



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
St. Louis District

Summary of Activities at the

ST LOUIS NORTH COUNTY SITE FEASIBILITY STUDY



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), St. Louis District, is conducting a cleanup program for the St. Louis North County Site. The Site contains soils primarily contaminated with radium, thorium, and uranium as a result of federal defense activities performed under contract with the Manhattan Engineering District and the Atomic Energy Commission during the nation's early atomic energy program in the 1940s and 50s.

On May 1, 2003, The USACE issued a Feasibility Study identifying and evaluating six alternatives for the North County Site. Public comment and regulatory review will help determine the remedy selected for the site. The USACE will respond to all significant comments in the North County Record of Decision, which will identify the final remedy for the site based in part upon public comments received during the 30-day review period.

The USACE encourages private citizens to participate fully in the cleanup program.

To learn more about the St. Louis North County Site or to inquire about public involvement opportunities, contact

(314) 260-3905

Or write

St. Louis District, Corps of Engineers
FUSRAP Project Office
8945 Latty Avenue, Berkeley, MO 63134

BACKGROUND

Under contracts with the Manhattan Engineer District and Atomic Energy Commission (MED/AEC), the Mallinckrodt Chemical Plant extracted uranium from ore at the St. Louis Downtown Site (SLDS) in St. Louis, Missouri from 1942 to 1957. During this time and until 1967, radioactive process byproducts were stored at a property adjacent to the Lambert-St. Louis International Airport, which is now referred to as the St. Louis Airport Site (SLAPS). In 1966, the SLAPS wastes were purchased, moved, and stored at a property on Latty Avenue, which became known as the Hazelwood Interim Storage Site (HISS) and Futura property. During this move, improper handling, transport and storage of the contamination spread the materials along haul routes and to adjacent properties forming the SLAPS and Latty Avenue Vicinity Properties (VPs). Today these sites, including impacted areas along Coldwater Creek, make up the North County Site.

On October 4, 1989, SLAPS, HISS and Futura were added to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Priorities List (NPL). In 1997, Congress directed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to oversee the cleanup of all areas within the North County Site under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP).

CONTAMINANTS OF CONCERN

The radioactive contaminants of concern at the North County Site consist primarily of radium, thorium, and uranium. Investigations conducted to date indicate that these contaminants exist at levels requiring action for soils and sediments at the North County Site. Usable groundwater does not appear to be impacted.

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1 – No Action

This alternative includes no further excavation for the North County Site. It is required by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) to act as a baseline alternative for comparison with other alternatives. The cost of Alternative 1 is \$1.5 million over a 30-year period because of the cost to conduct recurrent 5-year reviews.

Alternative 2 – Partial Excavation and Capping at SLAPS and HISS/Futura
Alternative 2 includes excavation of impacted soils from the VPs for out-of-state disposal. SLAPS and HISS/Futura would be capped with stone and clean

Alternative 1

No Action

Leave site as is with periodic environmental monitoring.

Cost: \$1.5 million

Alternative 2

Partial Excavation and Capping at SLAPS and HISS

Excavate soil from the VPs and dispose out-of-state. Cap SLAPS and HISS and use institutional controls to limit access to contaminated areas.

Cost: \$205 million

Alternative 3

Partial Excavation and Treatment

Excavate impacted soils from VPs and HISS, then consolidate and treat at SLAPS. Use institutional controls to limit access to contaminated areas.

Cost: \$284 million

Alternative 4

Institutional Controls

Use institutional controls such as deed notices, land use restrictions, and zoning restrictions to limit future land use at SLAPS, HISS, and the VPs.

Cost: \$129 million

Alternative 5

Excavation with Institutional Controls Under Roads, Bridges, Railroads, and Other Permanent Structures

Remove contamination to allow unrestricted use at all sites. Control access under roads, bridges, railroads, and other permanent structures.

Cost: \$223 million

Alternative 6

Excavation at all Properties

Excavate impacted soils from all locations, regardless of accessibility, for out-of-state disposal.

Cost: \$286 million

soil. Institutional controls (e.g. zoning restrictions, etc.) would be used to restrict future land use at SLAPS, HISS/Futura and Coldwater Creek and to control soils beneath roads, bridges, railroads, and other permanent structures. The total cost is \$205 million.

Alternative 3 – Partial Excavation and Treatment at SLAPS

This alternative includes excavation of impacted soils and sediments from HISS/Futura, the VPs and Coldwater Creek. The excavated soils would be consolidated at SLAPS for treatment (soil sorting and washing). Soils that meet supplemental standards would be used as backfill at SLAPS then covered with clean soils. Soils not meeting supplemental standards would be disposed of out-of-state. Institutional controls (e.g. zoning restrictions, etc.) would be used to restrict future land use at SLAPS and to control soils beneath roads, bridges, railroads, and other permanent structures. The total cost is \$284 million.

Alternative 4 – Institutional Controls (No Further Excavation)

Alternative 4 consists of limiting the future land use at SLAPS, HISS/Futura, VPs, Coldwater Creek and controlling soils beneath roads, bridges, railroads, and other permanent structures using institutional controls (e.g. deed notices, land use restrictions, and zoning restrictions). Institutional controls and site maintenance would be implemented to prevent unacceptable exposures to site contamination. The total cost is \$129 million.

Alternative 5 – Excavation with Institutional Controls Under Roads, Bridges, Railroads, and Other Permanent Structures

This alternative uses a combination of excavation with out-of-state disposal for accessible soils. Institutional controls (e.g. zoning restrictions, etc.) would be implemented to control soils under roads, bridges, railroads, and other permanent structures. The total cost is \$223 million.

Alternative 6 – Excavation at all Properties

Alternative 6 includes excavation of impacted soils from all locations, regardless of accessibility, for out-of-state disposal so that no institutional controls are required. All difficult-to-access soils under roads, bridges, railroads, and other permanent structures would be excavated under this alternative. The total cost is \$286 million.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The USACE encourages public input to ensure the remedy selected for the St. Louis North County Site meets the needs of the local community and is an effective solution to the problem. Based on available information, the Corps of Engineers' preferred alternative is Alternative 5, Excavation with Institutional Controls Under Roads, Bridges, Railroads and Other Permanent Structures. Although Alternative 5 is preferred at the present time, public comments are welcome on all alternatives.

Written comments may be submitted to the USACE, at any time during the 30-day period. Oral comments will be recorded during the May 29, 2003 public meeting. The USACE will respond to all significant comments and will consider these comments when working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to select a final remedy. The final remedy will be outlined in the Record of Decision, which will be submitted to EPA later in 2003.