

THE BUFFALO NEWS

Editorial: Public vigilance in Huntley project is good for community

By News Editorial Board | Published March 27, 2018

There is, at this point, no reason to believe that the decommissioning, closure and potential sale of the former Huntley Generating Station won't be handled appropriately and professionally. Nevertheless, it is all to the good that community watchdogs are on guard, insisting on thorough and appropriate standards for the transition. Their involvement will bolster public confidence in what needs to be an honest and open process.

The Huntley Plant was closed two years ago and leaves behind a toxic residue from a century of coal-fired power generation. Environmental advocates say that likely includes arsenic, cadmium, chromium, mercury and other toxins contained in the coal piles, ash ponds and fly ash landfill that remain on the site. Those poisons could leach into the soil, the ground water and the Niagara River, they say, if the site isn't properly remediated.

Maybe in some parts of the country, no one would have to worry that corners would be cut in a bid to save time and money. But the people of Western New York have learned that the price of inattentiveness can be high: Think Love Canal, Tonawanda Coke, the Buffalo River, West Valley and, as the advocates who demonstrated on Monday noted, the old Bethlehem Steel site in Lackawanna which, like the Huntley plant, is hard on the waterfront.

It's important for everyone concerned to undertake the Huntley project in a way that both protects and includes the public whose members will have little choice but to live with the results.

Thus far, the project seems to be unfolding appropriately. Officials of NRG Energy, which owns the plant, say they are developing a plan in conjunction with the state Department of Environmental Conservation. They pledged that the decommissioning will comply with federal and state laws and regulations. "We will also continue to keep community leaders informed as we make progress on both fronts," company spokesman David Gaier said in a statement.

That's encouraging, but it is also important for advocates to be vocal and specific about their concerns. For example, the executive director of the Clean Air Coalition of Western New York wants a detailed list of the toxic chemical that remain on the site because, she said, "without it, we can't even determine the next course of action." That, surely, is a reasonable request springing from a legitimate concern.

Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, meanwhile, favors remediation and reuse of the site, but says planning must focus on protecting the environment, public access and water quality. "Restoration and reuse of this site must take into consideration the Niagara River's critical role in providing drinking water to communities in Western New York," the Waterkeeper's executive director, Jill Jedlicka, said in a statement.

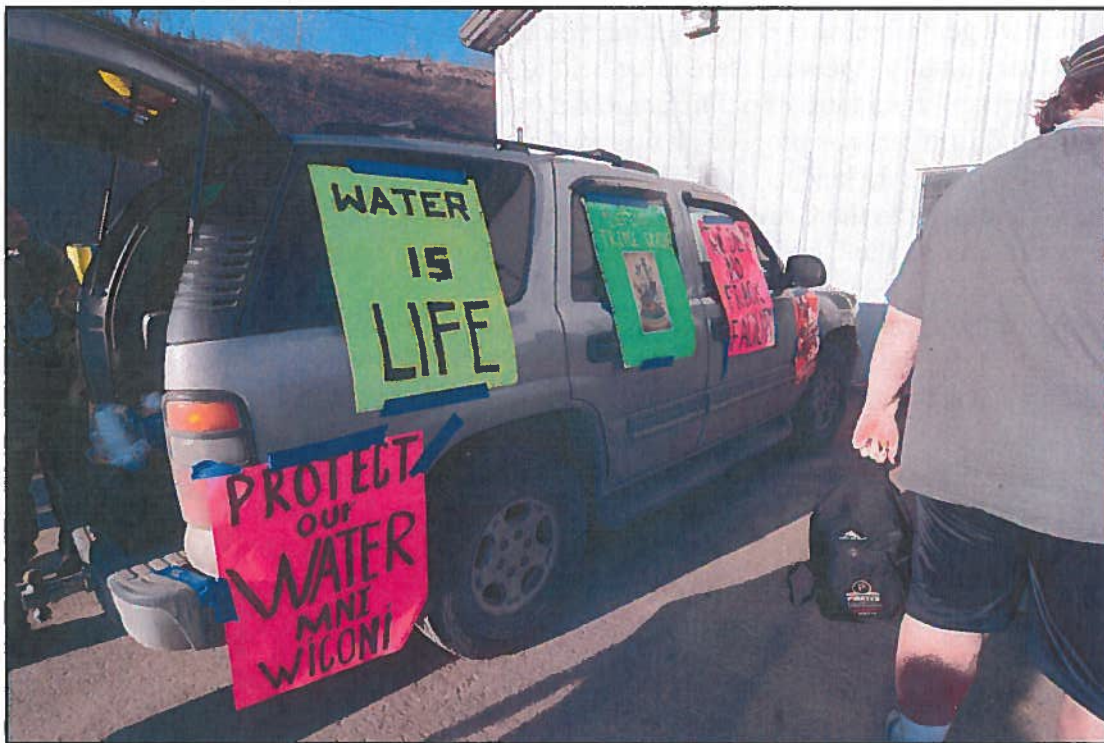
Others expressed their own concerns. Cheryl Hughes, a Ken-Ton science teacher, simply wants to know the plan. A student, Evan Haeick, said the students at Kenmore East High School "won't rest until a solution that is economically and environmentally friendly is found."

Maybe this vigilance will turn out to have been unnecessary. Maybe because of it, the process will turn out better than it would have otherwise. Either way, their influence is welcome.

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

Heated CAMA meeting drawn to close following outburst over Epiphany project

By BOB CLARK, Olean Times Herald



A van covered in signs protesting \$1 million Epiphany Allegheny LLC Hydraulic fracturing wastewater treatment facility in Eulalia Township sits in front of the Coudersport borough garage Monday.

COUDERSPORT, Pa. — An occasionally heated discussion ended in disarray Monday evening, as the Coudersport Area Municipal Authority closed its public meeting after almost two hours of comments on a proposed hydraulic fracturing wastewater treatment plant in Eulalia Township.

Around 100 people attended Monday's meeting, which stretched for almost two hours and consisted solely of public comments. Thirty-eight people signed up to speak, with several leaving before their turn was called.

The meeting was called to a break by Chairman Bill Krog following a dispute over order of commenters with Joshua Pribanic, a documentary filmmaker who has been critical of fracking in general, as well as the

proposed \$1 million Epiphany Allegheny LLC project to use a two-step process to purify the waste before returning it to wells for reuse or to CAMA for final treatment and discharge into the Allegheny River.

Pribanic said that, as the last person to sign the sign-up sheet, he should go last, Krog said that, as chairman, he has the right to set the order, and if Pribanic did not want to speak when offered the floor, he would not speak.

"So you're going to deny me my right to speak?" Pribanic said.

"You were given the right to speak," Krog said.

Several audience members began chanting "Let him speak," with Krog putting the meeting into a break as a response.

Almost immediately, a man entered the rear of the packed hall shouting obscenities at the board, accusing them of lying to the community. At that point, Krog adjourned the meeting.

"This is what we get for being open and letting you talk," Krog said. "We are done."

Krog noted that, initially, speakers were to be held to a 2-minute limit, but the limit was not often enforced. The normal limit of 15 minutes of public comment overall was also lifted. Epiphany Water Solutions, a Pittsburgh-based firm that has proposed a wastewater treatment facility near the borough sewage treatment plant on Eulalia Township land to handle wastewater from the hydraulic fracturing process for natural gas wells, signed a lease with the CAMA in 2017 for land adjacent to the existing sewage plant. The water, once purified, would head to the CAMA wastewater treatment plant, which empties into the Allegheny River.

The majority of the speakers were enrolled members of the Seneca Nation of Indians, whose Allegany Reservation straddles the river in Cattaraugus County, N.Y. The Nation sponsored a bus from Salamanca, which brought several dozen attendees. The majority came by car, however.

Seneca President Todd Gates said he is skeptical of promises of economic improvement and negligible risk. "We've been sold a bill of goods before," Gates said, noting the loss of territory from the construction of the Kinzua Dam and from **leaking radioactive waste from the West Valley Demonstration Project into Cattaraugus Creek**. "You can see the Senecas' distrust of outside government authority."

Epiphany Water Solutions, a Pittsburgh-based firm that has proposed a wastewater treatment facility near the borough sewage treatment plant on Eulalia Township land to handle wastewater from the hydraulic fracturing process for natural gas wells, signed a lease with the CAMA in 2017 for land adjacent to the existing sewage plant. The water, once purified, would head to the CAMA wastewater treatment plant, which empties into the Allegheny River.

Scoping meeting held on West Valley nuclear site

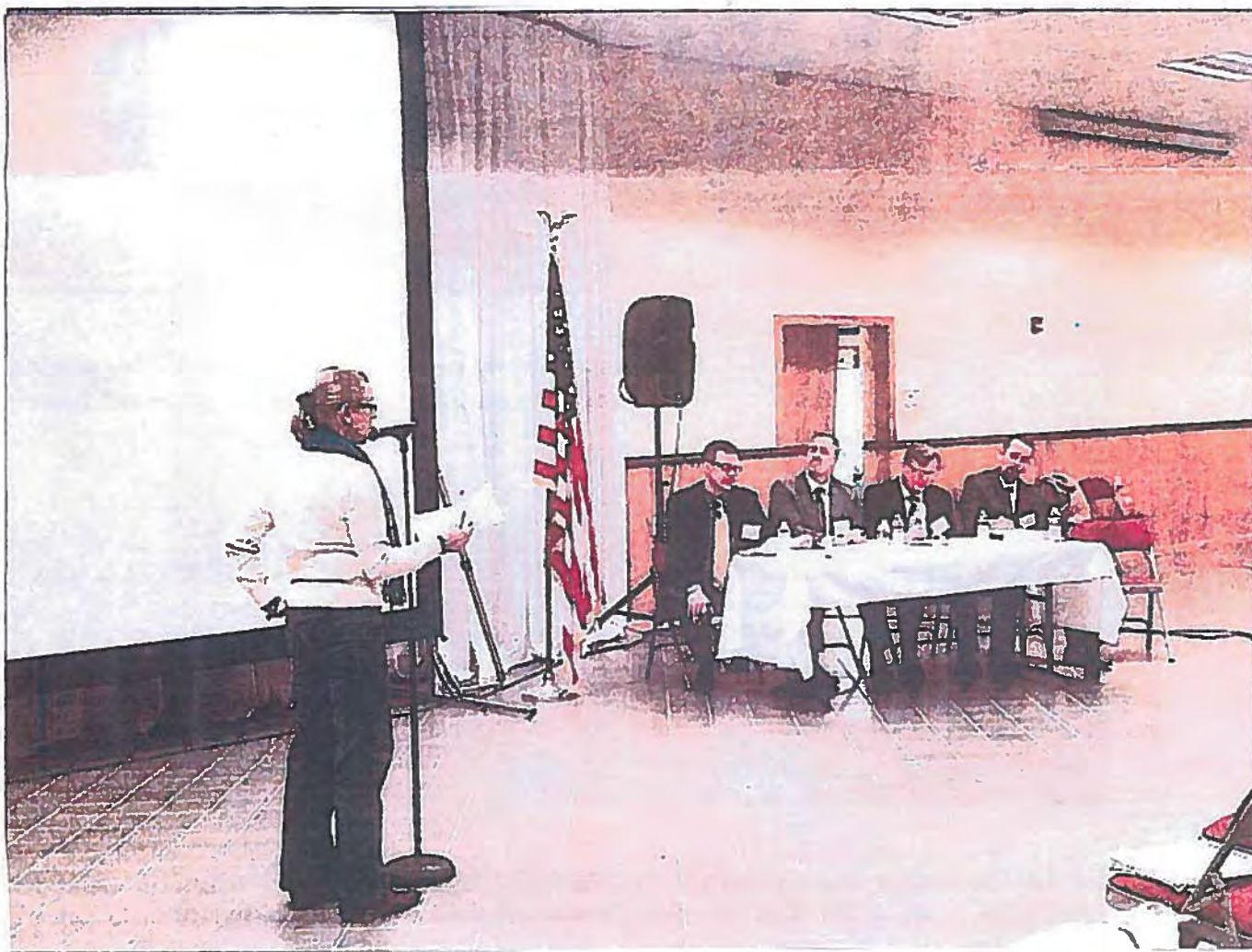


Photo by Max Borsuk

Lia Oprea speaks to DOE and NYSERDA representatives.

