FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES | Mill Cove Bombing Site

NOTIFICATION AND SAFETY EDUCATION INITIATIVE

OCTOBER 2015

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 established a water target, known as Mill Cove Bombing Site located in Mill Cove within Doctors Lake in Clay County, Florida. The target was a pyramid -shaped raft of palmetto logs painted yellow. Flight crews from Jacksonville Naval Air Station used the target for strafing and dive bombing practice, firing .50 caliber machine guns and dropping practice bombs. The crews dropped their practice bombs at altitudes of 1,500-2,500 feet above the target.

Following World War II, the Navy no longer needed the target for training, and the target was removed. The State of Florida owns the submerged land of Doctors Lake and Mill Cove. The land surrounding the water is privately owned.

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 2008, the Corps completed a Site Inspection to determine if further evaluation of the site may be necessary based on the past mili-

tary use of the area. 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 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 Mill Cove Bombing Site. 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 Mill Cove Bombing Site is low, the Corps has not 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.

Approximate Location of Mill Cove Bombing Target

SAFETY FIRST: Remember the 3Rs

If you are on a Formerly Used Defense Site, do not pick up anything that you did not put on the ground. Because of previous military training, munitions may potentially be present. These could be dangerous and may not be easily recognizable. Never touch, move or disturb something you think may be a munition. Remember the 3Rs of explosive safety.

RECOGNIZE - The object you found could be dangerous.
RETREAT - Leave the area without touching or moving the object.
REPORT - Call 9-1-1 immediately.

Recognize Retreat Report

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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