Rolling Knolls Community Advisory Group meeting April 1, 2019 minutes

Prepared by Sally Rubin, CAG chair

Present on behalf of EPA: Pat Seppi, Stephanie Vaughn, Betsy Donovan, Rachel Griffith. Present from TASC: Kirby Webster, Terry Baguski from Skeo.

Stephanie presented an overview of the Remedial Investigation (RI) and Risk Assessments and how they work together to get to the Feasibility Study (FS).

The FS should hopefully be released early summer 2019.

The RI defines the physical characteristics of the site; the nature and extent of contamination. The RI was conducted by the PRPs (Primary Responsible Parties), with EPA oversight. It was also reviewed by the DEP and Fish and Wildlife Service.

The field work for the RI was conducted from 2007-2015.

The topography is relatively flat with flooding. The soil is 25’ deep. Underneath that is a thick layer of clay. Groundwater is 2.5’ down. There are three ponds on site. Loantaka and Black Brook border the site. The site is 170 acres (down from the original 200 acres once the RI was complete). 110 acres are non-wetlands. There is habitat for six threatened and endangered species. Only one species was found: blue spotted salamanders.

57 test pits were dug down to “native” soil. Some random test pits for good representation, some targeted where there was surface debris, and some at edges to determine boundaries. 37 with debris and 3 with industrial waste.

The maximum depth of contamination is 18’.

The test pits were dug down until they hit clay. Only three test pits found contamination.

Where there were points of interest- what was seen on the surface- they did more investigation. 18 sites

Borings were done to see how deep the clay layer is.

150 soil samples were dug on the landfill, 35 other locations on the site, and 22 for background data.

There was no plume of groundwater contamination. Limited to areas near the soil contamination.

47 surface water samples were taken. Loantaka and Black Brook are not impacted.

Investigation was focused on the surface because that’s where the exposure is. There is no risk of exposure deeper down. There were some deeper samples taken. Down gradient wells were sampled no contamination found. Soil gas was collected at the hunt club – was clean.

An ultimate re-use evaluation was done in 2017 to determine a reasonably anticipated future use.

An assumption has been made that the future use will be passive recreation, which is equivalent to “trespassing”.

Risk assessments showed that cancer risks do not exceed acceptable levels.

Non-cancer health hazards slightly exceed acceptable levels, limited in extent and severity.

The primary risks are from PCBs and lead. And some arsenic as well.

Ecological risks are slight to vermivorous birds and mammals from PCBs and metals.

Addressing health risks also addresses the ecological risks.

Ultimate use of the private property: it could be owned by the Refuge or Chatham Township. It Chatham Township acquired it and wanted to use it for active recreation, the site would have to be re-evaluated.

SUPERFUND 101

Superfund law provides emergency response, liability for PRPs, obtaining funding for clean-ups, gathering information and analysis, and clean-ups.

The goals are to protect human health and the environment and make the responsible parties pay for the clean-up. This does not mean the site will be made pristine, just that it will be free from risk to human health.

Involving the community is a goal, as well as returning the property to a productive use. The law is limited to cleaning hazardous substances.

Stages of the process

1. Assessment- discovery of contamination and identifying the PRPS. Preliminary assessment includes a review of existing information, a site inspection, hazard ranking of amount and toxicity of contamination and determination whether contamination is spreading. It includes a public health assessment for possible exposures. In 2006, there was no apparent public health hazard.
2. Characterization- Remedial Investigation and risk assessments. There is an unacceptable risk if contaminants exist at a certain level with an exposure pathway to people, animals, or the ecosystem.

There are nine criteria for remedy

Must meet:

protect human health and the environment

comply with state and federal regulations

balance:

long term effectiveness

reduce toxicity

short term effectiveness (for workers, etc.)

implementability

cost

EPA selects a remedy then must:

Have state acceptance

Community acceptance

The remedy can be modified based on state and/or community input.

Then a proposed plan is written with a preferred remedy. The EPA gathers public input and responds.

1. Selection of Remedy- Record of Decision. Need PRP agreement or enforced through court ordered consent decree. Best remedies are negotiated throughout the process.
2. Clean up- Remedial decision with engineering followed by remedial action.
3. Post construction- Includes operations and maintenance, institutional controls (restrictions), five year reviews, and potential removal from National Priorities List.
4. Plan for continued monitoring even if removed from list.