



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

Summary of Activities at the **ST LOUIS NORTH COUNTY SITE OVERVIEW**



"Gateway to Excellence"

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.

The USACE issued a Feasibility Study identifying and evaluating alternatives for cleaning up the North County Site as well as a Proposed Plan detailing the preferred cleanup alternative on May 1, 2003. The Plan identifies **Alternative 5, Excavation with Institutional Controls Under Roads, Bridges, Railroads, and Other Permanent Structures**, as the USACE's preferred remedy 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. The processing of uranium left radioactive contamination at the site. A Record of Decision (ROD), which was developed to address the contamination in accessible soils and groundwater at SLDS based upon public input, was signed in 1998.

From 1946 until 1967, radioactive process byproducts were stored on 21.7-acres of 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. The eastern part of this property later became known as the Hazelwood Interim Storage Site (HISS), while the western part became known as Futura. 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.

The North County Site is part of the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), a program managed by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) until 1997. On October 4, 1989, Congress added SLAPS, HISS and Futura to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Priorities List (NPL). In 1990, the EPA and DOE negotiated a Federal Facilities Agreement, which described the process that would be used to cleanup MED/AEC contamination in St. Louis. At the direction of Congress, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) became responsible for the cleanup of FUSRAP sites in 1997.

In accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, the USACE has based their approach to cleaning up the North County Site on data and findings contained within six key documents: the Remedial Investigation, the Baseline Risk Assessment, the Ecological Risk Assessment, SLAPS & HISS Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analyses (EE/CAs), and the Feasibility Study. These documents are available to the public through the North County Administrative Record File, which is maintained at both the FUSRAP Project Office and the City of St. Louis Public Library. A Proposed Plan identifying the USACE's preferred

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

remedy for site cleanup is also available for review at both locations. The final cleanup remedy will be outlined in the Record of Decision, which will be submitted to the EPA and Missouri Department of Natural Resources later this year.

EARLY REMOVAL ACTIVITIES

While developing a comprehensive cleanup strategy for the North County Site, DOE developed interim actions to minimize exposure to contaminated materials. The first of these actions took place in 1985 when DOE built a retaining wall at SLAPS along the bank of Coldwater Creek to combat erosion. In 1997, the DOE removed approximately 5,100 cubic yards of contaminated material from the west end of SLAPS next to the retaining wall and shipped it to an out-of-state disposal facility.

Under the 1998 SLAPS EE/CA, the USACE began efforts to stabilize SLAPS and constructed a sedimentation basin to limit the migration of contamination from SLAPS via stormwater runoff. A rail spur was also installed on SLAPS in 1998 to provide for shipment of contaminated materials removed. Since 1998, an estimated 280,000 cubic yards of contaminated soils from the northern and eastern portions of SLAPS have been removed. Additional removals are ongoing. To date, all material has been shipped to out-of-state disposal facilities.

At HISS, the USACE removed storage piles under the 1998 HISS EE/CA. Before the pile removal began, a rail spur was built along the eastern boundary of HISS to allow shipment directly from the site. Removal of the storage piles began in March 2000 and was completed about 18 months later. Nearly 58,000 cubic yards were removed.

Removal actions have also been conducted at SLAPS and Latty Avenue VPs. Between 1995 and 1997, DOE excavated contaminated soils from the frontages of 30 properties along Hazelwood Boulevard, Latty Avenue and Frost Avenue.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The USACE encourages public input to ensure the remedy selected for the North County Site meets the needs of the local community and is an effective solution to the problem.

Comments on the proposed alternatives will be accepted by the USACE for 30 days after the Feasibility Study and Proposed Plan are issued, unless a request for an extension is received. Verbal comments will be recorded during the May 29, 2003 public meeting at the Hazelwood Civic Center – East. Written comments may be submitted at anytime during the 30-day comment period, which currently ends May 30, 2003. The USACE will respond to all significant comments in the North County Record of Decision and will consider these comments when working with EPA to make a final decision. Interested parties should regularly check the FUSRAP website for current information at www.mvs.usace.army.mil/engr/fusrap/home2.htm.