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## 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

During World War II, the military leased 13,720 acres to establish the Fort Myers Bombing and Gunnery Range. It was about 16 miles southeast of Punta Gorda in Charlotte County, Florida. Personnel stationed at nearby Fort Myers Army Airfield used it as a practice range. The men trained on the skip bombing, demolition bombing, dive bombing, strafing and air-to-ground gunnery ranges. Crews fired .50 caliber machine guns at the strafing and air-to-ground gunnery ranges. They used practice bombs at the skip and dive bombing ranges and practice and general purpose bombs at the demolition bombing range.

Following World War II, the Army no longer needed the site, and the leases were terminated. The former Fort Myers Bombing and Gunnery Range is within the Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area.



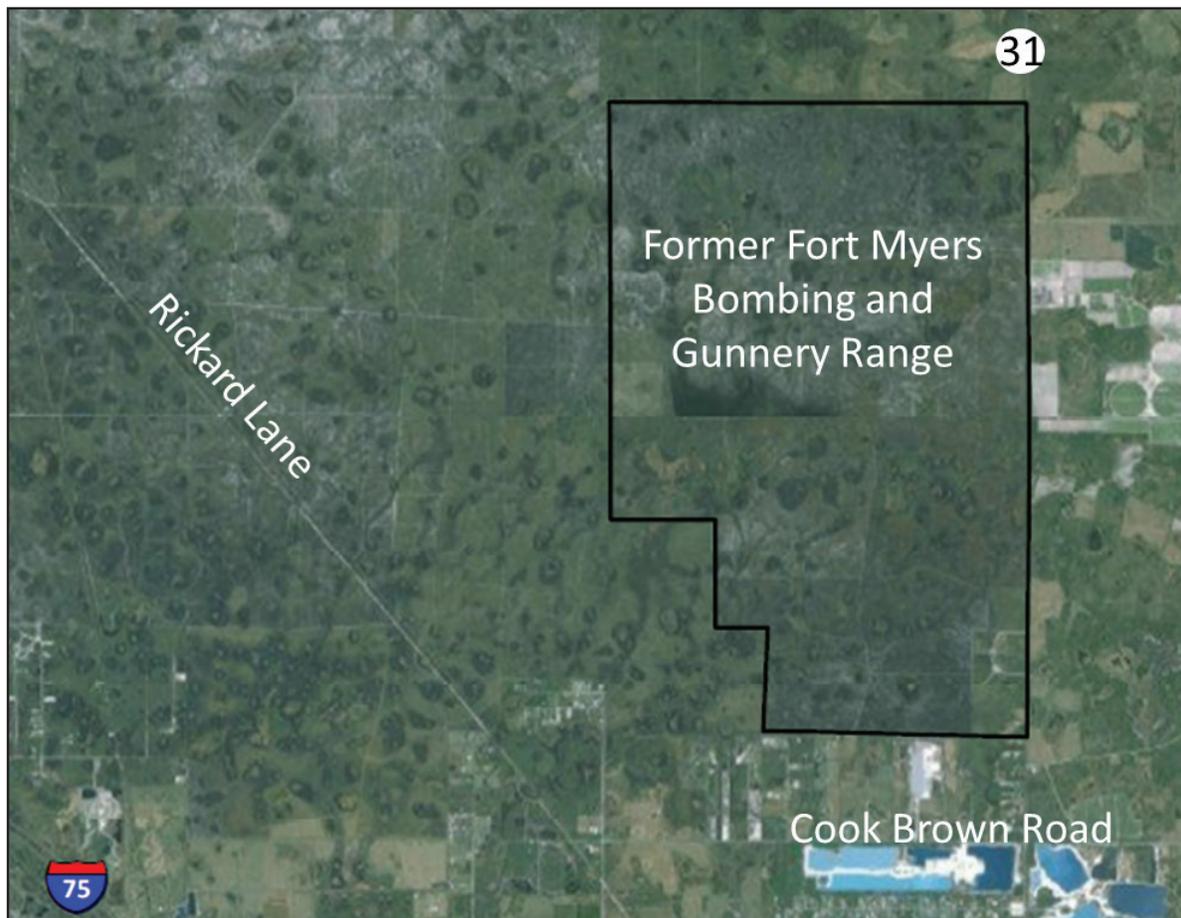
## ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

The Corps has evaluated the site several times over the years to determine if anything remains from the military's training. Through historical research and sites visits, the Corps identified the location of the training ranges. In 2009, 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 property. No munitions or munitions debris (expended small arms and/or pieces of munitions) was found at the dive bombing and strafing ranges, but munitions debris was found in the bombing ranges.

## FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES | Fort Myers Bombing and Gunnery Range

Munitions debris does not pose an explosive hazard, and no munitions or explosive materials have been identified within the former Fort Myers Bombing and Gunnery Range. 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 Myers Bombing and Gunnery Range. 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. The Corps has not scheduled the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study for Fort Myers Bombing and Gunnery Range, but we will notify the public when we anticipate initiating further studies.



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

