

Attachment 2



County of Erie

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

JOAN E. LORING
COMMISSIONER

July 31, 1984

ANTHONY T. VOELL
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Mr. Wayne Gall, Director
Tifft Farm Nature Preserve
1200 Fuhrmann Blvd.
Buffalo, New York 14203

Re: LeHigh Valley Railroad
Property-Tifft Street

Dear Wayne:

This Department has investigated the LeHigh Valley Railroad property adjacent to the Tifft Farm Nature Preserve.

The attached report addresses site conditions, potential environmental concerns and recommendations.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 846-6148.

Very truly yours,

CAMERON O'CONNOR
Env. Quality Technician
Division of Environmental Control

CO'C:rb

Attachment

LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD

Tifft Street

Buffalo, New York

Prepared by

CAMERON O'CONNOR
Department of Environment and
Planning

July, 1984

INTRODUCTION

On July 12, 1984 Mr. Paul Barrick, City of Buffalo Planning Director requested our assistance in identifying possible environmental concerns on three parcels of land located north, east and south of Tiffit Farm Nature Preserve.

Those parcels are presently owned by Lehigh Valley Railroad, who wishes to donate these lands to the City of Buffalo for tax relief purposes.

The City of Buffalo and the Tiffit Farm Preserve are interested in this donation as these lands would act as a valuable buffer to the Preserve. (Exhibit I).

BACKGROUND

The Inter Agency Task Force, in their Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Sites in New York State identifies both the Tiffit Farm Nature Preserve and Lehigh Valley Railroad as suspected areas that have received hazardous wastes.

In the original report, the area referred to as Tiffit Farm included only the area that is known as the "mounds". The Lehigh Valley site gave only a Tiffit Street address and the disposal area was loosely defined.

Subsequent investigations of the area, by this department, determined that the Tiffit Farm Site should include both the mounds and the northern area where the filled in canals were located.

Due to the discovery of 55 gallon drums along and in Lake Kirsty in the nature preserve, Tiffit Farm received extensive sampling and remedial work in 1983.

The Lehigh Valley Site still remained undefined and was given a Priority Code of 2A which is a temporary classification assigned to sites having insufficient information to determine their significance and requiring further investigation.

This report will describe the lands north, east and south of the Tiffit Farm Nature Preserve. This land will be referred to as the Lehigh Valley Site.

INVESTIGATION OF LEHIGH VALLEY SITE

Historical Review

Aerial photographs from 1951, 1958, 1960 and 1972 indicate the Lehigh Valley Railroad tracks located to the east were active throughout this period. No extensive landfilling or change in topography was noted in this area.

Complaints of Record

- 1) In 1975, a citizen called to report that acid sludge from the Chevrolet Plant was being spread on the northeast portion of the Lehigh Valley Site. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation responded to the complaint and ceased all disposal.
- 2) In 1982, this department investigated an oil spill at two large above-ground storage tanks on the Lehigh Valley Site. These tanks were leased from Lehigh Valley Railroad by Booth Oil. The spillage was satisfactorily cleaned up and the waste oil removed from the tanks by Booth Oil.

Field Inspection - July 19, 1984

The information supplied by the City of Buffalo represented the Lehigh Valley Property as broken into three distinct parcels of land shown as Parcels 1, 2 and 3. (Exhibit 2).

This report shall describe each parcel separately.

Parcel 1

Two areas of that appeared to be foundry sand were observed in this parcel. Also residue from acid sludge disposal was observed. These areas lacked vegetative growth.

The Veihmeyer Sampler was driven to three feet to secure a soil sample in the foundry sand disposal area for physical observation. A one foot sample of material was recovered. All recovered material appeared to be foundry sand. No odors were associated with this material.

Exhibit 2 shows the approximate location of recent landfill activity. Most of the fill observed consisted of railroad ties and earth. One crushed 55 gallon drum was located on the western slope of this fill area.

Of possible concern was unidentified purple and green granular solids found at the toe of the fill area. The Veihmeyer sampler was driven to three feet in this area. A One foot sample of material was recovered. The top layers consisted of sand and silty sand. At the bottom of the sample, the soil was purple in color. No odors were noted at this location.

