

Canadians fight cleanup plan

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BUFFALO (AP) — Two Canadian environmental groups, including Toronto-based Pollution Probe, have won permission to appear in U.S. federal court to oppose a plan they say is inadequate to clean up a massive chemical dump on the American side of the Niagara River.

Supported by federal Environment Minister John Roberts, Pollution Probe and Operation Clean-Niagara of Niagara-on-the-Lake have been given until June 30 to submit a brief to the court.

U.S. judge John Curtin is weighing a proposal for cleaning up the Hyde park landfill. Located on Bloody Run Creek immediately north of Niagara Falls, N.Y., the dump was operated by what now is Hooker Chemicals and Plastics Corp. between 1953 and 1974.

It is believed to contain 80,000 tons of wastes — four times the amount in the infamous Love Canal — including almost 2,000 pounds of dioxin, among the deadliest of poisons known.

The \$16.5 million cleanup plan's supporters say it is the best possible because it enables work to get started immediately. Without it, state and federal officials argue, lawsuits would continue for years.

The two Canadian groups, however, say that the containment systems and liability provisions placed on Hooker appallingly inadequate.