



AUGUST 2019

### 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. The Department of Defense is committed to protecting people and the environment and improving public safety by cleaning up these sites if hazards from the former military operations remain. 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. The Corps conducts 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. We partner with stakeholders throughout the process, including congressional representatives, state and local governments, regulatory and environmental agencies, and affected property owners.

### BACKGROUND

In 1925, the military began acquiring land for what would become Fort Buchanan, located about four miles south of San Juan. Initially, it was used as a target range, but with the onset of World War II, it grew in size and significance. The fort included roads, utilities, barracks, administrative buildings, a depot, ammunition storage, family housing, and a host of other support facilities. By 1949, Fort Buchanan's military port and general depot were responsible for receiving and shipping all supplies for every Army and Air Command Station in the Caribbean. Fort Buchanan also played a key role in the Korean Conflict, again serving all the Army facilities in the Caribbean.

Following World War II, the Army began reducing the size of Fort Buchanan, and by the mid-1960s, Army restructuring again led to significantly reducing the size of Fort Buchanan. The Formerly Used Defense Site comprises the 1,037.44 acres that were previously part of Fort Buchanan. That land is now used for homes, businesses and a park (Julio Enrique Monagas Park).

### ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

The Corps has evaluated the site several times over the years to determine if anything remains from the military's training. Historical research identified a multiuse range complex west of the active Fort Buchanan installation which consisted of two overlapping small arms ranges that the Army used between 1946 and 1967. In 2011, the Corps conducted a Site Inspection to determine if further evaluation of the site was necessary based on the past military use of the property. No munitions or

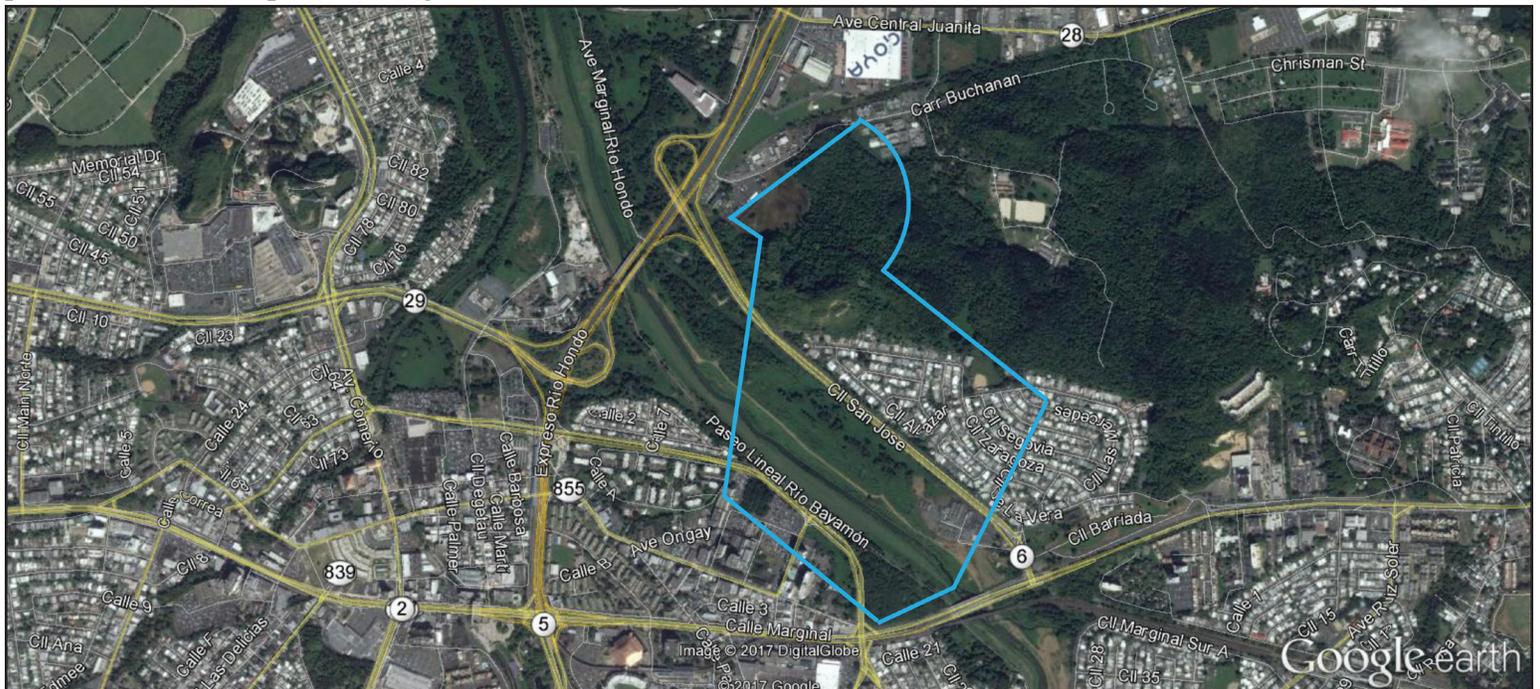


## FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES | Fort Buchanan

munitions debris (small arms or pieces of larger munitions items) were identified in one area. Munitions debris was found near the location of one of the small arms ranges.

Expendable small arms do not pose an explosive hazard, and no munitions or explosive materials have been identified within the former Fort Buchanan area. However, because safety is our primary concern, the Corps will conduct a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study to determine what may be present 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 evaluate the risk to people and the environment at Formerly Used Defense Sites, such as the former Fort Buchanan land. 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 Fort Buchanan is low, the Corps has not yet scheduled the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study for the multiuse range complex. We will notify the public when we anticipate initiating further studies.



 Approximate Boundaries of the Multiuse Range Complex

### 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.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION

US Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District

Toll-Free 800.710.5184

FUDS.Florida@usace.army.mil

[www.saj.usace.army.mil/FormerlyUsedDefenseSites](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/FormerlyUsedDefenseSites)

