



Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property

Tonawanda, NY

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Buffalo District

Building Strong®

June 2012

Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP)

FUSRAP was initiated in 1974 to identify, investigate, and clean up or control sites throughout the United States that were contaminated by activities related to the Nation's early atomic weapons and energy programs during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. Congress transferred execution of FUSRAP from the U.S. Department of Energy to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1997. When implementing FUSRAP, the Corps follows the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP).

Site Description and History

The Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property consists of two parcels owned by the Town of Tonawanda: the Town of Tonawanda Landfill and the Mudflats. The Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property covers approximately 170 acres in the Town of Tonawanda, Erie County, New York. The Vicinity Property is bordered by a residential area within the City of Tonawanda, a railroad line, Interstate 290 and East Park Drive. A National Grid utility corridor separates the Landfill and Mudflats.

Waste disposal at the landfill by the Town of Tonawanda began during the 1930s and continued through 1989. Records indicate that the landfill was principally used for the disposal of construction and demolition material, yard waste, incinerator ash, and municipal waste.



As the result of a radiological survey performed in 1991 by the Department of Energy, a portion of the Landfill and Mudflats were designated together into FUSRAP as a vicinity property of the Linde FUSRAP Site.

Corps of Engineers Activities

The Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District, completed a Remedial Investigation of the Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property in 2005. This effort was in addition to previous investigations performed by the Department of Energy in the 1990s. During the Remedial Investigation, the Corps sampled and tested soil, surface water, sediment, and groundwater of the vicinity property for uranium, radium, and thorium. Small, isolated locations within the vicinity property were found with levels of uranium, radium and thorium above background levels, similar to radioactive material found at other FUSRAP sites in Tonawanda. A Baseline Risk Assessment was conducted as part of the Remedial Investigation to determine the risk to human health associated with exposure to these radionuclides.

The Baseline Risk Assessment conducted in 2005, using information available at that time, concluded that risks to human health, for the current and reasonable future site uses in both the Landfill and Mudflats, were within the acceptable limits established in the NCP.

A Proposed Plan, covering both the Town of Tonawanda Landfill and Mudflats, was released for public comment in the spring of 2007. The Proposed Plan recommended no action as the Preferred Alternative for both the Landfill and the Mudflats, based on the findings of the 2005 Remedial Investigation and Baseline Risk Assessment.

In response to public comments received on the Proposed Plan, the Corps divided the vicinity property into two Operable Units: the Landfill Operable Unit and the Mudflats Operable Unit. The Corps signed a Record of Decision for the Mudflats Operable Unit of the Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property in September 2008. The Record of Decision states that no action is warranted for the Mudflats Operable Unit because the risks from FUSRAP-related material for all media are within the acceptable risk limits established in the NCP, for the current and reasonable future land use for the site. The Corps agreed to conduct additional sampling in the Landfill Operable Unit to confirm the nature and extent of FUSRAP-related material, and to update the Baseline Risk Assessment for the Landfill Operable Unit based on the results of the additional sampling and other information provided in the public comments on the Proposed Plan.

Current Status

The Corps conducted the additional soil, groundwater, sediment and surface water sampling on the Landfill Operable Unit of the Vicinity Property in 2009 through 2011. Data from this sampling was used to update the Baseline Risk Assessment to ensure that it accurately reflects the potential for human exposure to FUSRAP-related material in the Landfill Operable Unit, given the Landfill's proximity to residential property. The updated Baseline Risk Assessment was completed in the spring of 2012.

The updated Baseline Risk Assessment concludes the following:

- That for the current use of the Landfill Operable Unit, as it is currently configured, risks to human health from potential exposures to FUSRAP-related material are within the acceptable limits established in the NCP.
- If the surface of the landfill is not maintained and is allowed to erode over time, exposing FUSRAP-related material that is currently buried, then risks to trespassers or other users on the site could increase above the NCP acceptable risk range within the 1,000-year evaluation period.

Next Step

Based on the analysis provided in the updated Baseline Risk Assessment the Corps will prepare a Feasibility Study for the Landfill Operable Unit. The Feasibility Study will develop and evaluate remedial alternatives which would be appropriate to mitigate potential future unacceptable risks from exposure to the buried FUSRAP-related material in the Landfill Operable Unit

Administrative Record File

The Administrative Record File for the Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property contains CERCLA-related documentation used in the decision-making process for the site. Reports and documents in the Administrative Record File may be viewed at the following locations:

US Army Corps of Engineers
1776 Niagara Street
Buffalo, New York 14207 (by appointment only)

Tonawanda Public Library
333 Main Street
Tonawanda, New York 14150

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – BUFFALO DISTRICT FUSRAP TEAM

1776 NIAGARA STREET, BUFFALO, N.Y. 14207

Phone: 800-833-6390 (Option 4)

Email: fusrap@usace.army.mil

Website: www.lrb.usace.army.mil/fusrap/landfill/index.htm