

SEPTEMBER 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

During World War II, the military leased 640 acres in Pinellas County for flight crews from Pinellas Army Airfield to use for aerial bombing practice. The site, known as Pinellas Practice Bombing Range and Pinellas County Dive Bombing Range, is within the Clearwater city limits. The range included a hutment, which provided temporary living quarters for personnel, three observation towers, and a bomb target. The air crews practiced low-level dive bombing, dropping practice munitions at altitudes of 1,500 to 2,500 feet above the target. Practice munitions do not contain the same explosive materials that are found in "live" or non-practice munitions. They are often filled with sand or water or could be a solid piece of metal. The Army used the range from the fall of 1943 to November 1945.

When World War II ended, the Army no longer needed the site, and the leases were terminated. The land is now densely populated with more than 1,000 parcels, and the target center is on Countryside Golf Course.

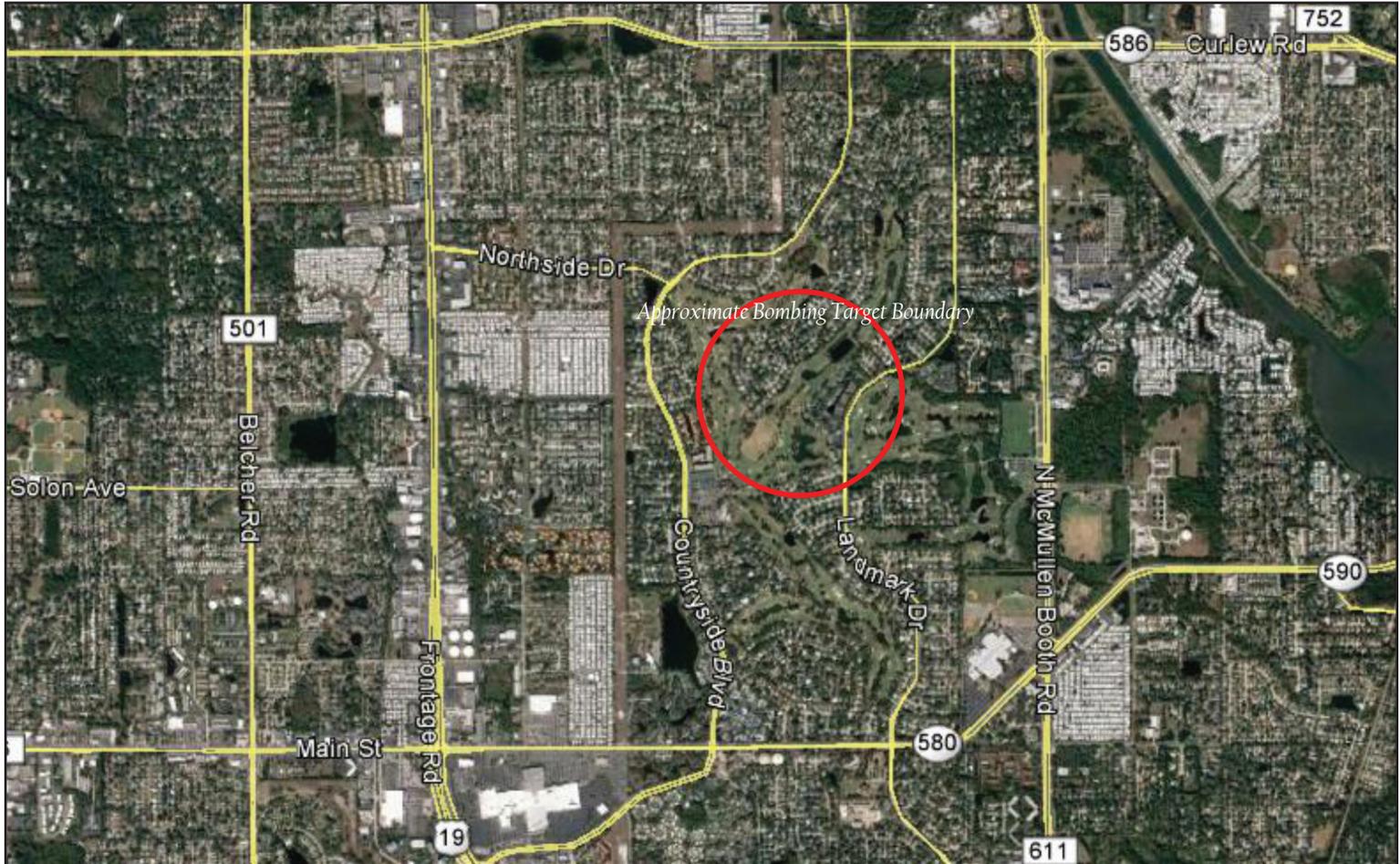
ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

The Corps has assessed the site a number of times over the years to evaluate if there is the potential of anything remaining from the Army's training. Based on historical research, the Corps established a 162-acre target area which includes the target location and a buffer around it. The Corps completed a Site Inspection in 2008 to determine if further evaluation of the site may be necessary. No munitions, munitions debris (pieces from munitions) nor any other indication of the military's training was identified. However, because protecting people and the environment is our primary concern, the Corps will conduct a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study to ascertain if anything remains in the area from the Army's training, and if so, in what amounts and locations. This is known as characterizing the nature and extent of potential military-related materials.

FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES | Pinellas Practice Bombing Range

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 Pinellas Practice Bombing 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. Since the potential risk at the former Pinellas Practice Bombing Range is low, the Corps has not yet 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.



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

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