



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

**Defense Environmental Restoration Program
Formerly Used Defense Sites**

**CULEBRA, PUERTO RICO
PROPERTY NO. I02PR0068**

**Inventory Project Report (INPR)
Original May 1991
Revised June 2005**



Prepared by
US Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District

**Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP)
Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS)**

US Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District

**Culebra Island, Puerto Rico
Property Site No. I02PR0068**

**Inventory Project Report (INPR)
Revised June 2005**

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USACE, Jacksonville District Points of Contact

DERP-FUDS Program Manager
Robert Bridgers
CESAJ-DP-S
904.232.3085

DERP-FUDS INPR Project Manager
Ivan Acosta
CESAJ-PD-EP
904.232.1693

**Findings and Determination of Eligibility
(Revised 2005)**

**Defense Environmental Restoration Program
For Formerly Used Defense Sites
Findings and Determination of Eligibility
(Original 24 Dec 1991)
(Revised June 2005)**

Culebra, Puerto Rico

Site No. I02PR0068

FINDINGS OF FACT

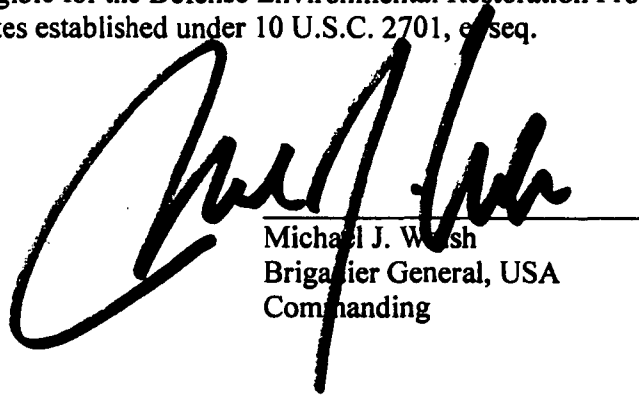
1. Between 1903 and 1964, the United States acquired 2747.12 acres of land on Culebra Island (2067.8 acres fee), Culebrita Island (266.0 acres fee), Luis Pena Cay (342.5 acres fee), Water Cay (7 acres fee) and the adjacent cayos (63.82 acres leased), for a bombing and gunnery range and auxiliary airfield for the Navy. The United States acquired fee title to 2135 acres of land from Spain (1785.5 acres on Culebra Island, the 342.5 acres on Luis Pena Cay, and the 7 acres on Water Cay). These lands were transferred to the Navy by Presidential Proclamation of 26 June 1903. The Navy acquired 13.83 acres by purchase in 1903 and 268.47 by donation in 1939, all on Culebra Island. In the early 1940s, 265.59 acres of fee land Culebrita Island and Ladrones Cay were transferred to the Navy from the Coast Guard; 63.82 acres were acquired by leases for the Navy on adjacent cayos; and 0.41 of an acre on Culebrita Island was acquired by permit from the Coast Guard.
2. The lands were part of the U.S. Naval Station, Culebra Island, Puerto Rico and were utilized by the Navy as a coaling station, training area, auxiliary airport, weapons range, and bombing and gunnery range. The Navy constructed various improvements including a range operation center, maintenance sheds, helicopter landing pad, security fencing, warehouses, storage tanks, septic tanks, water distribution building, pumping stations, housing, and an auxiliary landing field including runways, taxiways, etc. Parts of the property (approximately 990 acres on Culebra Island) were utilized by others by virtue of outgrants from the Navy, prior to the Navy declaring the property as excess. The remainder of the property was under Department of Defense (DoD) control during the period of DoD ownership.
3. The Navy terminated the leases on the 63.82 acres on the adjacent cayos in 1972 and returned the property to the then current owners. The terms and conditions of the leases and termination notices or any restoration requirements are unknown as copies of those instruments could be located. On 5 July 1972, the Navy reported 1089.80 acres of the site excess to the General Services Administration (GSA). On 19 May 1976, the Navy reported an additional 1501.5 acres excess to GSA. On 28 March 1976, the Navy transferred 4.09 acres on Culebrita Island to the Coast Guard and terminated the permit from the Coast Guard comprising 0.41 of an acre located on Culebrita, which is still utilized by the Coast Guard. The Navy retained and still utilized 87.5 acres on Culebra Island that was only recently declared excess and is currently being transferred to the Department of the Interior.

4. The Lands reported excess to GSA were disposed of as follows:
 - a. The Navy (at the direction of GSA) transferred 611 acres (342.5 acres on Luis Pena Cay, 261.5 acres on Culebrita Island, and 7 acres on Water Cay) and 776.35 acres on Culebra Island, together with all improvements, to the Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) on 23 March 1978 and 15 September 1980, respectively. All 1387.5 acres transferred to the FWS comprise the Culebra Island National Wildlife Refuge.
 - b. By quitclaim deed dated 7 February 1980, GSA conveyed fee title to 79.73 acres to the Puerto Rico Ports Authority on Culebra Island for public airport purposes. The deed contained a recapture and reverter clause and was subject to existing easements for public highways, roads, utilities, etc. This property is utilized as a public airport.
 - c. By quitclaim deed dated 11 August 1982, the United States of America, through the Secretary of the Interior, conveyed 935.98 acres to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico on Culebra Island. The deed contained a reverter clause and other restrictions that the bombardment area composed of 644.99 acres would be utilized only for a public park or public recreational purposes. The deed contained language that the Commonwealth agreed to accept the bombardment area in its present condition, that the United States would not be held responsible for decontamination, and that the United States would be held harmless from any and all claims, demands, actions, etc., arising from any person's use of or presence on the property. This property is utilized for park purposes.
 - d. By quitclaim deed dated 24 February 1984, GSA conveyed 32.34 acres to the Department of Housing, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico on Culebra Island which is now public housing. The deed contained no restrictions, reverter, recapture clauses.
 - e. By quitclaim deed dated 29 April 1988, GSA conveyed 155.9 acres on Culebra Island to the Municipality of Culebra, Puerto Rico. This deed contained no warranties, recapture or reverter clauses, but was subject to existing easements for public highways, roads, utilities, etc., and contained a hold harmless clause in favor of the United States. The site is being utilized for city facilities and is under development as a port.
5. Besides the areas mentioned above that were purchased or leased by the Navy, additional lands were used by the US Marine Corps starting as early as 1914. The Marine Corps used the land for large scale maneuvers and ordnance training exercises. Beginning in 1924 the Marine Corps leased most of the private property on Culebra, other than the town of Dewey, for these exercises. In June 1937 the 1st Marine Brigade, Fleet Marine Force began preparations for the acquisition of property for the 1938 Fleet Landing Exercise #4. These preparations culminated in December 1937 when the Commanding Officer of the Naval Aviation and Facilities, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands that the government leases for all privately owned leases on the island of Culebra had been secured.

DETERMINATION

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the site, except for 87.5 acres recently transferred from the control of the Navy, has been determined to be formerly used by the Department of Defense. It is therefore eligible for the Defense Environmental Restoration Program- Formerly Used Defense Sites established under 10 U.S.C. 2701, et seq.

19 Sep 05
Date



Michael J. Walsh
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding