

Ordnance Works meeting Sept. 20

COMMENT SOUGHT:

The Army Corps of Engineers is accepting public comment on the site until Oct. 10.

By Scott Leffler

Greater Niagara Newspapers

The Army Corps of Engineers has scheduled a public meeting of the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works Site Restoration Advisory Board for 7 p.m. Sept. 20.

The meeting will take place in the board room of the Lewiston-Porter Central School primary building, 4061 Creek Road, Youngstown, according to Arleen K. Kreusch, a corps spokeswoman.

Kreusch said the meeting will involve plans by the corps to clean up chemical waste.

The LOOW site originally encompassed 7,500 acres, but Department of Defense activities occurred on 2,500 acres. The site is now divided into

four sections with different owners — the Town of Lewiston, Chemical Waste Management, Modern Disposal Services Inc. and the federal government.

The government owns the Niagara Falls Storage Site, a 191-acre tract containing radioactive waste from various sources, including the Manhattan Project and the former Simonds Saw and Steel plant in Lockport.

In the early 1940s, the federal government used what is now the CWM site to produce and store the explosive trinitrotoluene (TNT).

The corps has already started removing a TNT waste pipeline and chemical waste pipeline on the CWM, Kreusch said.

In a related move, the corps has begun a 30-day comment period for an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis Report concerning removal of other chemical waste at a drum trench and trash pit on the CWM site at 1550 Balmer Road, Lewiston.

Written comments regarding the

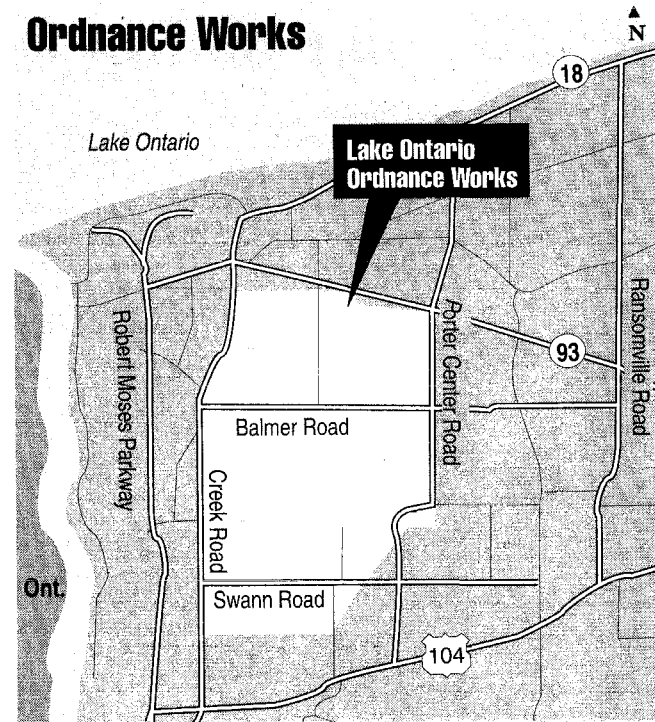
report must be postmarked by Oct. 10, and can be submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers, Public Information Center, 1776 Niagara St., Buffalo, NY 14207. Comments on the drum trench and trash pit will not be accepted at the Sept. 20 meeting.

According to the corps, copies of the Administrative Record File are at the Lewiston Public Library, 305 S. Eighth St., Lewiston; the Youngstown Free Library, 240 Lockport St., Youngstown; and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Public Information Center, 1776 Niagara St., Buffalo.

Kreusch said that only the Niagara Falls Storage Site, which is government owned, contains radioactive residues. It was used to store radioactive residues and wastes from uranium ore processing.

The corps maintains site security, environmental surveillance, and monitoring of the Niagara Falls site under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), according to Kreusch.

Ordnance Works



Niagara Gazette

The corps announced last week that it plans to add the former Simonds Saw and Steel plant in Lockport to its list of FUSRAP sites. When the site

will be added to the program has not been decided, according to Candy Walters, a public affairs specialist for the corps in Washington.

Maziarz checks state role in Simonds site

REPORT: *The closed Lockport plant was featured in a USA Today expose last week.*

By Matthew Winterhalter

Greater Niagara Newspaper

State Sen. George D. Maziarz, R-North Tonawanda, said last week that he contacted the state Department of Environmental Conservation to clarify the state's role in cleaning up the abandoned Simonds plant site in Lockport.

The plant was one of three scrutinized in a series of articles by USA Today. The series reported that the federal government contracted with the former Simonds Saw & Steel Co. to work with radioactive materials in the 1940s and 1950s.

A report prepared for USA Today

by the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research stated that the government and executives at three companies, including Simonds, were aware of the dangers and provided false reassurances of safety to the workers.

The other two companies identified were Electro-Metallurgical in Niagara Falls, where uranium metal was made for eventual use in plutonium production reactors, and the Harshaw Chemical Co. in Cleveland, which produced uranium hexafluoride as part of the Manhattan Project.

Maziarz said he immediately contacted the Department of Environmental Conservation.

"I don't exactly know what role the state is going to play and what role the federal government is going to play," Maziarz said. "My first objective is

going to be to find out exactly what responsibility the state of New York has and what we can do to assist the city and the former employees."



G. Maziarz with the problem.

DeFlippo said he has been working with Edmund P. Sullivan, the Niagara County brownfield coordinator, on trying to get something done with the vacant plant site.

"It's a shame, because that is a site that would be a beautiful location for an industrial park," DeFlippo said.

"Coming off the I-990 there. It would be great. But nobody wants to do anything to clean it up."

DeFlippo said he has seen the reports of illness linked to the site but isn't sure how much of a connection can be made. "A lot of these guys that I read about that worked there died of cancer and stuff like that, but a lot of the older guys that worked there are still alive," he said.

Sullivan said his group isn't actively involved in this particular brownfield sight because of the involvement by the state Department of Environmental Conservation and the federal government.

A brownfield is a site that is abandoned, underused or mothballed, according to Sullivan. "The goal of this program is to identify brownfield sites with reuse potential and to essentially

get them back on the tax rolls."

Sullivan said most of the vacant property is clean of radioactivity. "The main concern is the old plant."

Daniel King, regional hazardous waste remediation engineer with the State DEC in Buffalo, said there are two separate problems at the site — radioactive waste and chemical industrial waste. King is dealing with the chemical waste aspect.

His department is in the process of a site assessment of the former Simonds property by sampling to determine if it is a hazardous waste disposal site. "We're putting the finishing touches on a site assessment report, relative to chemical contamination," he said.

"My guess is we'll probably have it wrapped up at the end of the month," he said. "It will provide the data we have found."