Rolling Knolls summary

Rolling Knolls Superfund Landfill is a 200 acre site in Chatham township. It is a former landfill which operated from the mid 1930s through the late 1960s. Waste included household garbage, construction and demolition debris, septic waste, scrap metal and industrial waste. Pesticides were also applied on the site.

35 acres of the landfill are on the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in the Wilderness area. Parts of the landfill are wetlands and flood hazard areas. The wilderness area and landfill provide habitat for native mammals, fish, amphibians, and reptiles, including endangered bog turtles, Indiana bats, and blue spotted salamanders.

Landfill operations contaminated soil, sediment, surface water and ground water. After many years of investigation, the site was placed on the National Priorities list and labeled a Superfund in 2003. One of the primary drivers for placing the site on the list was its proximity to a National Wildlife Refuge.

Establishing Rolling Knolls as a Superfund allows EPA to clean up the site, including requiring the parties responsible for its contamination to pay for and perform the clean up. Superfund law goals are to

Protect human health and the environment by cleaning up polluted sites

Make responsible parties pay for the clean up work

Involve communities in the process

Return sites to productive use.

EPA has now identified the potential responsible parties, called PRPs, and has conducted a remedial investigation through soil and water sampling and a risk assessment. A feasibility study outlining 5 potential clean up alternatives is about to be released, specifying a preference for one of the alternatives.

The 5 alternatives are currently:

1. No action
2. Engineering and institutional controls (such as fencing, signage, and land use restrictions)

3. Capping selected areas to reduce overall risk posed by the site, capping an/or excavating additional areas that exceed allowances in soil to further reduce risk and/or to prevent impacts to ground water, and engineering and institutional controls
4. Excavation and off site disposal of selected areas to reduce overall risk, capping and/or excavation of additional areas that exceed allowances in soil to further reduce risk and/or to prevent impacts to groundwater, and engineering and institutional controls
5. Capping of the approximately 140 acre landfill area, capping and/or excavation of additional areas that exceed allowances to further reduce risk and/or to prevent impacts to ground water, and engineering and institutional controls.

Anticipated costs for the alternatives are:

1. 0
2. $761,000
3. $16,525,000-$21,099,000
4. $32,831,000 -$57,792,000
5. $55,430,000

EPA has determined that groundwater impacts will not be addressed in this Feasibility Study and will be monitored and addressed later.

EPA presented the potential alternatives at public meetings in June, 2018. In response, this Community Advisory Group was formed in September, 2018. The CAG purpose is to provide a public forum for the community to present and discuss their needs and concerns and to offer input to EPA in the clean up process. The CAG applied for and received a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) from the EPA to hire a consultant to assist with document review and analysis. After putting out a request for proposals, the CAG interviewed 5 potential consultants and hired GEI who will present a summary of their review to date.

The Department of Interior explained that their view is that all landfill waste at the landfill site needed to be capped consistent with EPA's presumed Superfund

remedy for landfills to protect the ecologically sensitive natural resources and recreational users of the federally protected wilderness area of the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. DOI hired a consultant to evaluate the remedial investigation, baseline human health and ecological risk assessments and the draft feasibility study. This assessment concludes that the landfill waste poses unacceptable risks to wildlife and recreational users at the GSNWR and that significant areas of the refuge impacted by the landfill waste were not evaluated. DOI is in the initial stages of performing a data gap investigation on the Refuge portion of the landfill.