
The Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes

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On April 14, the U.S. Department of Energy published its Record of Decision for the nuclear wastes on the 3,300-acre site at West Valley, 30 miles south of Buffalo.

This Record of Decision addresses less than 10% of the waste on the West Valley site. Recently, the Department claimed that this latest Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has satisfied the West Valley Demonstration Project Act of 1980 and no further environmental analysis and procedural public review of decision-making will be necessary for the more than 90% of the waste remaining. This is an insult to the millions of people downstream, who are the involuntary risk-bearers of this dangerous decision.

The Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes, the only continuously active stakeholder in the decision process at West Valley since the late 1970's, rejects this current decision document and the accompanying flawed analysis.

In 1987, the federal district court in Buffalo ordered the Department of Energy to do a full NEPA Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS was to be a timely final waste disposition decision at the West Valley nuclear waste site for all of the site's wastes and provide public review of the decontamination and decommissioning of the West Valley site. The Draft EIS was issued for public comment in 1996, but was aborted jointly by the U.S. Department of Energy and New York State Energy Research and Development Authority.

The current Record of Decision is the result of a manipulated revised second analysis, namely the joint federal/state 2008 Draft EIS and the 2010 Final EIS. This revised analysis, using scientifically unsound, "re-engineered" modeling assumptions, predicts human health impacts that are up to *100,000 times less than those previously determined by the analysis of the 1996 site-wide DEIS.*

Simply stated, during 14 years of additional delay, the federal Department of Energy used inappropriate science to revise the previous 1996 site-wide DEIS and to produce a grossly flawed analysis that supports the federal/State choice of permanent onsite waste management at West Valley (see the CWVNW comments at [http://nuclear.bfn.org.CWVNW_2008 DEIS comments.pdf](http://nuclear.bfn.org.CWVNW_2008_DEIS_comments.pdf)).

The vast majority of the long-lived wastes, including the vitrified High-Level Nuclear Waste, are not to be removed from this physically most unsuitable site. Instead, the nuclear and chemical wastes are to be left onsite where they will be subject to both gradual erosion and sudden storm-related catastrophic releases to the creeks that drain the site to Lake Erie, thereby polluting downstream water supplies.

Dozens of local, State and federal politicians and local municipalities and hundreds of individuals formally objected to the manipulated, severely flawed revision and went on the record in support of full waste removal from West Valley.

An independent State-sponsored study showed that full waste removal to be both safer *and less costly in the long run*. Displaying "penny wise and pound foolish" short-sightedness, the State administration ignored its own study and the unanimous, informed public opposition to leaving the wastes at West Valley.

The federal DOE issued its "onsite stewardship" decision on April 14, 2010. Subsequently, New York State issued a SEQRA Findings Statement accepting the final federal decision (see <http://westvalleyeis.com/ROD.pdf> and http://www.nyserda.org/publications/findings_statement.pdf respectively).

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The Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes is a volunteer, not-for-profit association of individuals and organizations and dedicated to good decision-making for the nuclear wastes at West Valley, NY.