Parcel 2

Review of Parcel 2 indicated that the majority of this site was on active railroad tracks. Remnants of railroad tracks

were observed throughout this area. Slag and blast furnace material were observed throughout.

A Veihmeyer sampler was driven to three feet. Poor recovery of the sample was due to the sand and cinder consistency of the soil at this location.

On the northern edge of this parcel (possibly not on the parcel itself) a ponded water area was observed with a slight oil sheen. This oil sheen is probably from the adjacent active railroad.

One empty 55 gallon drum labeled "Car Oil" was observed on site. The only other evidence of industrial waste on Parcel #2 was casting sands and minor amount of foundry sand.

Except in the areas of foundry sand, parcel 2 is well vegetated with upland fields, with a few low areas that consist of wetland shrubs and trees.

Parcel 3

Parcel 3 rings the Tiffit Farm Nature Preserve on the north, south and east.

No environmental degradations were noted on the narrow strips of land located to the north and south of the Preserve.

The central portion of the Parcel 3 exhibits several areas of potential concern.

Leakage has occurred from the release valve of the southern above ground storage tank. Both tanks appear to have approximately one foot of an odorous residue. The Veihmeyer sampler was driven to a depth of three feet in two areas adjacent to the southern tank and one area adjacent to the northern tank. In all three attempts, very poor recovery in the core sample was secured due to the mucky soil conditions. The material recovery was greasy and had an oil odor associated with it.

North of the above ground storage tank was an approximately 200 X 15 foot wet area with sparse vegetation, numerous railroad ties and strong oil odor. The Veihmeyer sample was driven to three feet in three different locations in the affected area. In each location, heavily oil contaminated surficial ground water filled the hole to one inch below ground surface.

In the northwest sector of the central portion of Parcel 3, a series of mounds were observed.

The mounds, which are covered with field vegetation, are comprised of various types of waste material.

A rough approximation of thirty 55 gallon drums were noted protruding from the side slopes of the mounds. The poor condition of the drums indicate they have been on the site for an extended period of time. No labels were noted on the drums. Some of the drums were empty while others had either a red solid or a green granular solid. Sealed drums were not checked for contents. It is probable that drums are within the mounds that were not visible. Associated with these mounds were brick rubble commonly used in industrial furnaces. It is possible that the solids within the drums are debris from a razed foundry.

Parcel 3 consists of upland field and brush in areas of former railroad lines and cattail marsh in low areas.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The industrial waste material on the Lehigh Valley Site is the result of activities both by the railroad and other individuals who utilized the land when the railroad yards were abandoned.

There is insufficient information to determine if any of the industrial wastes noted are considered hazardous in accordance with Part 366 of the Environmental Conservation Law.

This Department cannot recommend acceptance of the property donation until an in-depth sampling program is undertaken to determine if hazardous materials are on site.

The following sampling is recommended:

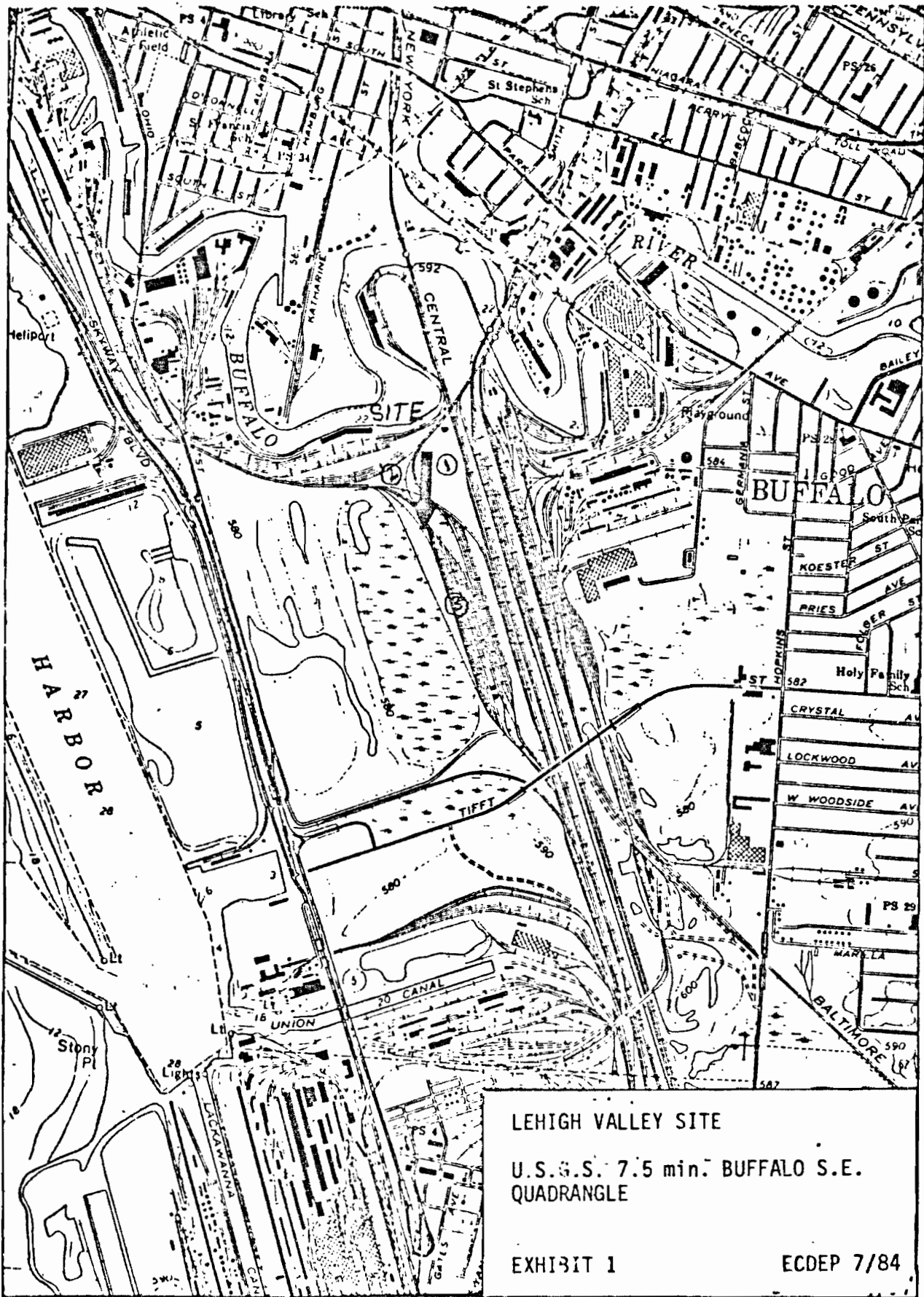
- 1) The residue of the acid sludges and foundry sand should be sampled for Arsenic, Barium, Cadmium, Chromium, Lead, Mercury, Selenium and Silver.
- 2) Samples of the sludges from the bottom of the above ground storage tank should be sampled for identification of the petroleum product. PCB analysis and an Aromatic Scan should also be run.
- 3) Soil samples (surface and deep) should be secured from the areas contaminated with oil. THO, PCB analysis and oil identification should be performed.

- 4) The material in the drums should be analyzed for the characteristics of ignitability, corrosivity, Reactivity and Toxicity).
- 5) A test pit in the area of the recent landfill should be excavated to determine the extent of disposal of the unidentified green and purple material.

It should be recognized that costs for remedial measures at the site would be high not only for removal of hazardous wastes, if any, but also site preparation if it were to become part of Tiffit Farm.

It is further recommended that this site be recognized as the Lehigh Valley Site (#915071) and retain its Priority Code of 2A indicating that the site needs further investigation.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation should consider this site as a possible candidate for State Super Fund action.



LEHIGH VALLEY SITE

U.S.G.S. 7.5 min. BUFFALO S.E. QUADRANGLE

EXHIBIT 1

ECDEP 7/84

