

# FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES | Benedict Field Bombing Target

## PROPOSED PLAN



July 2025

## DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROGRAM-FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES

Across the United States, the Department of Defense (DoD) 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 governmental entities. These Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) range from privately owned farms to National Parks. They also include residential, industrial, and educational properties. The DoD is committed to protecting people and the environment and improving public safety by cleaning up these sites if hazards from former military operations remain. The Defense Environmental Restoration Program-Formerly Used Defense Sites was established to evaluate and, if necessary, remediate these FUDS. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) manages the program on behalf of the DoD.

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 USACE the authority for certain cleanup activities and dictate the process we must follow. USACE conduct investigations to determine the potential risk to people and the environment from the military's former use of these FUDS properties. Public involvement and community participation are important components of the process. USACE partners with stakeholders, including congressional representatives, state, local and tribal governments, regulatory and environmental agencies, and affected property owners throughout the process.

## BACKGROUND

The Benedict Field Bombing Target is a Munitions Response Site within the larger Benedict Field FUDS located on the southern shore of Saint Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. The Army Air Forces used the site as a low-altitude practice dive bombing target between 1940 and 1947. Munitions used at the site included practice bombs containing signal cartridges and aircraft parachute flares. Following the end of World War II, the military no longer needed Benedict Field, including the bombing target. In 1948, the federal government began deeding the property to other entities. The U.S. Virgin Islands Port Authority now owns most of the land associated with the former Benedict Field which they use for the Henry Rohlsen International Airport.

## ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

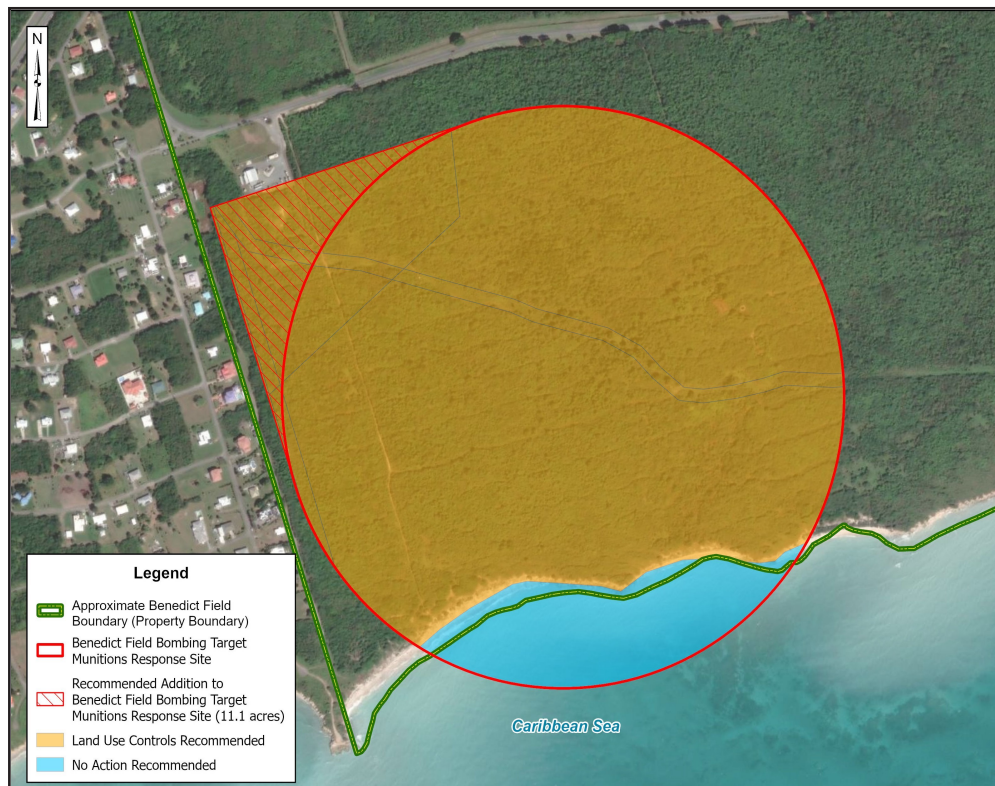
USACE has assessed the Benedict Field Bombing Target a number of times over the years to evaluate if there is the potential for munitions to remain from the Army's training. Based on historical research, USACE established a 162-acre bombing target area which includes the target location and a buffer around it. The former bombing target is in an undeveloped area within the airport property south of the runways and consists of both a terrestrial and a water area (see Figure on page 2). USACE conducted a Remedial Investigation (RI) to determine the types and extent of munitions remaining from the military's training. The team used digital metal detectors on paths (called transects) and grids (square or rectangular areas of various sizes) to map metallic objects in the ground. The team found limited munitions debris from practice bombs. While these practice items do not contain the explosive materials found in a "live" bomb, practice bombs may have a small explosive charge ("signal cartridge") that emits a small puff of

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smoke to show where the bomb landed. The RI evaluated the risk to people and the environment from potential munitions and the metals and explosives that comprise munitions (known as munitions constituents). Based on the RI findings, there is no unacceptable risk from munitions constituents at the site, both on land and in the water. While no unexpended signal cartridges were found, there is the potential for them to be present; therefore, there is unacceptable risk from exposure to munitions within the former bombing target land area. There is no unacceptable risk from munitions within the water area. To address the risk determinations, USACE is proposing to expand the boundaries of the Munitions Response Site. The footprint for the Benedict Field Bombing Target Munitions Response Site would retain the original 162 acres plus 11.1 acres of land to the northwest (see Figure to the right). Since unacceptable risk was identified in the RI for the former bombing target land area, USACE developed and evaluated alternatives as part of the Feasibility Study (FS). An FS is used to identify appropriate future actions at a site.

### PROPOSED PLAN

The next step in the federal process is the Proposed Plan (PP). The PP summarizes the RI and FS and presents the alternatives and recommendations to address the unacceptable risk in the land area. Based on USACE's analysis of the alternatives, the Preferred Alternative for the land area is Land Use Controls (fencing, gates, and public awareness). Since there is no unacceptable risk in the water area, the Preferred Alternative is No Action. Please see the PP for further information.



*Munitions Response Site Boundaries (Land and Water Areas)*

### YOUR OPINION MATTERS

USACE encourages you to comment on the PP during the public comment period from August 19 through September 29, 2025. Please submit your comments by emailing [FUDS.Florida@usace.army.mil](mailto:FUDS.Florida@usace.army.mil), calling 800.710.5184, or mailing them to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ATTN: FUDS Program (PMM-E), 701 San Marco Boulevard, Jacksonville, FL 32207-8175. USACE will accept comments received or postmarked by September 29, 2025 and will consider them in the final decision-making process.

### SAFETY FIRST: REMEMBER THE 3Rs

Always use caution in areas where the military has trained. Remember and follow the 3Rs of Explosive Safety: Recognize, Retreat, Report.



**RECOGNIZE** - The object you found could be dangerous.  
**RETREAT** - Leave the area without touching or moving the object.  
**REPORT** - Call 911 immediately.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Documents are available at:  
**Florence A. Williams Public Library**  
1122 King Street, Largo, Christiansted  
Virgin Islands 00820  
Telephone: 340.773.5715  
[www.saj.usace.army.mil/BenedictField](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/BenedictField)

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