

Creek cleanup between phases

LOWERTOWN: *Next stage of remediation awaits results of sampling.*

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Phase one of the Eighteen-mile Creek Corridor Superfund site cleanup in Lockport is complete.

Michael Basile, community involvement coordinator for the Environmental Protection Agency, said the EPA was out in the area recently to do a walk-through of the Flintkote property, 300 Mill St.

"We confirmed that job was definitely completed," he said. "Not only demolition, but the removal of all the materials, buildings and foundation areas."

The now vacant property where five homes once sat on Water Street was also evaluated.

"Phase one is definitely behind us as we look forward to phase two," Basile said.

Phase two involves cleanup at particular industrial and commercial properties between the Erie Canal and Harwood Street. An EPA official said previously that the creek and its banks in this area are the "most contaminated" part of the Superfund site.

Samples of the creek sediment, bank soil and fish tissue have been taken. The results, which are expected later this year, will help inform the scope and mechanics of phase-two remediation, according to Basile. A feasibility study listing construction options and EPA's preferred course of action will be released to the public before it's finalized.

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"We're hoping that won't be too far along from now," Basile said. "We want to come back to the public with information."

With its fiscal year ending Sept. 30, EPA's goal is to have a proposal to the public by then. But, Basile said, "it's difficult to foresee it will take place."

The third and final phase of Eighteenmile Creek Corridor site remediation will focus efforts on the creek itself from roughly Harwood Street north to Olcott, where the creek lets out into Lake Ontario.

Basile said the EPA has been pleased with the "good public participation from residents" living near the phase-one cleanup area. As for what remains on the remediated parcels, "it's a nice green space now," he said. "It lends itself to a nicer, cleaner looking community."

Whether that cleaned-up green space is developable won't be determined until after phase-three cleanup is completed, according to Basile.

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