Max Borsuk
Staff Reporter

As work continues and decisions need to be made on the future of the Western New York Nuclear Service Center in West Valley, representatives from the United States Department of Energy and the New York State Energy Research and Development Agency held a meeting on March 19 in West Valley to get input on the scoping process.

NYSERDA West Valley Program Director Paul Bembia, West Valley Demonstration Project Director Brian Bower, DOE Document Manager Martin Krentz and NYSERDA Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Manager Lee Gordon presented information on the West Valley site, the scoping and SEIS process and the alternative decommissioning actions proposed for phase two of the project.

The DOE and NYSERDA determined a supplemental environmental impact statement would help in the process, which requires public input on environmental issues and alternatives as they move on to phase two of the decommissioning and decontamination of the West Valley Nuclear Site.

During phase one, the process included facility disposition and soil remediation. Phase two would cover the facilities and areas remaining after phase one including the waste

tank farm, U.S. Regulatory Commission licensed disposal area, state-licensed disposal area, construction and demolition debris landfill, cesium prong, contaminated stream sediments and more.

The SEIS will focus on the purpose and need with-in phase two of decommissioning and decontamination, description of the affected environment from different aspects including geology and soils, water resources, human health and safety, land use, analysis and summaries of the proposed decommissioning alternative actions, description of recommended best practices and identifying the preferred alternative.

Four phase two decommissioning alternatives are to be considered within the

SEIS. The no-action alternative would consist of no further decommissioning after the completion of phase one with management of the site facilities. The sitewide removal alternative would remove site facilities along with contaminated soil, sediment and groundwater. The waste would be packaged up and shipped off site for disposal once a disposal location is available and would be stored on site until shipped. The site wide close-in-place alternative would close most of the phase two facilities in place with management of major facilities and contamination along with

**See "NYSERDA"
on page 2**

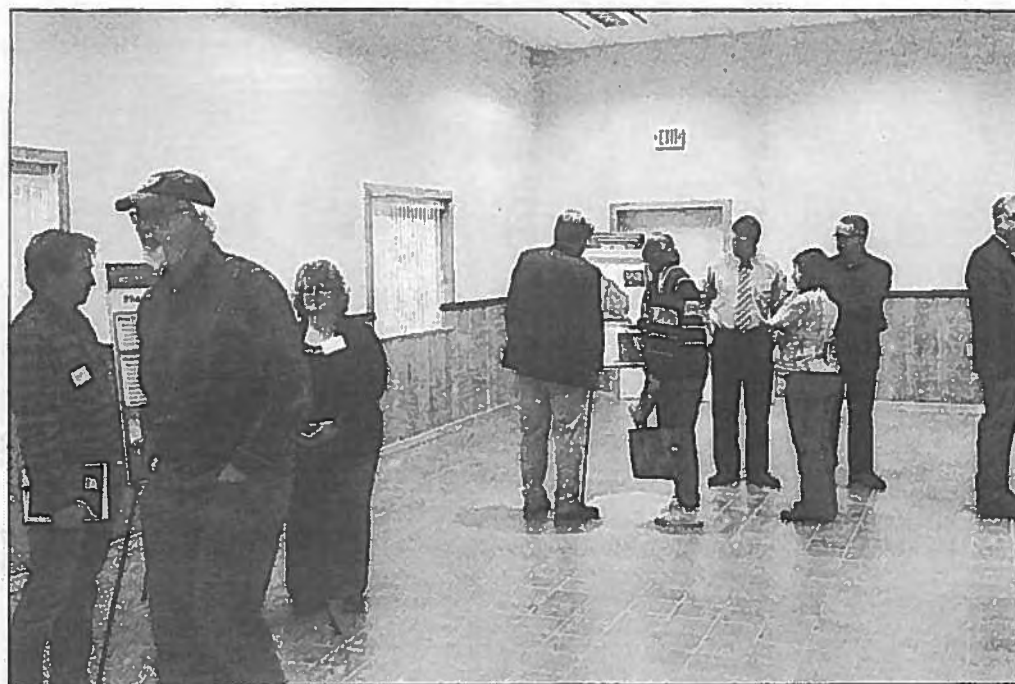


Photo by Max Borsul

Residents ask questions and view posters for the West Valley nuclear site, phases of work and the supplemental environmental impact statement.

isolation of facilities with certain radiation with barriers and structures. The hybrid alternative would be a combination of elements from other alternatives.

Comments for scoping will be taken until April 23 with any comments after to be considered to the extent practicable. Those interested in commenting can do so at SEISWestValleySite.com, emailing SEISWestValleySite@emcbc.doe.gov or mailing to Mr. Martin Krentz, DOE Document Manager West Valley Demonstration Project, U.S. Department of Energy, 10282 Rock Springs Road, AC-DOE West Valley, NY, 14171-9799.

After the comment period, preparations will start for the draft SEIS to be completed by 2021. The draft

SEIS will be made public, with more public hearings and a six-month comment period. After the six-month comment period, preparations will start on the final SEIS to be completed in 2022. A publication of the notice of availability and completion of the final SEIS will be available and after a 30-day waiting period, the record of decision and findings statement will be published.

After the presentations, residents in attendance voiced their opinions on the scoping, the SEIS and which alternative they feel would best fit the town.

"Obviously everybody would like to see things moved, but then where do you send it?" Jeanne Brown asked. "It's kind of like we are stuck with it and have to

deal with it the best we can in remediation so it doesn't spread and contaminate groundwater."

"The only option is to dig it up, contain it, transport it out and exhume both the high activity volume waste and the lower activity high volume waste," Lia Oprea said. "Contain the waste in long-term stabilization in storage tanks located in a secure, temporary above ground monitored and retrievable location ... with an active plan in place for transport to a more suitable site ... at an appropriate secure facility away from West Valley, far from populated communities, water sources, erosions, earthquakes and fault zones."

For more information on the visit SEISWestValleySite.com.

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Ashford continues to work with WNYSSB

March 22, 2018

ASHFORD—The Ashford Town Board heard recent updates and possible upcoming improvements to sections of the Western New York Southtown Scenic Byway that run through the town during its meeting March 14.

Councilman Richard Bernstein reported to the board that he recently attended a meeting of the WNYSSB along with representatives from other towns along the byway.

At the meeting, WNYSSB officials talked about doing more with Ashford including the possible installation of new informational signs in the town. The town would be able to pick the location of the sign and provide all the historical and relevant information.

Locations discussed included the West Valley Hotel and Griffis Sculpture Park.

“It made sense to them to reach out to us because we are in [the WNYSSB] path,” Bernstein said.

Along with the informational sign, Bernstein said the WNYSSB is continuing to update many of their brochures and flyers to better represent Ashford and West Valley.

The board also discussed performing a dog enumeration within the town, which hasn’t been done since 2000. Kasey Cummings and Todd Miller have offered to do the enumeration, which the board approved for the months of June, July and August.

“We have always hired somebody that has gotten halfway through it and given up,” Councilman John Pfeffer said.

Within Ashford, all dogs over four months of age and are being harbored within the town for more than 30 days need a dog license.

In other news, the board:

- Approved a bid for the annual spring trash and refuse pickup from MRC Disposal Inc. at the cost of \$11,695.

- Heard an update from New York State Energy Research and Development Agency West Valley Program Director Paul Bembia. Based on input from its licensing support contractor, NYSERDA is revising their information package regarding the town’s proposal for a solar facility. Once revisions are made, the package will be submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for consideration.

- Adopted a local law for the Cold War Veteran Exemption within the town.

The next Ashford Town Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 18 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ashford Community Center, located at 9377 Route 240, in West Valley.

NY senators earmark \$75M for West Valley cleanup project

- Mar 23, 2018 Updated 58 min ago
 - WASHINGTON — New York state's two U.S. senators say that more than \$75 million was included in the federal budget bill for cleanup of the West Valley Demonstration Project.
 - Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand noted they secured an additional \$8.6 million above current fiscal year levels in the spending bill, which is set to pass Congress in the coming days, to pay for ongoing cleanup efforts at the former Cattaraugus County nuclear site.
 - "After years of underfunding, this \$75 million federal investment will finally fully fund this year's cleanup in West Valley," Schumer said. "Each year that the West Valley Demonstration Project goes underfunded, the amount of time and money it will take to decontaminate and remove the radioactive waste increases."

Gillibrand added, "These federal funds will help ensure that the site will be cleaned up as quickly and safely as possible, so that Western New Yorkers can live and work in the area without having to worry about this decades-old nuclear waste."

Earlier this month, Bryan Bower, Department of Energy director of the West Valley site, told the Cattaraugus County Legislature that a full cleanup of the West Valley site could cost a total of \$6 billion. The state and federal governments have already spent in excess of \$2 billion on the cleanup.

The DOE and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) are working on a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to determine the phases that will finally close West Valley.

Alternatives being considering for the site are:

- Sitewide close-in-place, which would rely on engineered barriers to prevent erosion from impacting buried wastes including the tank farm and state and federally licensed low-level disposal sites.

- Sitewide removal alternative, which would remove all facilities, contaminated soil and groundwater to allow unrestricted release of the property.
- Hybrid alternatives that would provide for complete or partial removal of some facilities while leaving other facilities under close-in-place protocols.

Meanwhile, Schumer and Gillibrand say that Congress has shortchanged the cleanup effort. In fiscal year 2016, the site received \$59.2 million for cleanup efforts; in 2015, it received \$60 million; \$66 million in 2014; \$61 million in 2013; \$66 million in 2012; and \$59 million in 2011.

Schumer, during an in-person meeting in March 2015, urged the former president's nominee for the Office of Environmental Management at the DOE, Monica Regalbuto, to prioritize the complete cleanup of West Valley and support full federal funding for the effort.

During the meeting, Schumer argued that the short-changing of West Valley is "out-of-step with other DOE cleanup sites," which have seen either sustained or increased funding. Schumer also argued that the underfunding of the cleanup only increases the amount of time the project will take, wasting taxpayer dollars and risking the health of Western New Yorkers.

West Valley is the site of the first and, to date, only commercial reprocessing plant in the United States. After beginning operations in 1966 with a theoretical capacity to reprocess 300 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel per year, the facility processed a total of 640 tons of nuclear waste in six years before shutting down in 1972.

During this time period, 600,000 gallons of highly radioactive waste accumulated in an underground waste tank. Today, millions of gallons of radioactive waste remain at the site and radioactivity from the site has been found in both Lake Erie and Lake Ontario.

The West Valley Demonstration Project Act, signed into law on Oct. 1, 1980, required DOE to solidify and dispose of the high-level waste and decommission the facilities used in the process.



Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) goes over his notes Thursday before a news conference at the U.S. Capitol. (Win McNamee/Getty Images)

House passes spending bill that includes benefits for WNY

By **Jerry Zremski** | Published March 22, 2018 | Updated 1 hour ago

President Trump didn't get much of what he wanted in the \$1.3 trillion spending bill the House passed Thursday, but Western New York members of Congress got plenty of what they wanted.

The \$1.3 trillion bill, which funds the government through the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30, sets aside money for numerous programs that Trump wanted to eliminate but that local lawmakers fought to keep. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Great Lakes funding and aid to cities all escaped Trump's proposed cuts.

Meantime, lawmakers increased funding to combat the opioid crisis and to rebuild the nation's infrastructure.

The generous funding of all those programs was no surprise, given that Congress struck a bipartisan budget deal earlier this year that drew the outlines for more spending. Thursday's must-pass spending bill followed up on that budget bill by filling in the blanks with millions of dollars.

Republicans, who pushed the bill to passage in the House by a 256-to-167 margin, lauded the legislation.

"Hardworking Americans can be assured that Congress is spending taxpayer dollars wisely to make sure our children can feel safe in their schools, our towns and cities have sound infrastructure, and we are closing gaps in security at our borders," said Rep. Chris Collins, a Republican from Clarence.

But many Democrats, including Rep. Brian Higgins, supported the measure as well – largely because it ignored many of Trump's budget cuts, which they thought would hurt the country.

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"A lot of the things he wants are outrageous," said Higgins, a Buffalo Democrat.

The Senate is scheduled to consider the bill Friday.

