

JUNE 2016

## 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.

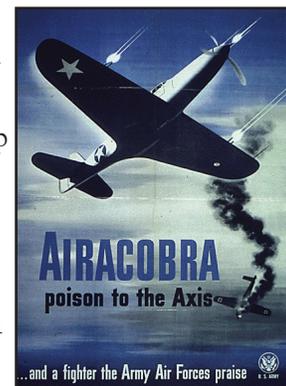
## BACKGROUND

During World War II, the military leased 4,820.98 acres in Polk County about two miles north of Bartow for use as a small arms range and a practice bombing range for Army Air Forces personnel training at Bartow Army Airfield. The Army established a water target in the middle of Lake Hancock as a dive and skip bombing range where crews dropped 100-pound, sand-filled practice bombs. Rifle, pistol, and submachine gun ranges were constructed on the south shore of Lake Hancock with the firing point on land and the targets in the water.

By 1945, the Army no longer needed the site, and the leases were terminated. The Southwest Florida Water Management District now owns the former Lake Hancock Small Arms and Bombing Range which encompasses all of Lake Hancock and some land along the south shoreline.

## ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

The Corps has evaluated the site several times over the years to determine if anything remains from the military's training. The Corps established a 2,006-acre project area that comprises the bombing and small arms ranges, and completed a Site Inspection of this area in 2010 to determine if further evaluation of the site may be necessary. While no munitions or munitions debris (expended small arms and/or pieces of munitions) were found during the Site Inspection, the Corps will conduct a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study at a future date to determine if anything remains in the area from the Army's training, and if so, in what

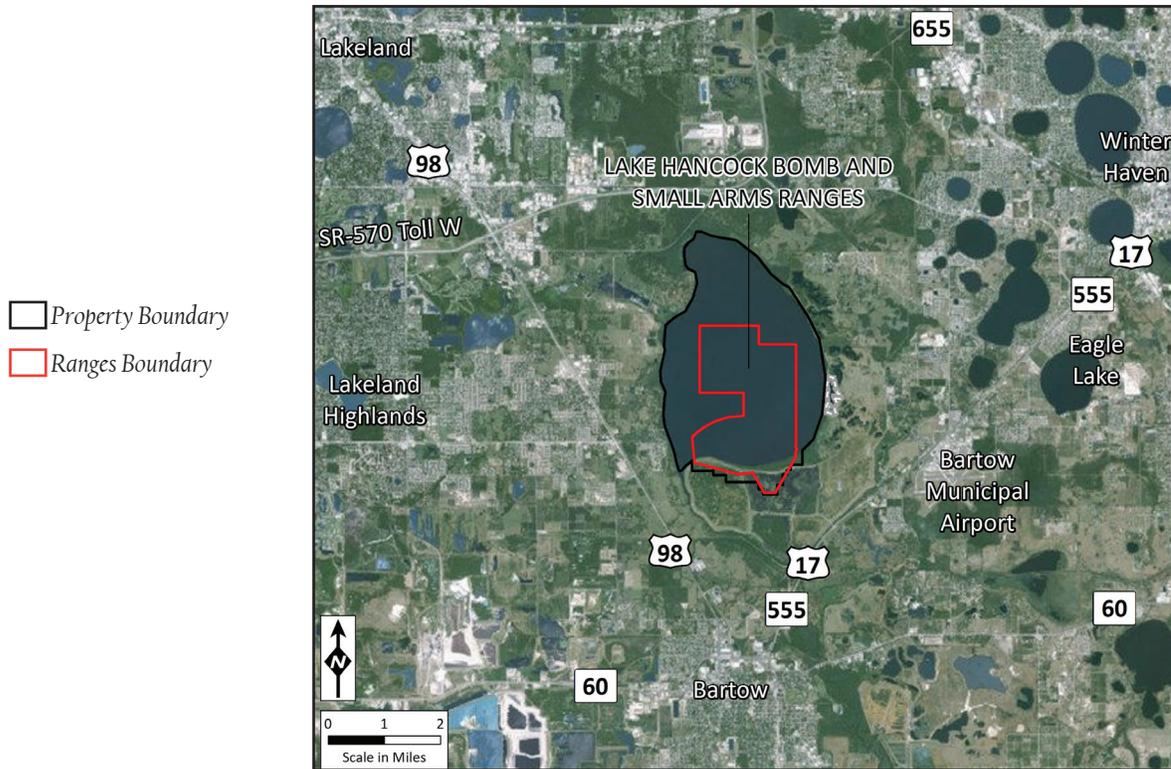


# FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES | Lake Hancock Small Arms and Bombing Range

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 former Lake Hancock Small Arms and Bombing 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 Lake Hancock Small Arms and Bombing 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.



Lake Hancock Small Arms and Bombing Range

## 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.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Click on Formerly Used Defense Sites under Most Requested

