in front of the public, before, not after the Report is Final."

The community is welcome to join the RAB as a member, or to sign up for the mailing list by contacting Bill Choboy at [billc313@yahoo.com](mailto:billc313@yahoo.com) or 745-7790. The RAB website is "loowrab.org".

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The RAB is a volunteer organization created as the community conduit for Army Corps of Engineers investigations at the LOOW site. The mission of the RAB is to influence the investigation and promote the satisfactory remediation of the former 7,500 acre federal site located in the Towns of Lewiston and Porter, NY. The RAB endeavors to ensure the community is provided the opportunity as early as possible to obtain information about, provide input to, and have impact on, the decisions regarding all investigations and restoration activities.

Members of the RAB include representatives for the Towns of Lewiston and Porter, Niagara County, the Tuscarora Environment Office, the Low-Port Central School District, LOOW contractors, retired industry executives, the Niagara County Health Dept., the NYS DEC, the EPA, community volunteers, and academics from Niagara University and the University at Buffalo. All meetings are open to the public.