Here's a line-by-line look at the spending plan as it might affect Western New York:

LIHEAP: The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance program faces what seems like an annual fight for survival, and it survived again in this spending bill. The program, which Trump wanted to eliminate, instead will see an annualized increase of 0.7 percent, to \$3.64 billion. That's hugely important to Western New York, given that 69,127 families in Erie County alone got aid through the program as of last December.

Great Lakes funding: The Obama-era Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which is responsible for the Buffalo River cleanup and the waterfront redevelopment stemming from that, would end if Trump got his way. But the spending bill instead keeps funding steady at \$300 million on an annualized basis.

Opioid funding: Trump has pushed for increasing federal efforts to fight the opioid crisis, and Congress responded with money: \$3.3 billion more than the government spent last year, including more than \$2.8 billion in increases for treatment, prevention and research for programs within the Department of Health and Human Services. Some of that money is bound to trickle down to Erie County, where 268 people died of overdoses last year. New York's two senators pushed for the funding increase, and Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer said: "New York deserves every federal resource possible to combat the growing scourge of opioid drug abuse and trafficking – and to increase treatment and prevention."

The drug czar: Western New York officials were outraged to hear that Trump wanted to move the Office of National Drug Control Policy –the drug czar – away from White House control and over to the Justice Department. Congress not only rejected that move; it increased funding for the White House office from \$388.2 million to \$415.5 million. Some of that money filters down to local agencies that fight drug abuse and drug dealing.

Transportation funding: Trump proposed eliminating the Obama-era Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant program, which funds innovating infrastructure projects. Instead, congressional negotiators tripled funding for the program to \$1.5 billion – which could mean big bucks for Buffalo. The city already relied on the program for returning cars to Main Street in downtown

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Buffalo, and Higgins said the funding increase would dramatically increase the chances that the city could get a so-called TIGER grant to fund the restoration of the DL&W Terminal at the foot of Main Street.

Mass transit money: The president asked Congress to slash the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program from \$2.4 billion to a mere \$1 billion, but instead Congress boosted funding to \$2.64 billion. That increases the likelihood that Buffalo's Metro Rail system could someday get federal funding for an extension, because the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority would not be seeking the money from a cash-starved agency.

Clean water infrastructure: Trump wanted to keep the federal investment in local water systems steady at \$1.4 billion, but Congress increased that figure to \$1.7 billion. That means that aging local water systems have a better chance of getting federal grants to rebuild their infrastructure.

Aid to cities: The main federal program for localities – the Community Development Block Grant – survived yet another murder attempt in the budget bill, given that Trump wanted to eliminate it. Instead, lawmakers boost its annualized funding from \$3 billion to \$3.365 billion. The Buffalo metro area typically gets about \$21 million annually under that program with more than half of that money going to the city of Buffalo, and those totals should increase slightly under the new spending bill.

Medical research investment: The bill increases funding for the National Institutes of Health from \$33.3 billion to \$37 billion, much more than the \$500 million hike Trump proposed. The larger increase probably means that more federal money will trickle down to the Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center and other local institutions that rely on NIH funding to pay for some of their research.

West Valley: The West Valley Demonstration Project will get \$75 million to continue its clean-up work, \$8.6 million more than it had in fiscal 2017. New York's two U.S. senators fought for the increase. "These federal funds will help ensure that the site will be cleaned up as quickly and safely as possible, so that Western New Yorkers can live and work in the area without having to worry about this decades-old nuclear waste," said Sen. Kirsten E. Gillibrand, a New York Democrat.

County lawmakers table local law on heroin/opioid epidemic

- By RICK MILLER, Olean Times Herald, Mar 15, 2018
 - LITTLE VALLEY — Cattaraugus County lawmakers had expected to approve a local law declaring the heroin/opioid epidemic a public nuisance Wednesday following a public hearing.
 - An Olean family physician, Dr. Michael Kalsman, however, urged the Legislature to reconsider some of the wording in the proposed local law to reflect negligence on the part of distributors and prescribers.
 - The law “does not distinguish between those prescribing and dispensing in a responsible and lawful manner as opposed to being negligent,” Kalsman said.
 - When the resolution on the local law came to the floor later, Portville Republican Dan Hale moved that it be referred back to the Human Services and Finance committees to be refined.
 - “I think we can amend this to your satisfaction,” Legislature Chairman James J. Snyder, R-Olean, told Kalsman, referring the resolution to the committees.
 - The law firm Napoli Shoinik of New York City, hired by the county as outside counsel in a class-action lawsuit against drug companies in relation to the opioid epidemic, recommended the adoption of the local law.
 - The county’s measure is called “Local Law Declaring the Opioid Epidemic and Its Effects on Cattaraugus County A Public Nuisance and Establishing a Cost Recovery Procedure for the County’s Expenditures Incurred in Providing Services Related to the Opioid Epidemic.”
 - Minority Leader John Padlo, D-Olean, one of the sponsors, told Kalsman that the intent of the local law was not to impact local physicians or pharmacists.
 - “My focus is on the pharmaceutical companies” for misleading physicians on the addictive nature of opioids, Padlo said.
 - IN OTHER ACTION, legislators:
 - Heard a presentation from a Department of Energy representative on upcoming scoping sessions for phase 2 of the cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project in the town of Ashford.
 - Appointed Jeffrey VanDeCar acting director of nursing homes at \$30,000 a year until a permanent director can be appointed.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

At Allegheny River's headwaters, treatment plant for fracking wastewater stirs debate



DON HOHEY
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MAR 18, 2018 3 29 PM

Editor's note: This story has been updated to clarify a paragraph that was unclear about the timeframe for discharges of shale drilling wastewater at treatment plants, which hasn't taken place since 2011.

COUDERSPORT, Pa. — The Allegheny River begins its 325-mile meander to Pittsburgh's Point in rural Potter County, flowing through town as a still, small stream — no wider than a country lane and rarely deeper than a fisherman's chest waders.

In Pennsylvania's northern tier, the river ripples and pools through a landscape with more deer than people, more trees than telephone poles and more pickup trucks than sedans.

As the river flows west, through the backyards of homes along State Route 6, it passes the Coudersport Area Municipal Authority sewage treatment plant where Epiphany Water Solutions, a Lawrenceville-based startup, has proposed hooking up its first commercial shale gas drilling and fracking wastewater treatment plant.

The proposal, which the state Department of Environmental Protection is considering permitting, would allow Epiphany to accept and store truckloads of wastewater — up to 400,000 gallons a day — from shale gas drillers. That water would be injected into a natural gas heated-evaporation and distillation boiler where salts and other chemical contaminants would be removed. Up to 42,000 gallons a day of the remaining water would be piped through the municipal sewage treatment plant, then discharged into the Allegheny River.

If approved by the DEP, it would be Epiphany's first desalination and distillation site in the state.

Supporters say the shale gas drillers need a regulated place to get rid of millions of gallons of wastewater produced by the drilling and hydraulic fracturing process. Supporters also note that a more robust drilling presence could help fill the economic hole created when Coudersport-based Adelphia Communications Corp., then the fifth-largest cable company in the U.S., went bankrupt in 2002.

Allegheny River headwaters: Epiphany's project proposal (Post-Gazette) Opponents of the Epiphany proposal say the company's water treatment technology is untested and won't remove all of the fracking chemicals or naturally occurring radioactive elements in the drilling wastewater and sooner or later will degrade the river, which is a source of drinking water for millions of people in dozens of municipalities downstream, including Pittsburgh.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, wastewater from shale gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing operations can contain high concentrations of salt, also called total dissolved solids or "TDS," various organic and inorganic chemicals, metals, and naturally occurring radioactive materials, which can be harmful to river ecology if not properly handled, treated and disposed.

Some of the loudest opposition has come from the Seneca Nation, whose tribal lands sit astride the river they know as the "Ohi:yo" or "good river," along the Pennsylvania-New York border, 65 miles downstream from the proposed wastewater treatment plant.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Somewhere in the middle, at least for now, is Ed Easton III, owner of Potter County Outfitters, a hunting, fishing and trapping store on Route 6 near the sewage treatment plant, and one of five CAMA board members who will decide whether to greenlight the proposed facility.

"The drillers are drawing millions of gallons of water from our streams and lakes, and aren't going away anytime soon. This treatment plant is a possible solution, a way to put clean water back," Mr. Easton said from behind a counter that separated the rest of the store from a wall of rifles, shotguns and ammunition.

"But as an authority board member, we are stewards of clean water. This is the hottest topic we've faced, and a decision we on the board are not taking lightly," he said. "We know we are at the headwaters. We know that the Allegheny River is the lifeline of the area, our claim to fame."

Mr. Easton said the authority has signed a nonbinding agreement to lease Epiphany the land next to the sewage treatment plant, but a final decision on the proposal — what he called a "demonstration project" — is months away and will be informed by the action the DEP takes on the facility's permits.

"We're still researching this thing and we're not a bunch of hicks," Mr. Easton said. "We understand what can happen if this thing goes bad."

A long history of hurt

And so do the Seneca. More than 100 Seneca attended the regular CAMA board meeting last month, banging drums and singing outside the meeting room and carrying signs saying "Stop Fracking with our children's future," "Defend Ohi:yo'," and "Water is Sacred."

A half-dozen spoke passionately against the Epiphany proposal, with several warning against "poisoning" the river that has played a central role in their tribe's culture and heritage.

"This is one of those things you can't afford to play around with at the headwaters of a major river," Jason Corwin, a Seneca spokesman, said at the meeting.

Seneca President Todd Gates, in a phone interview, said that even if the Epiphany facility works as advertised, unintentional pollution releases could occur from the process and from the six to eight large wastewater holding tanks that will be built within the river's 100-year flood plain.

"There is no proven technology that allows for the complete treatment of wastewater from fracking, particularly in the Marcellus Shale region," Mr. Gates said. "Allowing this project to move forward would be a reckless assault on Mother Earth, the resources of the Ohi:yo', the health of thousands of downstream and future generations."

Mr. Gates said the Seneca have a long history of hurt when it comes to encroachments, intentional and otherwise, on its lands and rivers, "and the Kinzua Dam, that's always in the back of our minds."

In the early 1960s, the federal government used eminent domain to override the Canandaigua Treaty of 1794, signed by President George Washington, and take more than 10,000 acres of Seneca land for the Kinzua flood control dam and reservoir that formed behind it and flooded two tribal towns on the historic Cornplanter Tract, displacing more than 600 residents.

And, in 1974, Seneca land was inundated by radioactive waste that washed out of a commercial disposal site near West Valley, N.Y. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates cleanup costs at \$8 billion and work is ongoing.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The treaty provides a solid legal basis, Mr. Gates said, but it has been violated before.

"That said, the Seneca Nation is always concerned about the environment and preserving it. So anyone who wants to compromise that, we're going to fight them," he said.

Inaccurate information

But Tom Joseph, Epiphany co-founder and chief technology officer, said opposition to the facility, though well-intentioned and sincere, is based on inaccurate information.

"The false information that has been spread by opponents to our project is very obviously designed to undermine the oil and gas industry," he said, "rather than addressing the legitimate environmental challenges that Epiphany is striving to resolve in a sustainable and responsible way."

The Epiphany facility, which will cost more than \$1 million to build and install, would be a closed-loop boiler system that will produce water discharges "clean enough to drink," he said.

A big concern for opponents is radioactive materials in the wastewater. University researchers and DEP regulators have found high concentrations of radionuclides from shale gas drilling wastewater in river and creek sediment near the discharge pipes of at least four water-treatment plants in the lower Allegheny River watershed.

Shale gas drillers have not used municipal sewage treatment plants to dispose of wastewater containing radionuclides since 2011, but did so prior to that.

Mr. Joseph said the Epiphany process is different.

"Unlike some other companies, Epiphany does not believe in dilution as a treatment method," he said. "Epiphany's facility legitimately purifies the water and removes all radiological contamination to non-detectable levels based on federal and state limits prior to discharge to the [publicly owned treatment works] or to the waterways."

Scott Blauvelt, director of regulatory affairs for JKLM Energy LLC, one of the most active shale gas companies operating in Potter County and potentially Epiphany's main customer, said JKLM needs a proven, more economical wastewater disposal option for its well sites.

