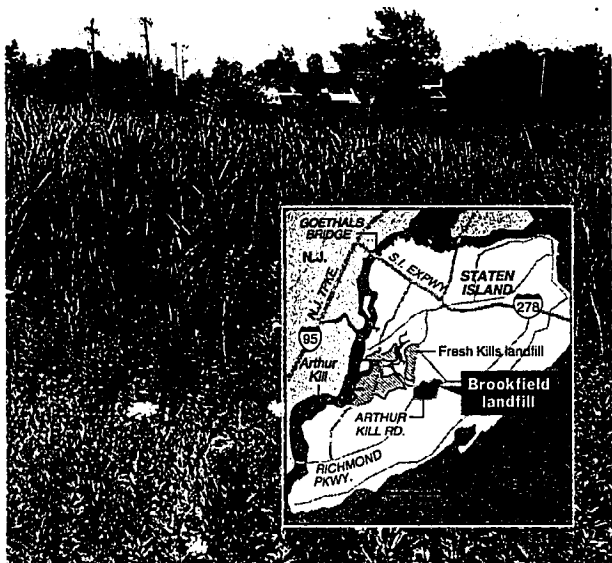


GREENRIDGE



Mary DiBlase Blaich for The New York Times

Weeds hide a toxic stew at a landfill the state wants to clean up.

State's Plan for a Leaky Landfill Doesn't Go Far Enough, Some Say

The Brookfield landfill's 272 acres are dwarfed by the nearby Fresh Kills landfill's 3,000, but they still have a toxic punch. Those 272 acres leak 95,000 gallons of contaminated water every day into the groundwater and Richmond Creek.

That water is tainted with pesticides, chlorinated solvents, lead and cadmium dumped at the landfill illegally from 1974 to 1980, the year it closed. The waste makes the landfill almost as much of a threat to the environment as Fresh Kills, which closed to much fanfare in March.

Now the State Department of Environmental Conservation has come up with a \$86.7 million plan to clean up the Brookfield landfill. First, it would be capped with a plastic liner covered with dirt. Then trenches and plastic barriers would funnel the tainted water into a treatment plant. Finally, the sites's gases would be burned off.

Ted Mrozinski, a retired environmental engineer who lives near the landfill, said he thought the plan did not go far enough. He said the department should dig up the haz-

ardous waste and remove it. "Those heavy metals are going to migrate into the water," he said, "unless they're taken out."

But Helen Bialer, chairwoman of the Brookfield Landfill Citizens' Advisory Committee, a monitoring group, called such an effort unnecessary and expensive.

Financing for the cleanup is in doubt. Jennifer Post, spokeswoman for the Department of Environmental Conservation, said the city had collected \$60 million from companies that illegally dumped at five city landfills. Of that amount, \$12 million would go to Brookfield. Normally, the rest of the money would come from the state's Superfund account. But Ms. Post said Gov. George E. Pataki and the State Assembly are wrangling over how to run the Superfund, and its money has run out.

Still, Ms. Post said the department would continue work under the assumption that the state would reimburse it. Should all go well, construction would begin in 2003. Eventually, the site will be covered with groves of trees and walking trails

JIM O'GRADY