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Army engineers plan more than half of stimulus outlay for Lewiston N-site

Corps gets \$15 million to cover cleanups

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WASHINGTON — The Army Corps of Engineers announced Tuesday that it plans to spend nearly \$15 million in federal stimulus money in Western New York, more than half of that going to a substantial environmental project in Niagara County.

About \$8 million will be spent at the Niagara Falls Storage Site in Lewiston, a 191-acre area where the federal government stored radioactive wastes from uranium ore processing during the Cold War.

And most of that money will be used to demolish the site's Building 401, a massive concrete and steel structure that served as the main boiler plant for the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works.

"The building has got to come down," said Bill Kowalewski, chief of the special projects branch at the Army Corps of Engineers Buffalo District, which oversees the site.

The building is dilapidated and must be demolished so that workers can remove hazardous waste that is stored beneath it, Kowalewski said.

Contractors will be hired to do the demolition, and it is too soon to tell how many jobs will be created.

"It's a significant project," Kowalewski said of the \$8 million allocation. "Typically we get \$3 million a year for all of our work" at the site.

In addition to the building's demolition, the stimulus funds will pay for a new security and digital records system for the entire storage site.

The Lewiston project was part of a package of stimulus expenditures that the Army Corps and local members of Congress announced Tuesday.

Other major local projects include:

- \$1.87 million to improve roads and remove debris at the Mount Morris Dam.
- \$1.5 million for dredging work to improve navigation safety and allow vessels to carry more cargo at the Black Rock Channel and Tonawanda Harbor.
- \$1 million for further investigation of radioactive wastes at the Tonawanda Landfill.
- \$820,000 for dredging work to improve navigation safety and allow vessels to carry more cargo at the Dunkirk Harbor.

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