

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 Navy leased 748 acres for a practice dive bombing target. The site, known as the Vero Beach Bomb Target 1, was about 22 miles west of Vero Beach in Indian River County. The Navy constructed two aircraft landing strips and a practice bomb target with a bulls-eye and three concentric rings around it. Air crews from Vero Beach Naval Air Station and Fort Pierce Naval Amphibious Training Base dropped miniature practice bombs from low altitudes of 1,500 to 2,000 feet above the target.

Following World War II, the Navy no longer needed the target, so the leases were terminated, and the land was returned to the original property owners. The land is privately owned and is used for cattle grazing.



## ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

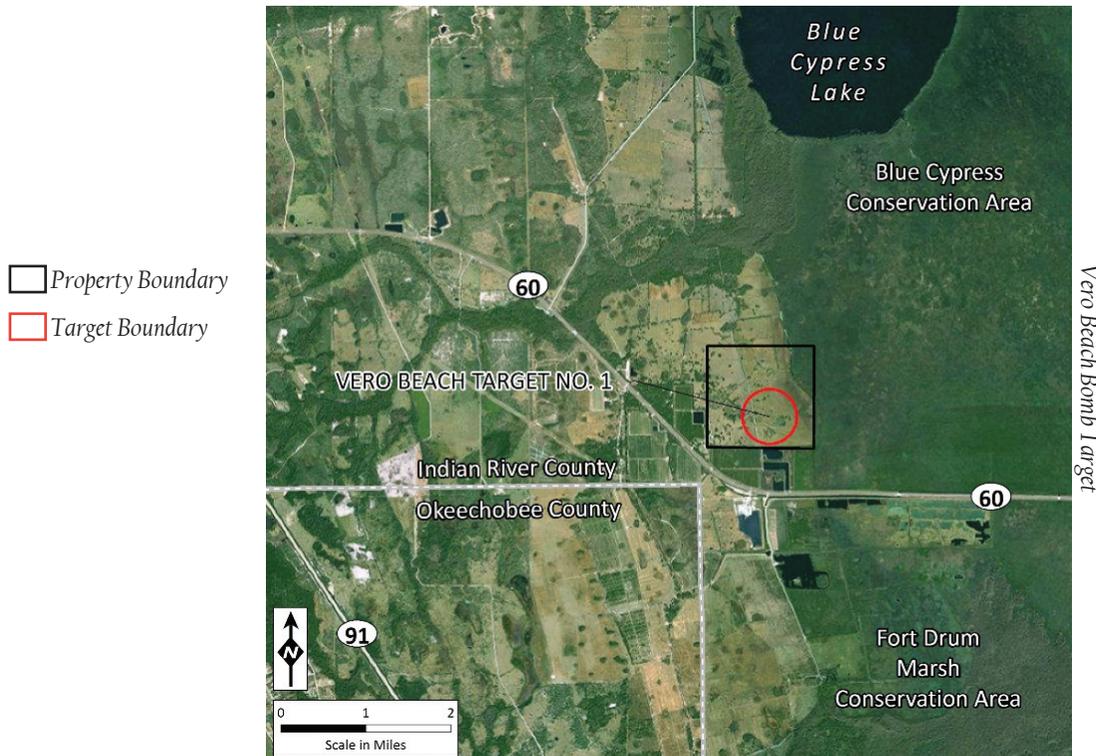
The Corps has evaluated the site several times over the years to determine if anything remains from the military's training. Based on historical research, the Corps established a 162 acre target area which includes the target location and a buffer around it. In 2010, the Corps completed a Site Inspection to determine if further evaluation of the site may be necessary based on the past military use of the area. No munitions or munitions debris (expended small arms and/or pieces of munitions) were found during the Site Inspection, although the team did identify remnants of the target. Because our primary concern is protecting people and the

# FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES | Vero Beach Bomb Target 1

environment, the Corps will conduct a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study at a future date to determine if anything remains in the area from the Navy'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 former Vero Beach Bomb Target 1. 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 Vero Beach Bomb Target 1 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.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

US Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District

Toll-Free 866.279.4880

FUDS.Florida@usace.army.mil

www.saj.usace.army.mil

Click on Formerly Used Defense Sites under Most Requested