The Sewickley-based shale gas driller now recycles what wastewater it can to new wells or trucks excess wastewater to deep-well disposal sites in Ohio or West Virginia.

He said the Epiphany process uses similar technology to the Eureka Resources distillation treatment facilities successfully operating in Williamsport, Lycoming County, and Standing Stone, Bradford County, along the Susquehanna River.

"This was presented to us as an experimental project by Epiphany," said George Stenhach, the CAMA solicitor. "We don't see it as much of a risk. If a permit is granted by the DEP we expect there will be strict conditions."

According to the DEP, the Epiphany permits are undergoing thorough review by the department's water, air, waste management, waterways and wetlands programs to ensure that the river is not degraded. The DEP's north-central office said it had finished an initial review of the Epiphany water quality management permit and sent a technical deficiency letter to the company.

The DEP has received more than 3,000 comments on the Epiphany proposal.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

One of those was from Pete Ryan, a long time Coudersport area conservationist, who said he supports it.

"The best scenario would be to not have any fracking or frack water to treat, but that horse is out of the barn and isn't turning around," said Dr. Ryan, a retired dentist who is president of the God's Country Trout Unlimited chapter he founded in 1979.

He also holds leadership positions in the Upper Allegheny Watershed Association, the Kettle Creek Watershed Association and the upper First Fork Watershed Association, to name a few.

He said the Epiphany system could be a "win-win for the river," eliminating or limiting withdrawals to supply the 8 million to 10 million gallons of water needed to drill and frack each well into the deep Utica Shale formation, and adding clean, distilled water.

"We've been praying for someone to do this, to put water back in the river system, and that's what this appears to be," Dr. Ryan said. "It's better than injecting wastewater into the ground."

But he also is hedging that bet. If the DEP approves the Epiphany permit, he said, the Potter County and Upper Allegheny conservation districts and his Trout Unlimited chapter will install in-stream monitors to provide independent monitoring of the discharges.

"If I end up with egg or beer on my face, I'll be terribly surprised," he said. "But there is risk in anything that's new."

Save the Allegheny

The battle against the Epiphany proposal, which began last spring, is led by "Save the Allegheny," a loose confederation of regional advocates and activists.

On many days, it's run from the front seat of Laurie Barr's car, or the back room of Bryan Welsh's dog-eared used bookstore on Coudersport's Main Street, where stacks of copied documents about Epiphany fill file cabinets and tabletops.

Ms. Barr pointed out some of the problems with the Epiphany proposal during a visit earlier this month to the Coudersport Area Municipal Authority, just outside Coudersport.

"This area often gets flooding, both in the spring and winter," she said, pointing to an overgrown field next to the the sewage treatment plant that Epiphany has leased for construction of its treatment facility. The site is about 100 yards from the river.

She said wastewater is now recycled, whereas the new system would discharge it into surface water.

"We think it's a step backwards," she said.

Mr. Welsh, a former Coudersport borough councilman, said it makes no sense to allow construction of an untested toxic-waste treatment plant on a flood plain in a stretch of river where habitat for endangered fish and mussels is fragile.

He said Epiphany hasn't made public, what chemicals, salts and radioactive elements are in the wastewater it will be receiving. And it hasn't disclosed any test results that indicate how effective the company's process is in removing those contaminants.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

"If the process works so wonderfully and can put out purified water they say is 'cleaner than rainwater,' why do they need to put the effluent through our sewer system?" Mr. Welsh said.

He said JKLM "is trying to take advantage of the fact that we're a small town and economically depressed."

Potter County has a population of 17,000 people and is one of the poorest counties in the state.

"Some people were waiting for another company to come in and save us," Mr. Welsh said. "Unfortunately that turned out to be the oil and gas industry, which promptly had a drilling accident that contaminated the groundwater table, caused our water to turn colors and shut down the hospital. That's one reason we don't feel we can trust these people."

Mr. Welsh was referring to a September 2015 accident in which JKLM was fined for a drilling accident that contaminated groundwater and private and public water supplies in Coudersport.

Coudersport Councilman Brian Ruane said he's opposed to the Epiphany proposal and would like to see the CAMA, an independent authority, reject it.

"I've researched the company and it doesn't have much of a track record, so I think Potter County is not the place for such an experiment to take place," Mr. Ruane said.

Objections raised

A number of federal and state agencies, Native American organizations and environmental groups don't think so, either.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District; the Seneca Nation Tribal Council, the Seneca Nation president's office, the National Congress of American Indians, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Clean Water Action have raised concerns about the proposed facility in official comment letters to either the DEP or CAMA about the proposed facility.

The DEP said it will continue to review Epiphany's water quality management permit and if satisfied will issue a draft permit, followed by a 30-day public comment period. There is no deadline for the review.

Ms. Barr, noting that it's the same river that flows by Pittsburgh's Point, said "if something catastrophic happens, we can't replace that water source," she said. "The risks are so significantly high and the liability is so great."

Don Hopey: dhohey@post-gazette.com, 412-263-1983, or on Twitter @donhohey



Discharge plan could harm the Allegheny River and the life it supports

By CHRIS CAYA · 15 HOURS AGO 03/22/2018

A plan to discharge treated fracking water into the Allegheny River continues raising concerns. The Seneca Nation of Indians hosted a day-long conference on the controversial project Wednesday.

WBFO's Chris Caya reports



Millions of people get their drinking water from the Allegheny River
CREDIT NANFA.ORG

Federal state, and local officials from New York and Pennsylvania along with Seneca Nation officials and environmental experts took part in the meeting on the Seneca's Allegheny Territory. At issue - a proposed wastewater treatment plant in Coudersport, Pennsylvania, that would discharge treated fracking water into the Allegheny River. Seneca Nation President Todd Gates points out the drilling process for natural gas and oil brings up dangerous radionuclides.



Seneca President Gates
CREDIT FILE PHOTO: CHRIS CAYA WBFO NEWS



"At West Valley, they're trying to process nuclear waste. They haven't found a good way to process it. You can contain it. If you can contain it, that's one thing. And if there is nuclear waste coming up from the fracking water, and they have it there, it's going to contaminate our river," Gates said.

Millions of people get their drinking water from the Allegheny. Along with Coudersport, it flows through Olean, Salamanca, Allegany State Park and down into Pittsburgh. Gates says fracking water is known to damage aquatic life.

"And this is a new process they're proposing so why experiment on the Allegheny River? There's no good place to experiment with that type of waste. But we really oppose them trying it on the Allegheny. Especially at the headwaters. It's been designated as some of the cleanest water for the 3 rivers that originate there, the Genesee, the Susquehanna, and the Allegheny," Gates said.

Along with the Seneca Nation, the plan is opposed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the New York State DEC. The project is currently under review by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Spectrum News – Buffalo

DOE AND NYSERDA TAKING PUBLIC COMMENT ON WEST VALLEY CLEAN-UP

By Alex Haight | March 21, 2018

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Neighbors of the Western New York Nuclear Service Center want to make sure their community is safe from nuclear contamination, both now and in the future.

But one of the containment options they prefer might increase of nuclear waste leaking into the soil at the site, a 3,338-acre site in West Valley. Nuclear fuel was reprocessed there from 1966 until 1972.

The federal Department of Energy was ordered by Congress to solidify the liquid high-level radioactive waste and transport it to a federal depository for permanent disposal.

Tuesday night, the federal Department of Energy and New York State Energy Research and Development Authority held a presentation at ECC to discuss actions they've taken over the last eight years at the site, including the decontamination, demolition and off-site disposal of several highly contaminated facilities.

The final public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday night at the Seneca Nation of Indians Cattaraugus Council Chambers in Irving starting at 6 p.m.

They are now taking public comment on the direction of Phase 2 of the plan.

A group of environmental activists held a press conference before the hearing, calling for an option which includes the removal of contaminated soil, sediment and groundwater.

"What we have to do at West Valley is clean up all of the nuclear waste, dig it up, secure it onsite so it does not end up in the Great Lakes, and in our children," said Barbara Warren of Citizens' Environmental Coalition.

The DOE and NYSERDA also presented a close-in-place alternative, which is a process where contaminants are left and fenced off.

Diane D'Arrigo of the Nuclear Information and Resource Service says she worries this is an option being considered because it's less expensive.

She says until all of the contaminants are excavated, the land will continue to erode and leak even more.

"It's already leaking radioactive Strontium-90, which is a bone seeker that causes leukemia and bone cancer, and there's no safe level."

The DOE and NYSDERDA are also considering alternatives that would be a mix of the two options.

Comments can be submitted through April 23.

Email: SEISWestValleySite@emcbc.doe.gov

Mail:

Mr. Martin Krentz

DOE Document Manager

West Valley Demonstration Project

U.S. Department of Energy

10282 Rock Springs Road, AC-DOE

West Valley, New York 14171-9799

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

‘Dig it up’ popular demand at West Valley scoping session

By RICK MILLER, Olean Times Herald, March 20, 2018



Barry Miller of Hinsdale speaks Monday night at the first of three scoping sessions on the phase 2 cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project. Miller and other speakers were seeking a full cleanup at the site of the nation's first and only commercial spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in the town of Ashford. Similar meetings will be held in Buffalo tonight and on the Cattaraugus Territory of the Seneca Nation of Indians on Wednesday.

WEST VALLEY — A familiar refrain was heard in West Valley Monday night.

“Dig it up,” said Barbara Dyscant, an activist from Hinsdale. She was among speakers who urged U.S. Department of Energy to “do a complete cleanup at West Valley” at the first of three scoping sessions on the phase 2 cleanup of the West Valley Demonstration Project.

Many attendees asked for all radioactive and hazardous waste at the site be exhumed and contained in above ground retrievable storage until an off-site disposal area is available.

Dyscant said the radioactive waste "poses a deadly threat to Western New York. There is no safe level of low-level exposure," she added. If the waste is not removed, it will erode into local creeks and into Cattaraugus Creek which empties into Lake Erie.

According to the DOE's Feb. 23 notice in the Federal Register, alternatives being considering for the site are:

- Sitewide close-in-place, which would rely on engineered barriers to prevent erosion from impacting buried wastes including the tank farm and state and federally licensed low-level disposal sites.
- Sitewide removal alternative, which would remove all facilities, contaminated soil and groundwater to allow unrestricted release of the property.
- Hybrid alternatives that would provide for complete or partial removal of some facilities while leaving other facilities under close-in-place protocols.

Officials said a fourth alternative of no action was not under consideration.

These are the first steps the U.S. Department of Energy and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) are undertaking for the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) which was "phased decision-making." That alternative from the 2010 Final Environmental Impact Statement put off the more difficult decision of how much of a cleanup would be done at the 3,100-acre site.

It was operated from 1966 to 1972 when Nuclear Fuel Services extracted plutonium and uranium from spent nuclear fuel rods. Some of the material was defense related. NYSERDA claims for that reason that the DOE should store the materials off site.

There are 56 concrete casks at the site containing 275 stainless steel canisters of solidified high-level radioactive material encased in glass. That is all that remains of what was once 600,000 gallons of high-level radioactive liquid waste.

The scoping process involving the Phase 2 SEIS involves public comment through April 23. Those who cannot attend one of the scoping sessions can fill out a comment on the project website at www.SEISWestValleySite.com.

Comments can also be emailed to SEISWestValleySite@emcbc.doe.gov.

The draft SEIS is not expected to be completed and ready for public comment until late 2020. It will contain a preferred alternative agreed upon by the DOE and NYSERDA. There will be a six-month comment period at that time.

Speakers at Monday's scoping session pointed out that comments are being sought before studies have been completed.

One study is called probabilistic performance assessment which deals with long-term impacts at the site that could release radioactivity into the air or water. That study is not complete.

Diane D'Arrigo, radioactive waste director of the Nuclear Information and Research Group, pointed out the Engineered Barrier Group had not issued a report, which could indicate it was not a long-term solution for dangerous radioactivity that persists for thousands or millions of years.

Everyone's goal, D'Arrigo said, was the "safest outcome for this site." She said it appears that much of the site's radioactive components will remain on site indefinitely. It is a mistake, she said, to "leave long-lasting radioactive material at a site that is already leaking."

