

Army spokesmen did not identify the individuals responsible for the comments, but the overall commander of the Buffalo District of the Corps of Engineers is Lt. Col. Owen J. Beaudoin, who succeeded Lt. Col. Stephen H. Bales in that position June 21. Beaudoin was not in command here when the latest government memorandum and response to citizens' comments were prepared.

The government's official description of the Niagara Falls Storage Site at 1397 Pletcher Road is that it is a "191-acre federally owned site, a remnant of a larger Lake Ontario Ordnance Works site used by the wartime Manhattan Engineer District.

"The storage site and adjacent ordnance works properties were developed for the production of trinitrotoluene [TNT] during World War II. However, TNT production never reached full capacity, and the site became an interim storage facility, first receiving radioactive wastes and residues in 1944.

"Interim remedial actions addressed radioactive residues stored at various locations on the site and widespread contaminated soil on the site. In addition, these actions addressed on-site and off-site drainage areas that had been contaminated from migration of radioactive materials.

"During remedial actions conducted by the U.S. Department of Energy from 1982 to 1986, approximately 240,000 cubic yards of residues and wastes were consolidated in a diked containment area known as the interim waste containment structure. This 10-acre engineered containment structure is located in the southwest corner of the site.

"Additionally, the corps is responsible for environmental investigation and response at three open vicinity properties and on an adjacent private parcel owned by CWM Chemical Services. These properties were impacted by the Manhattan Engineer District and the Atomic Energy Commission."

The Corps of Engineers currently is in the feasibility study phase of its Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program. So far, it has determined that residues and waste at the site pose no threat to human health or safety as long as they remain buried in the containment structure and are not disturbed.

The next step is to propose a preferred plan for permanently handling the material. One alternative would be to leave it in place, undisturbed. If it is to be moved to another location, the corps has identified potential disposal sites in Utah, Idaho, Texas, Michigan and Nevada.

The estimated cost of such disposal is just over \$234.8 million, in addition to the cost of treatment, packaging and transportation.

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