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DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROGRAM FOR FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES

Across the country, the Department of Defense acquired properties, often during times of war, to use for military training, testing and demonstrations. When no longer needed, many of these properties were cleaned up according to the best practices available at the time and then transferred to other owners such as private individuals or other government entities. These Formerly Used Defense Sites can range from privately owned farms to National Parks. They also include residential, industrial and educational properties. We are committed to protecting people and the environment and improving public safety by cleaning up these properties. The Defense Environmental Restoration Program for Formerly Used Defense Sites was established to evaluate and, if necessary, to remediate Formerly Used Defense Sites. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) manages the program on behalf of the Department of Defense.

Congress passed the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, also known as Superfund, in 1980 and the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act in 1986. These laws give the Corps the authority for certain cleanup activities and dictate the process we must follow. We conduct investigations to determine the potential risk to people and the environment from the military's use of the property. Public involvement and community participation are important components of the process. The Corps partners with stakeholders throughout the process, including congressional representatives, state and local governments, regulatory and environmental agencies, and affected property owners.

BACKGROUND

The military leased 1,681 acres in Dixie County in 1942 for an Army air-to-ground gunnery range. The site, known as Cross City Target Range, was about one mile north of Horseshoe Beach, and air crews from Cross City Army Airfield and Marianna Army Airfield used it for strafing practice and possibly as a practice bombing range. The Army constructed four hutments, an emergency landing strip, and a standard gunnery range with 12 targets. Crews fired .30 and .50 caliber machine guns and 20 mm and 37 mm cannons from fighter aircraft onto the ground targets. While some historic documentation indicates the Army requested the site be used for practice bombing, there is no evidence it was actually used for that purpose.

Following the end of World War II, the Army no longer needed the range, and the leases were terminated in June of 1945. The property comprising the former Cross City Target Range is undeveloped marsh and timberland. About half of the site is within the Jena Unit of the Big Bend Wildlife Management Area which the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission manages.

ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

The Corps has evaluated the site several times over the years to determine if anything remains from the military's training. Based on historical research, the Corps established a 938 acre Air-to-Ground Gunnery Range project area which includes the target location and a buffer around it. In 2011, the Corps completed a Site Inspection to determine if further evaluation of the site would be necessary based on the past military use of the area. No munitions or munitions debris (expended small arms and/or pieces of

FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES | Cross City Target Range

munitions) were found during the Site Inspection. However, because our primary concern is protecting people and the environment, the Corps will conduct a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study at a future date to determine if anything further remains in the area from the Army's training, and if so, in what amounts and locations. This is known as characterizing the nature and extent of potential military-related materials.

The Corps uses a tool called the Munitions Response Site Prioritization Protocol to rank the risk to people and the environment at Formerly Used Defense Sites, such as the Cross City Air-to-Ground Gunnery Range. This tool helps the Department of Defense prioritize studies or remediation (if necessary) for properties across the country. Sites that have a higher potential risk to people and the environment are addressed first. Since the potential risk at the former Cross City Air-to-Ground Gunnery Range is low, the Corps has not yet scheduled the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study, but we will notify the public when we anticipate initiating further studies.

While the possibility of encountering munitions is low, always use caution in areas where the military has trained. Remember and follow the 3Rs of Explosive Safety. **Recognize** the object you found could be dangerous. **Retreat** from the area without touching the object, but make note of its location. **Report** it by calling 9-1-1.



SAFETY FIRST: Remember the 3Rs

If you are on a Formerly Used Defense Site, it is vitally important, in the unlikely event that potential munitions are encountered, to follow the simple 3Rs of explosives safety: Recognize, Retreat, Report.

RECOGNIZE - The item may be dangerous.

RETREAT - Do not touch the item and leave the area.

REPORT - Call 9-1-1 immediately.

Recognize **Retreat** **Report**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Click on Formerly Used Defense Sites under Most Requested