THE SALAMANCA PRESS

PROUDLY SERVING CENTRAL AND WESTERN CATTARAUGUS COUNTY SINCE 1867

‘Dig it up’ popular demand at West Valley scoping session

By Rick Miller, County Reporter, March 20, 2018

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If the public is to participate in the phase 2 cleanup decision, they need "full disclosure" of the reports West Valley officials are reviewing and a searchable database of the study results.

Last week, Bryan Bower, DOE director of the West Valley site told the Cattaraugus County Legislature that a full cleanup of the West Valley site could cost \$6 billion. The state and federal governments have already spent in excess of \$2 billion on the cleanup. The DOE is allotting about \$60 million a year toward the cleanup costs.

Barry Miller of Hinsdale, a former president of the Cattaraugus County Concerned Citizens environmental group, said the site is an "extremely dangerous mess that needs to be cleaned up." The radioactive wastes should be dug up and safely stored in contained on site until they can be moved to a national disposal site that is not currently available.

Barbara Warren, executive director of the Citizens Environmental Coalition of New York State, said the unanimous recommendations for the phase 1 cleanup in 2010 was to remove the wastes — including the tank farm and state and federal low-level waste disposal areas.

"You never studied complete exhumation," she declared.

Warren also noted the DOE and NYSERDA had not convened an independent scientific panel to review the phase 1 studies.

Charles Bowman, a co-chair of the Environmental Justice Task Force said the public needs to see the scientific documents "before we comment." He asked for a six-month extension of the phase 2 comments "so we can see the studies."

For information on available phase 1 studies, go to www.westvalleyphaseonestudies.org.

My View: I'm a nuclear baby with apprehensions

By My View | Published March 20, 2018

By Patricia K. Townsend

I am a nuclear baby, born in the same year that Glenn Seaborg discovered plutonium, Franklin Delano Roosevelt authorized the development of an atomic bomb, and the Manhattan Project began.

I've been reluctant to admit it. Not so much that I mind anyone knowing that I was born in 1941. I don't dye my white hair; I prefer silver to my old mouse brown. And "three-quarters of a century" sounds like a lot of wisdom acquired.

My earliest memories include sitting on the front porch and waving a little flag to celebrate the end of the war, welcoming my big cousin Curt home from the Navy from a war that ended with the dropping of two atomic bombs.

I'm a nuclear baby, off to grade school in my sturdy brown oxfords at the peak of shoe-fitting fluoroscopy. Do you remember that? It was a fascinating machine to a science-loving kid. You tried on the shoes and stuck your feet in the slot at the bottom of the machine in the shoe store. There were three eyepieces: one for me, one for the sales clerk and one for my mom. I wiggled my toes and looked at my bones and had a whole lot more fun than just seeing if the shoes fit. I do have rather funny-shaped feet. Only today did I learn that malfunctioning machines did lead to foot problems among some of us nuclear babies, as well as cancer in shoe store clerks.

At Sisters Hospital last month, I remembered those shoe fittings when I experienced a modified barium swallow test, trying to diagnose what's causing me to choke occasionally. It was great fun to watch the globs of applesauce slip down my gullet in the fluoroscope. Sorry, too much information, as my daughter would say.

I'm a nuclear baby, and I'm grateful for the regular mammograms that caught my breast cancer early and for the surgery and radiation treatments that I received 10 years ago.

I don't like to admit I'm a nuclear baby because I'd rather not think about the fact that I live in a state and country that is still getting a big share of its electricity from nuclear power. We're no closer to having a safe place to put the used fuel rods than we were when I saw the movie "China Syndrome" or the television footage of Fukushima.

It hurts my heart to read in the news that impoverished North Korea is eager to sell its nuclear technology to all buyers. That the administration wants to build "smaller, usable" nuclear weapons. That companies hope to build and sell small modular nuclear power plants all over the world.

The Buffalo News, Wednesday, March 21, 2018

It hurts my head to read the work of the University of Rochester geoscientists that mapped very low levels of a long-lived isotope of radioactive iodine from the West Valley nuclear site. They still blanket the soil and water of all Western New York at four times the level of the rest of the United States. While it is not likely that a bit of West Valley radionuclides caused my friend's thyroid cancer, one little bit adds to another, and it all hangs around for millions of years, so my great-great-great-granddaughter won't have a chance.

Humans aren't always stupid. I am hopeful that we can do something. We ditched those shoe store fluoroscopes. We can ditch nuclear power and weaponry.

And we certainly can demand that NYSERDA and DOE do a good cleanup at the West Valley nuclear site.

I guess we're all nuclear babies now.

Patricia K. Townsend of Amherst thinks the world needs to rely less on nuclear technology.



WKBW

WEATHER ALL SECTIONS

1 CLOSING

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Advocates urge for nuclear waste removal at West Valley

BY: Jeff Rusack

POSTED: 11:28 PM, Mar 20, 2018

Share Article

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. (WKBW) - The goal for many in Erie and Cattaraugus County is simple, keep the waters of Cattaraugus Creek and Lake Erie clean. They feel the best way to do that, address what's happening at the West Valley Nuclear Waste Facility.

"We want them to exhume all the waste on the site in order to make sure that our water and our drinking water is absolutely clean," said Lynda Schneekloth of the Western New York Environmental Alliance.

Currently, federal and state officials are weighing their options about what to do with the tons of nuclear waste that has been stored on the site for decades. The options are: better securing the waste that's there, removing the waste, a little bit of both, or do nothing.

People who spoke at a public hearing, Tuesday, want the waste removed.

"Total cleanup is the only answer, anything less than that is not good enough and that's what we're demanding," said Todd Gates, the President of the Seneca Nation.

The fear is, the land surrounding the waste will one day erode, and spread radiation and waste into the waterways.

"The Buffalo, the Erie County water supply, is at risk from this site. The radioactivity is there now. It's dangerous now. It's going to stay dangerous for literally millions of years," said Diane D'Arrigo with the Nuclear Information and Resource Service.

State and federal agencies are looking at studies and environmental impact reports. They say they will be considering public opinion submitted at Tuesday's meeting.



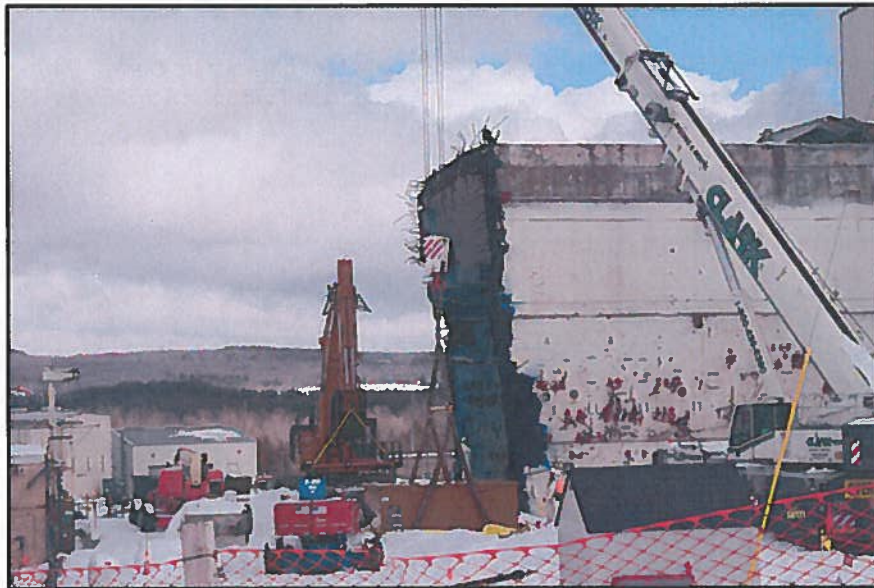
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY

OFFICE OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT

EM Update | Vol. 10, Issue 11 | March 20, 2018

West Valley Successfully Completes Critical Demolition Activity

Four Vitrification Facility hot cell coolers safely removed for packaging and shipment



Vitrification in-cell cooler boxed and being transferred to storage hardstand onsite.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – Four hot cell coolers weighing 7,188 pounds each were successfully removed from the Vitrification Facility at the [West Valley Demonstration Project](#) (WVDP) through extensive planning and engineering controls.

“This work was a significant accomplishment for our team,” said Jeff Bradford, president of CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV), [EM](#)’s cleanup contractor at WVDP. “They completed this work safely and compliantly using a deliberate and methodical approach, along with lessons learned.”

Workers at WVDP removed in-cell coolers as part of demolition of the Vitrification Facility, one of two main buildings to be taken down at the site. That particular task was the highest remaining hazard associated with the Vitrification Facility.

“The CHBWV Team did an excellent job in their planning and execution of this high-hazard work evolution,” EM WVDP Director Bryan Bower said. “This paves the way for the workforce to continue with the demolition of the Vitrification Facility.”



The first of four in-cell Vitrification Facility coolers is lowered to the floor as part of the removal process. This particular task was the highest remaining hazard associated with the Vitrification Facility project, and is critical to continuing with the demolition of the facility.



The second of four in-cell Vitrification Facility coolers, covered in yellow herculite, is lowered into a waste storage box. The waste box includes contamination controls and cribbing for safe transport and storage.

On March 3, crews began lowering and removing the first cooler from the Vitrification Facility ceiling. From above the 50-foot-tall building, the cooler was attached to a 300-ton crane using roof penetrations designed for mechanical and electrical connections. Once connected, the cooler was lowered to the floor, where crews performed general size reductions, and additional contamination

controls (fixatives and wrapping) were applied. On March 5, a large excavator was used to pick up the cooler and place it into an approved waste container.

The removal of the first cooler was analyzed for lessons learned that were then applied to the task of removing the remaining coolers from the facility and packaging them into waste boxes.

The Vitrification Facility produced 278, 10-foot-tall canisters of vitrified high-level waste between 1996 through 2002. It was one of only two vitrification facilities to operate in the United States. The facility's in-cell cooling system was an integral part of the operation. The coolers removed heat during normal operations and transferred that heat through a chilled water system.

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

BUFFALO RISING

March 14, 2018

Who's Cleaning Up The Mess?



Author: Lynda Schneekloth

When my kids were little, we used to have 'cleaning day' on Saturdays when my husband and I would each take a young one on our team and do certain tasks. We hoped to communicate through our shared work that all of us were responsible for taking care of our home – cleaning and putting things 'away.'

As the kids grew, the lessons got more complex: not only do you clean up your mess, you are often responsible for cleaning up after others. I don't think those lessons stuck because not many years later, I had a house of teenagers who left dirty dishes in the sink, clothes on the floor, and things anywhere. I put up a sign in the kitchen, "Your Mother Doesn't Work Here Anymore!" I initiated a Dish Amnesty Day where you could bring, wash and put away those yucky plates and glasses from your room without comment from me.

We also were regular users of secondhand stores, bringing a box of things to pass on and filling a bag with new toys and books to bring home. This isn't really 'away', but recycling, a creative way to constantly transform the things in our lives. This, I explained to children, who rolled their

eyes, is the way nature does it. There is no 'away' because all messes in the natural world are absorbed and transformed. Fallen trees, landslides, floods and even death have a place and a function on this earth — breaking down, composting, regenerating. I wish we humans understood that. We act as if there is a place, 'away,' especially in public housework.

For example, taking the trash out does keep the neighborhood clean, but really, it is not recycling and it is not away. Our waste goes to a place that probably had been a farm or woodland, but is now filled with discarded and often toxic things. Is this cleaning up our messes? In the last two centuries, we have created such extraordinary and lethal messes that we don't even know how to clean them up.

Those of us who live in the Buffalo Niagara Region learned about this the hard way with Love Canal. Hooker Chemical and the U.S. Army disposed of lethal WWII waste in a canal next to the Niagara River and tons of toxic and hazardous brew are still right there, contained in a better designed and monitored canal that is already obsolete. Contained is not 'away' but a holding strategy until . . . until what?

Today my children are grown and their children will have to contend with the ultimate messes that have been made: carbon in the ocean and atmosphere that has causes climate change, and the nuclear waste we have left across the globe. These two messes come to ground just 30 miles south of Buffalo at the **West Valley Nuclear Waste Facility** where climate destabilization and severe storms greatly increase the risk of releasing nuclear waste into our waters. There is no way to clean up nuclear waste, no 'away' to send it to. Yet we know that it will be hazardous to human and environmental health for thousands of years so it must be addressed. What we can do is to dig it up so we know where it is, contain it securely, ensure that it is retrievable, and communicate across generations that this material is lethal.

