



JULY 2025

### DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROGRAM - 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 governmental entities. These Formerly Used Defense Sites range from privately owned farms to National Parks. They also include residential, industrial, and educational properties. The Department of Defense is committed to protecting human health 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 Formerly Used Defense Sites. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) 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 USACE the authority for certain cleanup activities and dictate the process we must follow. We conduct investigations to determine the potential risk to human health and the environment from the military's former use of the property. Public involvement and community participation are important components of the process. We partner with stakeholders throughout the process, including congressional representatives, state and local governments, regulatory and environmental agencies, and affected property owners.

### BACKGROUND

The U.S. military began using Culebra in the early 1900s, initially as a coaling station and radio transmitter facility. Later, the military used portions of Culebra and adjacent islands and cayos for aerial bombing, maneuvers, artillery firing and amphibious training. The Flamenco Beach Maneuver Area (Munitions Response Site 04) encompasses 51.2 acres spanning Flamenco Beach to Flamenco Lagoon. The U.S. Marine Corps used this area for amphibious landing exercises and camps. The military established firing points within the maneuver area, shooting toward targets in Flamenco Bay and the Northwest Peninsula. However, the locations are not documented. Data indicate that Flamenco Beach and the Flamenco Lagoon also served as a buffer area for targets likely located further north on the Northwest Peninsula.

### ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION

USACE has conducted a number of investigations throughout Culebra over the years and completed a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study for the Flamenco Beach Maneuver Area in 2021. The purpose of the Remedial Investigation was to determine what may remain from the military's training and included searching for munitions, collecting environmental samples to analyze for the metals and explosives that comprise munitions (known as munitions constituents), and conducting risk assessments. The Feasibility Study evaluates alternatives to address risk identified in the Remedial Investigation.

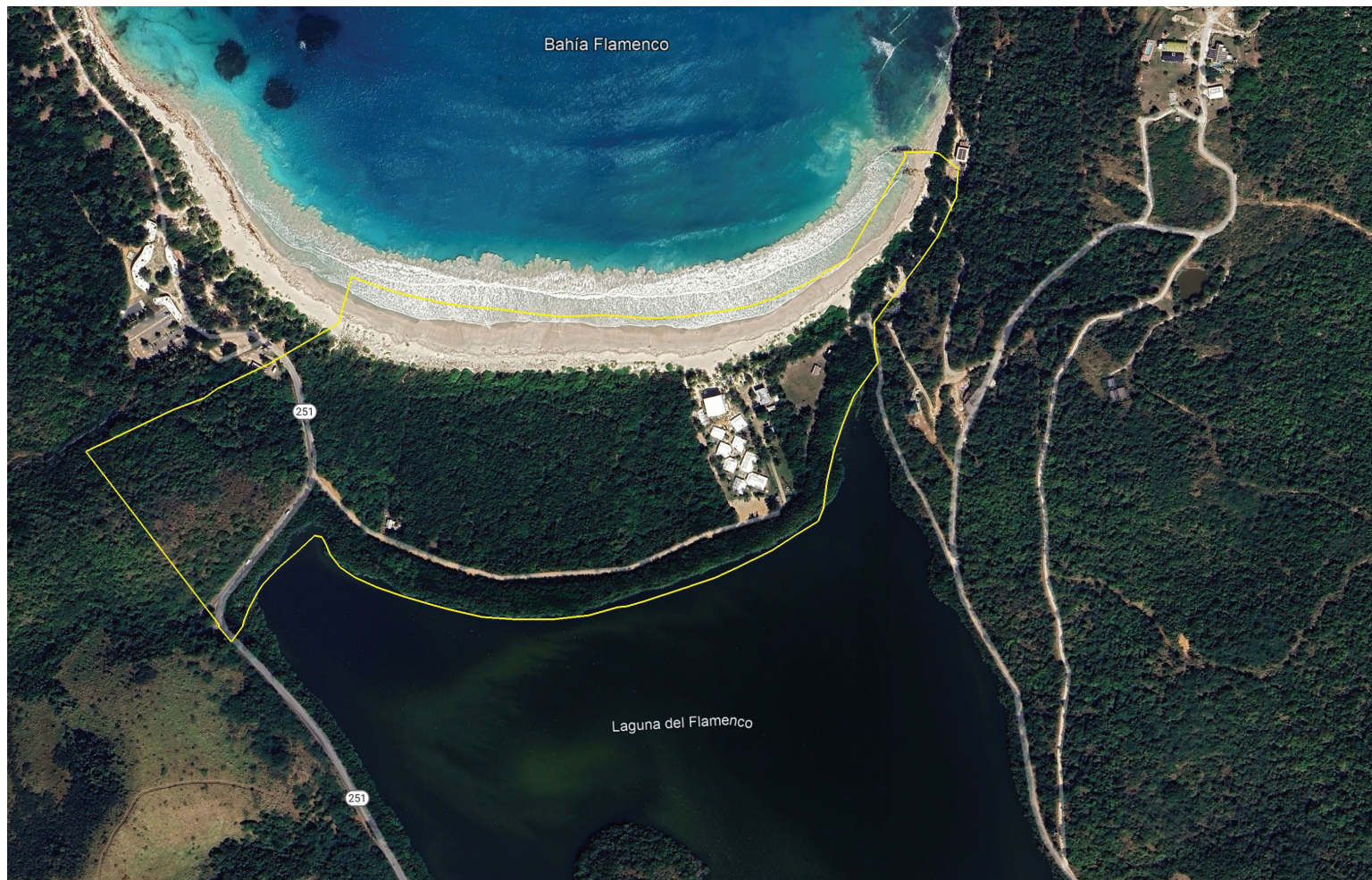
Based on the results of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study, USACE will search for and remove munitions on the surface and subsurface at the beach within the maneuver area from the mean low water



## FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES | Culebra Flamenco Beach Maneuver Area

line to the vegetation line and extended 25-foot buffer into the vegetation. We will also continue public awareness activities such as installing signs near the beach and providing fact sheets and posters to property owners and local businesses.

USACE anticipates beginning the fieldwork during the summer of 2025 and completing it by early 2026. You may see our teams working along the beach during this time, and we ask that you stay away from them so they can focus on their work. Please contact USACE directly if you have any questions or concerns.



### SAFETY FIRST: REMEMBER THE 3Rs OF EXPLOSIVES SAFETY

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



<https://3Rs.mil>

**RECOGNIZE** - when you may have encountered a munition and that munitions are dangerous.

**RETREAT** - do not approach, touch, move or disturb it, but carefully leave the area.

**REPORT** - Call 911 immediately.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION

US Army Corps of Engineers  
800.710.5184

FUDS.PuertoRico@usace.army.mil  
[www.saj.usace.army.mil/Culebra](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Culebra)

Documents are available at:  
Culebra Foundation Office  
[www.saj.usace.army.mil/Culebra](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Culebra)

