

Information Repositories

The final five-year review report, once available, will be posted to the Corps' SLDA Project website at:

<https://www.lrp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Planning-Programs-Project-Management/Key-Projects/Shallow-Land-Disposal-Area/>

The administrative record file for the SLDA Project is available for review at the Apollo Memorial Library, located at 219 North Pennsylvania Ave, Apollo, PA 15613



Contact Information

We encourage you to visit the SDLA Project website or contact us if you have questions or would like additional information. Please share this newsletter with a friend and ask them to contact us if they would like to be added to our electronic mailing list.

SLDA Project Website: <https://www.lrp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Planning-Programs-Project-Management/Key-Projects/Shallow-Land-Disposal-Area/>

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US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program SLDA Project News

July 2021

The Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) was initiated in 1974 to identify, investigate, and clean up or control sites throughout the United States that were contaminated as a result of Manhattan Engineer District (MED) or early Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) activities. Both the MED and the AEC were predecessors of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Congress transferred administration and execution of FUSRAP cleanups from the DOE to the Corps of Engineers in October 1997. The Corps continues to address sites the DOE began, sites that were referred to the Corps by the DOE Office of Legacy Management (LM) under a Corps of Engineers/DOE Memorandum of Understanding, including the Shallow Land Disposal Area (SLDA) that was added to the program by Congress.

When executing FUSRAP, the Corps of Engineers follows the framework of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980, as amended, and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP). Each site may have multiple operable units (OUs), each in a different phase of the CERCLA process.

Dear Interested Citizen,

In accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), this newsletter announces the start of a five-year review of the selected remedy (excavation, treatment, and off-site disposal of contaminated soil and waste) for the Shallow Land Disposal Area (SLDA) FUSRAP Site.

The purpose of the CERCLA five-year review is to evaluate the effectiveness and protectiveness of the selected remedy identified in the Record of Decision (ROD), as amended, for the SLDA Site issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Pittsburgh District.

You can learn more about the SLDA Site history and the CERCLA five-year review process inside this newsletter.

Please contact us if you have additional questions; our contact information is on the last page of this newsletter.

Respectfully,
The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Pittsburgh District





Site Description and History

The SLDA is a 44-acre site located in the Borough of Leechburg, Armstrong County, Pennsylvania within the Pittsburgh District of the Lakes and Rivers Division of the USACE. The site includes ten trenches containing chemicals and radiological impacted/ waste and soil. The estimated quantities of contaminated soils and waste in the trenches range from 23,500 to 36,000 cubic yards. The Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corporation (predecessor of current owner BWX Technologies (BWXT)) previously conducted the disposals according to Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) regulations. Uranium and thorium contaminated wastes consisting of process wastes; equipment, scrap, and trash from the nearby Apollo nuclear fuel fabrication facility were disposed of in the SLDA trenches between 1961 and 1970. The uranium in the trenches is present at various levels of enrichment from highly depleted to highly enriched. Americium and plutonium, whose presence is attributed to storage of equipment used in adjoining Parks Facility, have been detected in surface soils in the vicinity of Trench 10.

The existence of these materials in their current location coupled with completed pathways for exposure to a future hypothetical subsistence farmer utilizing the land creates an unacceptable risk. This unacceptable risk is the basis for remedial action at SLDA.

Corps Activities

In 2002, under Section 8143, Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2002, P. L. 107-117, Congress directed the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, to clean up radioactive waste at the SLDA Site under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP). The Corps of Engineers is the lead agency for this cleanup under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), and will accomplish the cleanup consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Corps of Engineers and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), dated July 5, 2001.

In September of 2007 USACE issued a Record of Decision (ROD) for the SLDA site, and initial excavation began in August 2011. Between August and September of 2011, approximately 3,300 tons of radiologically contaminated soil and debris were excavated, and subsequently disposed off-site. Excavation was suspended in September 2011 due to the discovery of complex materials of an unusual radiological quantity that were difficult to characterize. This resulted in the need for fundamental changes to site operations, project work plans, waste disposal options, and site infrastructure. These changes formed the basis for the SLDA ROD Amendment, issued in December 2015.

In April 2017, the Army Corps awarded up to a \$350-million remediation services contract to Jacobs Technology Inc from Tullahoma, TN for the clean-up of radioactive waste at the Shallow Land Disposal Area. Unsuccessful bidders subsequently challenged the agency's contract award and filed protests with the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The GAO dismissed the protests in August 2017 after the Army Corps agreed to re-evaluate the proposals. In September 2018, the Army Corps confirmed their original selection and a Notice-To-Proceed was issued to Jacobs in February 2019. Remediation design plans and procedures are currently being developed in anticipation of starting site infrastructure improvements in 2023.

Five-Year Review

The purpose of a five-year review is to evaluate the implementation and performance of a remedial action in order to determine if the remedy is or will be protective of human health and the environment. Five-year reviews are performed in a manner consistent with CERCLA and the NCP (40 CFR 300) until hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants no longer remain on-site at levels that do not allow for unlimited use and unrestricted exposure. Unlimited use and unrestricted exposure means that there will be no restrictions on the potential use of land or other natural resources.

Review Process

The CERCLA five-year review process integrates information taken from decision documents and operational data with the experiences of those responsible for and affected by actions at the site. There are six components to the process:

- 1. Community Notification** - Community involvement activities during the review will include notifying the community that the five-year review will be conducted, notifying the community that the five-year review has been completed, and providing the results of the review to the local site repository (the project website).
- 2. Documents Review** - All relevant documents and data will be reviewed to obtain information to assess performance of the response action. Various documents will be reviewed to obtain the necessary information, including those for remedy decisions (e.g., record of decision), site investigations, remedial design and construction, and remedy performance.
- 3. Data Review and Analysis** - Sampling and monitoring plans and results will be reviewed from monitoring activities, operation and maintenance (O&M) reports or other documentation of remedy performance. The data contained in these reports form the primary basis for the technical analyses and for the subsequent protectiveness determination.

4. Site Inspection - A site inspection will be conducted to gather information about the site's current status and to visually confirm and document the conditions of the remedy, the site, and the surrounding area.

5. Interviews - If necessary, interviews will be conducted to provide additional information about the site's status and/or identify remedy issues. Individuals who may be interviewed include: the site manager; site personnel; federal, state, and local regulatory authorities; and people who live or work near the site.

6. Protectiveness Determination - The purpose of a five-year review is to determine whether the remedy at a site is, or upon completion will be, protective of human health and the environment. The technical assessment of the remedy will examine three questions:

- Will the selected remedy function as intended?
- Are the exposure assumptions, toxicity data, cleanup levels, and the remedial action objectives still valid?
- Has any other information come to light that could call into question the protectiveness of the selected remedy?

These questions provide a framework for organizing and evaluating data and ensure that all relevant issues are considered when determining the protectiveness of the remedy.

Together, these components will be used to assess the selected remedy's performance, and, ultimately, to determine the protectiveness of that remedy.

Schedule for the Five-Year-Review

This newsletter represents the initial community notification step in the CERCLA five-year review process. The overall process will incorporate the steps described above and is estimated to be completed in 2022. A final report presenting the results of the five-year review will be prepared and placed on the site website for public availability.

Community Participation

In addition to notifying the public of the CERCLA five-year review activities, the Corps may conduct surveys of residents, nearby businesses, public officials, site personnel, school officials, public interest groups, and other stakeholders, if an interest is expressed. If you are interested in completing a survey/questionnaire, please email CELRP-PA@usace.army.mil or call (412) 395-7500 by August 31, 2021.