In March 2018, the Department of Energy will hold hearings to determine what should be done with West Valley nuclear waste. We of all people, who know about the dangers of toxic waste, must insist that the risk to our children be minimized by a full cleanup and secure containment of this nuclear waste. Attend the hearings and help clean up the mess. www.SEISWestValleySite.com and www.niagarasierraclub.com

Lynda Schneekloth has nine grandchildren and is on the Board of the Sierra Club Niagara Group and the Western New York Environmental Alliance.

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

Meeting held to prepare for upcoming West Valley cleanup scoping sessions

- By Rich Place, Managing Editor, Mar 11, 2018 Updated 9 hrs ago



Seneca Nation President Todd Gates speaks Sunday at an informational meeting to learn more about the upcoming West Valley cleanup scoping sessions.

Press photo by Rich Place



Joanne Hameister, president of the Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes, speaks Sunday at an informational meeting to learn more about the upcoming West Valley cleanup scoping sessions.

Press photo by Rich Place

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

SPRINGVILLE — A group of experts on Sunday helped educate the public about the upcoming state “scoping sessions” that will address future cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration project site.

More than two dozen people attended the meeting held at Springville Center for the Arts, which included Seneca Nation President Todd Gates and members of The Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes, the Sierra Club and Wyoming, Erie and Cattaraugus Communities Act on the Pipeline (WECAP).

The upcoming scoping sessions, scheduled for next Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in West Valley, Buffalo and Irving, respectively, will allow interested persons and agencies to comment on what they think the future cleanup at the West Valley site in northern Cattaraugus County should include.

“This will be the final decision for West Valley,” said Joanne Hameister, president of the Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes. “So we have to make very sure it’s the right one.”

Ray Vaughn, a professional geologist and environmental scientist who has been working with issues at the West Valley site since 1978, explained the scoping process is an early step in the environmental review process to guide cleanup for the decision of what to do with buried waste buried at the site.

“The plant only operated for six years and we’re well into decades of trying to deal with what was left over,” said Hameister, referring to when Nuclear Fuel Services operated the plant in the late ‘60s and early ‘70s.

Vaughn and Charley Bowman, of the Sierra Club Niagara Group, went into detail about the buried waste and its proximity to Buttermilk Creek, which flows into nearby Cattaraugus Creek.

“The concern is that over the next hundreds and thousands of years, the rainfall — especially accentuated by climate change — is going to enlarge these existing revines and at some point cut into the existing burial trenches and start to expose and carry away radioactive waste and carry it downstream,” said Vaughn.

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

He added previous environmental impact studies have had conflicting reports as to how soon this could happen.

"One suggested it was a very severe problem that would occur in the next few hundred years," he said. "The other basically said 'no big deal, it's not going to happen anytime soon.'"

However, no matter the timeline, Vaughn called the erosion near the site "not a trivial issue."

The Seneca Nation of Indians finds itself upstream of two separate issues with potential environmental impact: its Cattaraugus Territory in Irving is upstream of the West Valley site and the Allegany Territory near Salamanca is upstream of a potential Coudersport, Pa. plant to treat fracking wastes and discharge it into the Allegheny River.

Those issues brought Seneca Nation President Gates to the gathering on Sunday and he explained the impact each has on the territories and nearby communities.

"I'm for a total cleanup," he said in relation to the West Valley site, "but we have to consider how we are going to handle that once we dig it all out of the ground, where we are going to put it (and) how we are going transport it. The funding just needs to be increased."

Emphasis by multiple speakers was also on educating upcoming generations about the issue at West Valley site due to the timeline of the cleanup.

Those who gathered for the 90-minute series of speakers also learned more about how they can become involved in the scoping process, especially how to comment at one of the meetings or by mail or online.

"Last time they had these hearings they received 1,900 comments," said Lia Oprea, founder of WECAP that organized the event. "Now we would like to beat that."

OLEAN TIMES HERALD



Those interested in speaking at the upcoming scoping sessions must register, and there is a five-minute limit for comments. To register, contact DOE document manager Martin Krentz at 942-4007 or email martin.krentz@emcbc.doe.gov.

The first DOE scoping session will be held March 19 from 6 to 9:30 p.m. at the West Valley Volunteer Hose Company, 9091 Route 240, West Valley.

The next two sessions are:

- March 20, from 6 to 9:30 p.m. at Erie Community College, City Campus, Post Office Building, 121 Ellicott St., Buffalo, in the Minnie Gillette Auditorium.
- March 21, from 6 to 9:30 p.m. in the Seneca Nation of Indians Cattaraugus Council Chambers, 12837 Route 438, Irving.

Officials on Sunday also encouraged people to make written comments on the scope for the SEIS before the April 23 deadline.

A program similar to the one in Springville on Sunday will be held again on Thursday from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Crane Library, 633 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo.

This article originally ran on salamancapress.com.

Springville meeting Sunday on Preparing for West Valley cleanup scoping sessions

• By Rick Miller, County Reporter

Mar 9, 2018

SPRINGVILLE — Three environmental groups will conduct a meeting Sunday to help people prepare for state “scoping sessions” later this month on future cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project site.

The Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes, the Sierra Club and Wyoming, Erie and Cattaraugus Communities Act on the Pipeline (WECAP) will host the session 5 to 7 p.m. in the Carol Mongerson Theater at the Springville Center for the Arts, 37 N. Buffalo St.

The U.S. Department of Energy and New York State Energy Research and Development Authority will conduct “scoping sessions” March 19, 20 and 21 in West Valley, Buffalo and on the Cattaraugus Territory of the Seneca Nation.

The upcoming scoping sessions draw interested persons and agencies to comment on what they think the future cleanup at the town of Ashford site in Cattaraugus County should include.

Joanne Hameister, president of the Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes, said the scoping sessions are preparation for a supplemental environmental impact statement on the Phase 2 cleanup at West Valley.

The site was home of the first and only commercial spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plant and operated from 1966-72 when it closed for environmental retrofitting. Nuclear Fuel Services never reopened the plant, leaving it as it was. The West Valley Demonstration Project of 1980 set about to clean up the site that sits near Buttermilk and Cattaraugus creeks that empty into Lake Erie.

Sunday night's program will include experts who will explain what has gone on at the site, what's going on now and what should happen in the future.

The groups will present the program again Thursday from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Crane Library, 633 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo.

The Sierra Club, for example, supports the full cleanup of the West Valley sites including huge underground tanks that contain radioactive sludge, state and federal low-level radioactive burial grounds and removal of 56 concrete containers with radioactive waste solidified in glass from the site.

To speak at the DOE scoping sessions, individuals must register. There is a five minute limit for comments. To register, contact DOE document manager, Martin Krentz at (716) 942- 4007 or email martin.krentz@emcbc.doe.gov.

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March 21, from 6 to 9:30 p.m. in the Seneca Nation of Indians Cattaraugus Council Chambers, 12837 Route 438, Irving.

Environmental groups are also encouraging people to make written comments on the scope for the SEIS before the April 23, deadline.

(Contact reporter Rick Miller at rmiller@oleantimesherald.com. Follow him on Twitter, @RMillerOTH)

The Post-Journal

Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement To Assess Potential Effects Of Local Nuclear Project

03-11-2018 - The U.S. Department of Energy and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority are preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for Decommissioning and/or Long-Term Stewardship at the West Valley Demonstration Project and Western New York Nuclear Service Center.

In 1962, Nuclear Fuel Services Inc. entered into agreements with the Atomic Energy Commission and New York state to construct the first commercial reprocessing plant of nuclear fuel in the United States. NFS, a private company, built and operated the fuel reprocessing plant and burial grounds, processing 640 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel at the Western New York Nuclear Service Center from 1966 to 1972 under an Atomic Energy Commission license. The plant shut down in 1972 for modifications and never resumed operations. The West Valley Site includes the Department of Energy's West Valley Demonstration Project, the WNYNSC, and the state-licensed disposal area. NYSERDA holds title to the entire WNYNSC on behalf of the state of New York. Under a cooperative agreement, the Department of Energy controls, but does not own, the area to conduct the West Valley Demonstration Project.

In 2010, the Department of Energy and NYSERDA published a Final Environmental Impact Statement, DOE Record of Decision and NYSERDA Findings Statement for the West Valley Site. This resulted in selection of the Phased Decision-making Alternative and Phase 1 decommissioning, including facility disposition and soil remediation. The Phased Decision-making Alternative deferred decisions (known as Phase 2 decisions) on several facilities for 10 years (the expected time frame required to complete Phase 1 decommissioning activities) while DOE and NYSERDA complete certain scientific studies (Phase 1 Studies), gather additional information, and perform additional analyses to foster inter-agency consensus and inform the decisions.

The organizations intend to jointly prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to inform Phase 2 decision-making for the facilities remaining after completion of Phase 1 activities. The remaining facilities include the Waste Tank Farm, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission-Licensed Disposal Area, State-Licensed Disposal Area, Construction and Demolition Debris Landfill, non-source area of the North Plateau Groundwater Plume, Cesium Prong, balance of the WNYNSC property, and contaminated stream sediments.

The SEIS will further the purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act by incorporating the new information produced by the Phase 1 Studies, other scientific studies being performed at the West Valley Site, and a probabilistic performance assessment as part of the evaluation of the potential environmental

The Post-Journal

impacts of the Phase 2 alternatives. At this time, DOE and NYSERDA are considering the following potential alternatives and have not yet selected a preferred alternative:

- No Action
- Sitewide Close-in-Place
- Sitewide Removal
- Hybrid(s) (partial in-place closure and partial removal)

The Phase 2 alternatives will be informed by comments received during the scoping period, the Phase 1 and other scientific studies being performed at the West Valley Site, and the results of a long-term probabilistic performance assessment.

A Notice of Intent and Draft Scope, which details more specifically the background and plans for the SEIS, was published in the Federal Register and notice about the availability of the Notice of Intent and Draft Scope was published in the New York State Environmental Notice Bulletin on Feb. 21 marking the start of the public scoping period, which continues until April 23. The Department of Energy and NYSERDA are encouraging the public to comment on the proposed scope of the SEIS and will accept comments through April 23. Comments received after April 23 will be considered to the extent practicable. Public scoping meetings to encourage public involvement and receive comments on the scope of the SEIS will be held as follows.

- West Valley Volunteer Hose Co., Inc., Firemen's Memorial Hall & Training, 9091 Rt. 240, West Valley, March 19, from 6-9:30 p.m.
- Erie County Community College City Campus, Minnie Gillette Auditorium, in the Post Office Building at 121 Ellicott Street, Buffalo, March 20, from 6-9:30 p.m.
- Cattaraugus Council Chambers, 12837 Route 438, Irving, March 21, from 6-9:30 p.m.

Registration begins at 6 p.m., followed by an informal poster session with presentations starting at 7 p.m. Recording of public comments will follow the presentations.

A project website (SEISWestValleySite.com) is under development that will include details on submitting comments and the Notice of Intent and Draft Scope, as well as other SEIS-related documents as they become available.

The Buffalo News

March 5, 2018

Jack R. Alexander Supervised West Valley Cleanup



Nov. 23, 1946 -- Feb. 24, 2018

Jack R. Alexander, former senior manager for Westinghouse West Valley Nuclear Services, died Feb. 24 at his home in Hamburg after a battle with brain cancer. He was 71.

Mr. Alexander, a native of McKeesport, Pa., was a Westinghouse Electric Corp. employee for 37 years. He served as strategic planning and project control manager at the West Valley Demonstration Project from 1993 until his retirement in 2005.

West Valley involved the cleanup of a former commercial nuclear fuels reprocessing center in Cattaraugus County. During his tenure, Mr. Alexander directed a staff responsible for the design, construction, and operation of a first-of-a kind nuclear system that demonstrated the feasibility of vitrifying fuel reprocessing byproducts to the world.

"Jack was the most intelligent and kind man I have ever had the privilege to know," said former co-worker and longtime friend Terry Dunford. "He was the catalyst for world-record setting accomplishments achieved at the U.S. Department of Energy's West Valley Demonstration Project."

