

## GRATIOT COUNTY

# Business as usual at Pine River

## Cleanups continue in St. Louis amid Trump uncertainty

**Linda Gittleman**

*For the Morning Sun*

Amid serious concerns that President-elect Donald Trump will dismantle the Environmental Protection Agency, it was business as usual at the Pine River Superfund Task Force Wednesday.

Tom Alcamo, the EPA's project director in St. Louis for several years updated the group on the agency's plans and activities.

Work at the Velsicol plant site continues as roads are being created and electrical sources added.

Some remediation has taken place and more than \$1 million

has been spent, he said.

About 140 gallons of NAPL or non-aqueous phase liquid contaminants have been removed, he said.

Geotech borings have been completed to gauge the stability of the soil, he added.

But it won't be until spring when he finds out if funding will

be available for the on sight thermal clean up on the plant site.

That's expected to cost about \$15 million.

"I remain optimistic," he said.

The EPA and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality have spent years in the clean ups to rid the area of DDT, PBB and other toxic chemicals.

The EPA will also rank - in terms of funding — the burn pit site and sampling will begin

early next month.

He is waiting for results of the wildlife study, conducted by the DEQ downstream. That study concerns the health of mammals such as birds and mink.

Alcamo however, couldn't address or guess the future of the EPA or what the impact would be on the St. Louis clean ups.

"I just don't think you should expect an increase in funding," he said.