After his retirement, Alexander served as president and owner of Fourth Wave Solutions, a consultant agency in Caselberry, Fla., that worked to solve technical and nuclear issues at

various projects across the nation.

Mr. Alexander earned two bachelor's degrees. His first was from Penn State in physics, the second in computer science from his beloved University at Pittsburgh in 1975. He later earned a master's degree in strategic planning from St. Bonaventure University.

"My dad was a man of great character, loyalty and love," said one of his sons, Michael Alexander. "He will be greatly missed by his children and his grandchildren."

Mr. Alexander is survived by another son, Richard; two daughters, Sunday and Sue Kaiser, and, five grandchildren, all of whom reside in Western New York.

At his request, Mr. Alexander's body was donated to the University at Buffalo Anatomical Gift Program. He hoped that his brain cancer could be studied to help others diagnosed with such an illness.

A memorial Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Friday, March 9 in Saints Peter & Paul Church, 66 East Main St., Hamburg.

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

Environmental groups map next phase of West Valley nuclear site cleanup

*By Rick Miller, County Reporter
March 2, 2018*



Members of a panel speak at an environmental program on the cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project.

BUFFALO — A coalition of environmental groups met Thursday night in a Buffalo snowstorm to drum up public interest in important scoping sessions later this month on the next phase of nuclear cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project.

Dr. Alan Lockwood, a former University at Buffalo neurological professor, was guest speaker at the program set up by the Western New York Environmental Alliance at the Burchfield-Penney Art Gallery.

His major takeaways from the environmental push for a full cleanup at West Valley was that radioactivity is bad and that it has already gotten into the environment from West Valley —

including traces in Lake Ontario sediment via Lake Erie and the Niagara River. Some of that was the result of controlled releases from the site between 1969 and 1971.

There are also groundwater plumes of radioactive contamination from past spills. Plus, state- and federally-licensed low-level disposal areas sit on a plateau near local creeks that drain into Cattaraugus Creek and Lake Erie, Lockwood said.

The nation's first and only commercial spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plant operated from 1966 to 1972. Under a contract Nuclear Fuel Services had with New York state, it walked away from the plant in 1974.

The West Valley Demonstration Project Act of 1980 directed the Department of Energy to clean up the site starting with 600,000 gallons of high-level radioactive liquid stored in a giant underground tank. The liquid has been turned into radioactive glass sealed in stainless steel cylinders and concrete casks.

"Radioactivity is bad for you," Lockwood said. "There's a fair amount of it at West Valley that needs to be taken care of."

Lockwood also expressed concern over climate change and who will oversee the site generations from now. Without institutional controls, radioactive waste left at the site could find its way into Lake Erie with the next intense local rainstorm.

"The implication for West Valley increases the probability of further erosion at the site," Lockwood said.

Diane D'Arrigo, radioactive waste director of the Nuclear Information and Research Service and a member of the West Valley Action Network, said it is important to attend the upcoming scoping sessions to make comments. She encouraged others to submit written comments. The U.S. Department of Energy will conduct scoping meetings on the West Valley Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) March 19 in West Valley, March 29 in Buffalo and March 21 in Irving.

The Department of Energy has a website for the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement: seiswestvalleysite@emcbc.doe.gov and at www.seiswestvalleysite.com.

Anges Williams of the Indigenous Peoples Initiative said many people don't understand the technical issues. She said that radioactive releases into Cattaraugus Creek have affected Senecas who rely on the creek. No more radioactive waste should be brought to the site, she said. Williams suggested Western New York help raise \$10 billion for a total cleanup of the site if the federal government is going to limit the extent of the cleanup by not allocating enough money for the job.

Another speaker, Barbara Warren of the Citizens Environmental Coalition, said the site never should have been chosen.

She accused the Department of Energy of "bungling and mismanagement" at the site. It has not met project objectives. The main process building was to have been demolished years ago in order to get to the source of a strontium 90- plume that starts under a corner of the building.

"It's likely that won't be completed until 2019," she said.

Lynda Schneekloth, chairman of the Western New York Advocacy Alliance, said, "There really is no safe level of radiation. We are trying to motivate people to learn about it and take action." The first scoping session, March 19, is at the West Valley Firemen's Memorial Hall on Route 240, from 6 to 9:30 p.m.

That will be followed March 20 in Buffalo at the Erie Community College Campus, 121 Ellicott St., in the Minnie Gillette Auditorium, from 6 to 9:30 p.m.

The final scoping session on March 21 will be at the Seneca Nation of Indians Tribal Council Chambers in Irving on the Cattaraugus Territory from 6 to 9:30 p.m.

THE SALAMANCA PRESS

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Environmental groups map next phase of West Valley nuclear site cleanup

By Rick Miller, County Reporter
March 2, 2018



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The final scoping session on March 21 will be at the Seneca Nation of Indians Tribal Council Chambers in Irving on the Cattaraugus Territory from 6 to 9:30 p.m.

THE BUFFALO NEWS

Environmental groups to hold public meeting about West Valley

By T.J. Pignataro | Published February 28, 2018 | Updated February 28, 2018



The West Valley Demonstration Project site sits on a plateau near Cattaraugus Creek in northern Cattaraugus County. (T.J. Pignataro/Buffalo News)

The Western New York Environmental Alliance will hold a public information presentation at 7 p.m. Thursday at the Burchfield Penney Art Center, 1300 Elmwood Ave., to prepare for scoping hearings in mid-March on the fate of the West Valley Demonstration Project site.

Dr. Alan Lockwood, a professor emeritus from the University at Buffalo's medical school, will address the health effects from radiation exposure.

Lockwood's presentation will be followed by a panel discussion. Environmental advocates favor a full remediation of the site in northern Cattaraugus County, where highly radioactive materials are stored.

The Department of Energy-led scoping sessions are scheduled to be held from 6 to 9:30 p.m., March 19-21 in West Valley, Buffalo and Irving, respectively.

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

Meeting Thursday will detail next steps for West Valley nuclear cleanup

By RICK MILLER, *Olean Times Herald* – February 28, 2018

BUFFALO — A coalition of environmental groups is hosting a program Thursday on the **West Valley Demonstration Project** and the next step in the decades-long cleanup of the nation's first commercial nuclear reprocessing plant.

Members of the Western New York Environmental Alliance will hold a public information meeting on next phase of the West Valley cleanup at the Burchfield Penney Art Center, 1300 Elmwood Ave., beginning at 7 p.m.

Dr. Alan Lockwood, professor emeritus from the UB Medical School and senior scientist with Physicians for Social Responsibility will present a talk about the health impacts of radiation, "So You Don't Want Nuclear Waste in your Water?"

His presentation will be followed by a panel discussion to include Agnes Williams, of the Indigenous Women's Network, Barbara Warren of the Citizens' Environmental Coalition, Deborah Hayes of Communications Workers of America and Diane D'Arrigo of the Nuclear Information Resource Service.

The meeting is to help the public prepare for the upcoming scoping hearings for the West Valley Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on March 19, 20 and 21 in West Valley, Buffalo and Irving, said Joanne Hoffmeister, president of the West Valley Coalition of West Valley Nuclear Wastes, one of the sponsors of the meeting.

Hoffmeister, who has been involved in the issues surrounding West Valley for four decades, said, "An array of nuclear waste has been stored and some buried on an erodible plateau since the 1960s, put in place before there were any laws on the siting of such dangerous waste. This site is managed by the Department of Energy and owned by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, agencies responsible for cleaning up the waste and protecting public health and our waters."

Hoffmeister said the upcoming West Valley Phase II scoping sessions are very, very important. The Coalition is willing to wait for a national nuclear waste repository to move radioactive wastes from the site, but the wastes should be "packaged securely and monitored" in the interim.

"We meant to make sure good decisions are made at West Valley," she added. "It has to have a safe place to go," she said of the nuclear waste at the site.

Charley Bowman, of the Sierra Club Niagara Group, said the protection of fresh water supplies is key.

"There are enormous amounts of radioactivity (100,000's of Curies) buried and stored at the West Valley nuclear waste site," Bowman said. "Some of that radioactivity is escaping beyond the site boundaries and now resides in the

surrounding unstable soils, trees and creeks. Some of the radioactive elements will be dangerous for millions of years."

The Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes has been afraid from the start that the Department of Energy would seek to leave much of the waste buried where it is. That includes large steel tanks that still hold radioactive residue and the low-level radioactive waste in landfills operated by the (federal) Nuclear Regulatory Commission and New York State Energy Research and Development Authority.

These low-level radioactive landfills threaten the drinking water of hundreds of thousands of Western New Yorkers if they were to fail and leak into nearby creeks that empty into Cattaraugus Creek and Lake Erie, Hoffmeister said. A leak could also contaminate Lake Erie.

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

Concerned Citizens regroup to take on environmental issues

By KATE DAY SAGER, Olean Times Herald
Feb 23, 2018



Nick O'Keefe (at right), the new president of Concerned Citizens of Cattaraugus County, speaks to members who gathered for a reorganization meeting Thursday at Perkins Restaurant in Olean.
Kate Day Sager/Olean Times Herald

OLEAN — A reorganizational meeting for the Concerned Citizens of Cattaraugus County group not only elected a new president and officers Thursday, but began identifying environmental concerns in the region.

At the start of the meeting at Perkins Restaurant in Olean, longtime board member and vice president Barry Miller said the environmental organization had suffered a minor setback when former president Kathy Boser stepped down from the post. Miller said he was pleased with the turnout of more than a dozen current members who want the environmental and health watchdog organization to continue its support of issues in both New York state and Pennsylvania.

The organization counts its successful fight to keep a solid waste landfill from locating in Farmersville, as well as a wind turbine farm from setting up in Allegany, among its accomplishments since the early 1990s.

One of the first orders of business at the meeting was the election of the new board president, Nick O'Keefe, a current resident of Allegany County. O'Keefe, a Michigan native, has been an activist for political and environmental issues, works in fundraising for HomeCare & Hospice in Cattaraugus County and plans to move to the county. O'Keefe said he has worked with Concerned Citizens of Allegany County on issues that include fracking and landfill issues.

"I've always had a soft spot in my heart for the little guy," O'Keefe said.

Elected as the new vice president to replace Miller was Rob Mrowka, a retired U.S. Forest Service supervisor and forest ecologist, who was not present.

Miller said he expects the group will be ready to tackle several local environmental issues in upcoming months.

Miller identified the proposed Epiphany Allegheny fracking wastewater treatment facility in Coudersport, Pa., as one such issue. He said the Seneca Nation of Indians has asked the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to reject permit applications for the produced water discharge plant, as it will be located at the headwaters of the Allegheny in Eulalia Township in Potter County.

"It's going to be putting (harmful) particles in the Allegheny River" which runs through Olean and Allegany, he said.

Miller asked members of Concerned Citizens to attend the upcoming Coudersport Area Municipal Authority which will discuss the proposed treatment plant. The meeting is slated to be held at 6:30 p.m. Monday at the Sewer Plant on Toles Hollow Road. He said a group of Seneca Nation officials also plan to take a busload of people to the Coudersport meeting to voice their concerns.

Another issue on Concerned Citizens' agenda is the ongoing West Valley Demonstration Project, a nuclear waste remediation site in West Valley. The site has focused on the cleanup and containment of radioactive waste from a commercial nuclear fuel reprocessing plant abandoned in 1980.

"There are many opportunities coming up in the next month in West Valley so we're going to try to get carloads of people to go up there," Miller continued. "This is a big decision about what to do about West Valley — dig it up or let it stay there and erode into Lake Erie."

SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL



Ashford board discusses grant options

ASHFORD—Looking at the next phase in the master plan implementation, the Town of Ashford board heard about future grant options the town can pursue during a meeting Feb. 14.

Ashford Planning Board President Andrea Mellon spoke about a recent proposal from the Ferguson Group, who is developing the master plan for the town, that laid out a number of national and state grants that the town can apply for.

“This is really to start the implementation of our master plan,” Mellon said. “Things like infrastructure are called out specifically in the master plan recognizing the need to begin to design for the infrastructure, look at the strategic planning of that infrastructure and begin the construction of the infrastructure ... to not only keep the residents in the areas that are there but also to attract and encourage business in the area.”

With the cost of applying for each grant ranging from \$7,000 to \$17,000, the Ferguson Group offered an option where the town can choose to apply for any three grants for a flat fee of \$25,000.

Mellon recommended the town go with the three grants for \$25,000 option and suggested three grants they should apply for – the U.S. Department of Commerce grant, U.S. Agriculture grant and an Appalachian Regional grant.

With some of these grants, the Ferguson Group also recommended the town do a door-to-door income survey within the two main areas of the master plan – the Route 240 corridor and the Route 219 corridor.

“We are very close to having a lot more funding provided either in the pre-construction and the construction ... if we meet their eligibility requirements for income, we would have a lot more paid in the grant as opposed to being just over that,” Mellon said.

In other board news:

Stephen Schlagenhauf was presented with a plaque honoring his more than 35 years of service to the town highway department amid his retirement.



Councilman William Heim suggested the town looks into putting a streetlight at the corner of Route 219 and Peters Road. Supervisor Charles Davis said he will look into the issue.

New York State Energy Research and Development Agency West Valley Program Director Paul Bembia reported NYSERDA recently completed its evaluation needed from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the proposed solar farm at the West Valley nuclear site. NYSERDA submitted the package to their licensing support contractor and they expect to hear comments and recommendations back soon.

The next Ashford Town Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ashford Community Center, located at 9377 Route 240, in West Valley.

SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL

Serving Springville, Concord, Ashford, West Valley, Collins, Colden and East Concord

Equipment from WVDP shipped to another facility

02-16-2018

WEST VALLEY—A highly specialized piece of welding equipment from the Department of Energy's cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project was shipped thousands of miles to the government's Hanford site in Washington state, to assist in proposed packaging and moving highly-radioactive cesium and strontium capsules to dry storage. Sharing the equipment valued at approximately \$2.4 million helps the sites achieve savings.

Prior to the equipment transfer, a team from Hanford contractor CH2M visited counterparts at CH2M BWXT West Valley, LLC to learn about best practices from the WVDP's successful relocation of 278 canisters of vitrified high-level waste to an onsite interim storage pad. The canisters were packaged in overpacks and welded shut with the specialized welder before being relocated. CHBWV accomplished this task on Nov. 17, 2016, one year ahead of schedule.



"It's important to share lessons learned and best practices," CHBWV President Jeff Bradford said. "This helps to prevent potential problems, increase safety and maximize success."

The robotically-operated Tungsten Inert Gas welder was specially designed and fabricated to seal the WVDP overpacks. During the relocation process, five high-level waste canisters were inserted into a single stainless steel overpack that was preloaded into a steel-lined concrete

SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL



Serving Springville, Concord, Ashford, West Valley, Collins, Colden and East Concord

Vertical Storage Cask. The overpack lid was then welded shut using the highly-specialized TIG welder prior to the storage cask assembly being moved to the interim storage pad.

The TIG welder enables repetitive precision welding that produces a high-integrity seal to ensure a safe and secure shipment-ready package. Another benefit is the welder's remote operation capability that prevents radioactive exposure to the operator.

The welder's computer interface is capable of monitoring and controlling welder amperage, voltage, travel speed, wire feed speed and the hot wire current. All of this, combined with a fully integrated robotic arm, further enhances the safety and precision for welding operations.

At Hanford, CH2M is planning to relocate 1,936 cesium and strontium capsules, currently stored underwater at the Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility to an outside storage area. The planned storage area at Hanford, similar to the one at WVDP, is modeled after dry spent fuel storage systems in use at commercial nuclear power plants in the U.S. It will feature above-ground, shielded cask storage which requires little ongoing maintenance and no supplementary ventilation.

In the summer of 2018, the Hanford team will also receive a large tow tractor and vertical transporter used to move casks to the outdoor storage area at West Valley. These two specialized pieces of equipment were designed and built to move each 87.5-ton, steel-reinforced vertical storage cask to the interim storage pad at the WVDP.

EM Announces New Manager to Succeed Jack Craig at Savannah River Site



EM recently announced that Michael D. Budney will serve as the new manager for the Savannah River Operations Office.

AIKEN, S.C. – EM has named Michael D. Budney as the new manager for the [Savannah River Operations Office](#). He succeeds Jack Craig, who is retiring after 32 years of federal service, including 29 years of leadership in the environmental cleanup program.

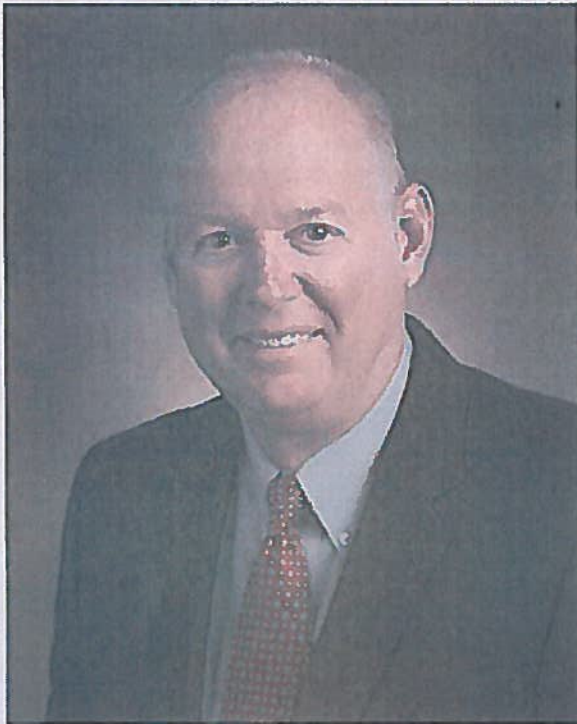
Budney brings to the Savannah River Site (SRS) 20 years of senior leadership experience while serving in the U.S. Navy, the departments of Defense and Energy, the private sector. He retired from the military as a captain and served as an officer aboard four submarines and three ships over a 29-year military career.

"Mike is highly respected for his leadership," said James Owendoff, EM Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary. "Through those skills, he is well positioned to lead the Savannah River team, run operations and manage the site."

In his major command, Budney spent two years as commanding officer of the *USS Emory S. Land*. In that post, he commanded 1,200 sailors and directed computer and communications systems, electrical, electronic, mechanical, propulsion plant and nuclear maintenance on Navy submarines and surface ships operating throughout Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

Budney also served 2 ½ years as commanding officer of the *USS Pennsylvania*, an Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine, where he was responsible for all aspects of ship and nuclear propulsion plant operations. The vessel was awarded Battle Efficiency "E" for superior operational performance.

Most recently, Budney was director of the Office of Business Operations in the DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. He led the office's workforce planning, information technology, and project management efforts, and coordinated support service contract and acquisition activities.



Jack Craig is retiring after 32 years of federal service.

Craig announced his retirement effective Feb. 28.

"I tell people that the DOE manager position at SRS is the best job in DOE — and it is true," he said. "SRS has important and challenging missions, a highly skilled and dedicated workforce, productive collaboration with our regulators, and an outstanding partnership with the community."

Craig also served as acting Associate Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for EM at DOE headquarters; director of the [EM Consolidated Business Center](#) in Cincinnati; and deputy manager of the DOE Ohio Field Office, where he was responsible for the management, cleanup, and restoration of the Fernald, Mound, Battelle-Columbus and Ashtabula sites, and the [West Valley Demonstration Project](#).

"It will be tough to see Jack go. Under his leadership, Savannah River has achieved impressive milestones, including closing of Tank 16, the completion of the [33-million gallon SDU \(Saltstone Disposal Unit\) 6](#) ahead of schedule and under budget, and the completed

construction of the Salt Waste Processing Facility," Owendoff said. "To Jack, I say we'll miss you and a job well done."

- Contributor: *Stephan Tetreault*

FY 2018 Appropriations Highlights*

(amounts in thousands of dollars)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	FY2018 House Bill (H.R. 3354)	FY2018 Senate Bill (S. 1609)
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY	30,746,009	28,041,597	29,888,401	31,463,626
Environmental Management	6,420,000	6,508,335	6,395,400	6,633,968
Defense Environmental Cleanup	5,405,000	5,537,186	5,405,000	5,579,968
Hanford/ Richland	839,760	716,192	837,553	826,192
Office of River Protection	1,499,965	1,504,311	1,518,311	1,590,000
Idaho National Laboratory	382,088	350,226	382,071	350,226
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory	1,396	1,175	31,175	1,175
Separations Process Research Unit	3,685	1,800	1,800	1,800
Nevada NNSA Sites	62,176	60,136	60,136	60,136
Sandia National Laboratory	4,130	2,600	2,600	2,600
Los Alamos National Laboratory	194,000	191,629	194,000	217,529
Oak Ridge Reservation	263,219	207,600	283,721	275,219
Savannah River Site	1,233,429	1,282,467	1,397,694	1,260,000
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant	292,720	316,571	323,041	300,971
Non-Defense Environmental Cleanup	247,000	218,400	222,400	266,000
West Valley Demonstration Project	66,413	60,585	64,585	75,000
Gaseous Diffusion Plants	101,304	100,575	100,575	101,304
Uranium Enrichment Decontamination & Decommissioning Fund	768,000	752,749	768,000	788,000
Oak Ridge	194,673	145,726	158,018	194,673
Paducah	205,530	202,958	202,958	205,530
Portsmouth	315,168	351,271	351,271	351,271
Legacy Management	154,320	154,606	154,606	154,606
National Nuclear Security Administration	12,938,252	13,931,000	13,914,400	13,685,032
Weapons Activities	9,245,567	10,239,344	10,239,344	10,000,071
Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation	1,882,872	1,793,310	1,776,461	1,852,310
Naval Reactors	1,419,813	1,479,751	1,486,000	1,436,651
Nuclear Energy	1,016,616	703,000	969,000	917,020
Yucca Mountain and Interim Storage	---	120,000	120,000	---
Nuclear Waste Disposal	---	90,000	90,000	---
Defense Nuclear Waste Disposal	---	30,000	30,000	---
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES				
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	112,505	138,000	161,612	108,525
Yucca Mountain Licensing	---	30,000	30,000	---

*Note: These figures are compiled from different sources: the Office of Management and Budget, the Congressional Appropriations committee reports, and press releases. There are some discrepancies in how each calculates government spending.

Ashford board holds organizational meeting

ASHFORD – The Ashford Town Board held its annual organizational meeting on Jan. 10.

Appointments by the board during the organizational meeting included Susan Feldman as the bookkeeper for the supervisor, Larry Feldman as code enforcement officer, Bill King as town historian, Angela Ghani as director of the recreation committee for a one year term, John Syms as the animal control officer, John Pfeffer as deputy supervisor and Keith Butcher as deputy highway superintendent.

Along with the appointments, naming the Springville Journal as the town's official newspaper, the 2018 schedule of meetings, the committees for the town board and rates for new employees were all approved.

After the organizational meeting, the board continued with its regular board meeting.

Ashford Supervisor Charles Davis spoke with the board about the upcoming year and some of the goals for the board to continue bettering the town.

"I feel like our responsibility is that when we wake up today we should figure out one thing to do to move this town forward and that is what I want our goal to be as a board," Davis said. "I just want to have, as a board, that mentality of what we are trying to do."

The town has a variety of projects its working on, including completion of the master plan, the **West Valley Demonstration Project demolition**, conversations about taxes and the proposed solar farm. Though Ashford is facing some challenges, Davis said the board's goal is to continue bettering the town and making it a better place for everybody in Ashford.

"We have a lot of challenges ... these are the goals that I think as this town board moves into 2018 and 2019, we need to strive more for ... to be

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better, to get better," Davis said. "Our goal is to make this town attractive where they want to come and live here."

In other board news:

– Sealed bids were opened for a new loader for the town. The board approved Ashford Highway Superintendent Tim Engels to look at the three bids and if they meet the specifications, go with the lowest bid.

– West Valley Volunteer Hose Company member Shawn Lafferty spoke to the board about the importance of adding and retaining new members to the fire company and asked if there is anything the town could do in helping increase membership.

The next Ashford Town Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ashford Community Center, located at 9377 Route 240, in West Valley.