



DECISION DOCUMENT
Landfill Areas 1 and 3
Lee Field Naval Air Station Formerly Used Defense Site
Project Number I04FL008509
Green Cove Springs, FL

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District
701 San Marco Boulevard
Jacksonville, Florida 32207

September 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is presenting this Decision Document to describe the Department of Defense (DoD) selected alternative for the Landfill Areas 1 and 3 project within the Lee Field Naval Air Station, Formerly Used Defense Site Project Number I04FL008509 in Green Cove Springs, Florida.

The Corps conducted a supplemental Remedial Investigation at Landfill Areas 1 and 3 to characterize the nature and extent of contamination related to DoD disposal activities in soil and groundwater and the potential for off-site migration. The Remedial Investigation found evidence of DoD disposal activities at Landfill Areas 1 and 3. The risk assessment concluded there is no unacceptable risk to human health or the environment associated with the military's activities at either area based on the results of the soil and groundwater sampling; potential human and ecological receptors; indications of the property owner (Clay County Port, Inc. that the foreseeable future use of the area is non-residential with intent to remain commercial/industrial; and other relevant information. Therefore, no action is necessary at Landfill Areas 1 and 3 to protect human health and the environment.

A No Action determination was selected in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), 42 U.S. Code § 9601 *et seq.*, as amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986, and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP), 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 300 *et seq.*, as amended.

The state's regulatory agency, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), does not agree with the No Action determination, and FDEP provided comments that included disagreement that FDEP's sampling standards were not followed and with the Corps' use of a risk evaluation for groundwater contaminants to support a No Further Action decision. The Corps attempted to resolve disagreement over current and reasonably anticipated future land use of the landfill sites, number and location of environmental samples, use of risk assessments, acceptable risk range, and Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirements (ARARs). The Corps is required by Congress to perform remedial investigations pursuant to CERCLA and the NCP and not according to state law and procedures. The Corps conducted the investigation in full compliance with CERCLA and the NCP. FDEP's comments are summarized in the Responsiveness Summary.

Based on the results of the Remedial Investigation, the selected alternative is protective of human health and the environment and satisfies the statutory requirements of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act.

The estimated cost for this decision is \$0.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	ES-1
Part 1: Declaration.....	1
1. Site Name and Location.....	1
2. Statement of Basis and Purpose.....	1
3. Description of Selected Remedy.....	1
4. Statutory Determination	1
5. Authorizing Signature.....	3
Part 2: Decision Summary.....	4
1. Site Name, Location, and Description	4
2. Site History and Enforcement Activities.....	4
3. Community Participation.....	5
4. Scope and Role of Response Action	6
5. Site Characteristics.....	6
6. Current and Potential Future Site and Resource Uses	8
7. Site Risks.....	8
8. Documentation of Significant Changes.....	8
Part 3: Responsiveness Summary	9
1. Stakeholder Issues and Lead Agency Responses	9
2. Technical and Legal Issues	10

Part 1: Declaration

1. Site Name and Location

Site Name: Lee Field Naval Air Station; Formerly Used Defense Site Property Number: I04FL0085

Clay County Port, Inc. owns the land and operates the Reynolds Industrial Park where Landfill Areas 1 and 3 are located. The approximate 6.2-acre Landfill Area 1 is located on the south side of Wildwood Road. The approximate 7.4-acre Landfill Area 3 is located on the north side of a dirt road that connects County Road 209 with Wildwood Road. Both sites are in undeveloped areas of the industrial park. The most reasonably anticipated future land use is for these areas to remain undeveloped.

2. Statement of Basis and Purpose

The U.S. Army is the lead agency on behalf of the Department of Defense, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has mission execution authority for the Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) Program.

This Decision Document presents the Selected Remedy for the Landfill Areas 1 and 3 within the Lee Field Naval Air Station Formerly Used Defense Site in Green Cove Springs, Florida. The selected remedy was chosen in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, 42 U.S. Code § 9601 *et seq.*, as amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986, and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan. The Corps based this decision on the Administrative Record file for this site.

The state's regulatory agency, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, does not agree with the Selected Alternative. The Corps attempted to resolve disagreement over current and reasonably anticipated future land use of the landfill sites, number and location of environmental samples, use of risk assessments, acceptable risk range, and Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirements (ARARs). The Corps is required by Congress to perform remedial investigations pursuant to CERCLA and the NCP and not according to state law and procedures. The Corps conducted the investigation in full compliance with CERCLA and the NCP. The Responsiveness Summary provides their comments and the Corps' responses.

3. Description of Selected Remedy

The Corps conducted a supplemental Remedial Investigation at Landfill Areas 1 and 3 to characterize the nature and extent of contamination related to DoD disposal activities in soil and groundwater and the potential for off-site migration. The investigation found evidence of DoD disposal activities at both Landfill Area 1 and Landfill Area 3. The risk assessment concluded there is no unacceptable risk to human health or the environment associated with the military's activities at either area based on the results of the soil and groundwater sampling; potential human and ecological receptors; indications of the property owner (Clay County Port, Inc. that the foreseeable future use of the area is non-residential with intent to remain commercial/industrial; and other relevant information. As the lead agency, the Corps therefore determined that no action is necessary to protect human health or the environment. A No Action

determination is the appropriate selected alternative for Landfill Areas 1 and 3.

4. Statutory Determination

Statutory determinations to comply with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act §121 are unnecessary. As the lead agency, the Corps has determined that no remedial action is necessary to ensure the protection of human health and the environment. Consequently, Five Year Reviews are not applicable.

5. Authorizing Signature

This Decision Document presents the No Action determination for Landfill Areas 1 and 3 at the former Lee Field Naval Air Station, Green Cove Springs, Florida. The Corps is the lead agency for the Lee Field Naval Air Station Formerly Used Defense Site and developed this Decision Document in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, as amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act, and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan. This Decision Document will be incorporated into the existing Administrative Record File for the former Lee Field Naval Air Station, which is available for public review at the reference desk of the Clay County Public Library and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Jacksonville District office. The addition of this Decision Document completes the Administrative Record for Landfill Areas 1 and 3. The Administrative Record is protected from additional documents being added. This document, presenting the basis for the No Action determination, is approved by the undersigned pursuant to Memorandum, CEMP-CED (200-1a), August 10, 2019, subject: Re-delegation of Assignment of Mission Execution Functions Associated with Department of Defense Lead Agent Responsibilities for the Formerly Used Defense Sites Program and delegation on September 17, 2019, to the Director of Regional Business of FUDS mission execution responsibility for assigned projects, including approval authority on decision documents for FUDS response action up to \$5 million.

APPROVED:

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THEODORE A. BROWN, P.E., SES
Director of Regional Business

30 September 2019

Date

Part 2: Decision Summary

1. Site Name, Location, and Description

The former Lee Field Naval Air Station comprised approximately 1,560 acres in Green Cove Springs, Florida. Clay County Port, Inc. currently owns the land that includes Landfill Areas 1 and 3.

Figure 1: Lee Field Naval Air Station Landfill Areas 1 and 3



2. Site History and Enforcement Activities

2.1 Site History

The Department of Defense developed Lee Field in 1940 for use as a pilot training base during World War II. The installation contained extensive docking facilities with access to the St. Johns River, a railroad system, multiple aircraft runways, and supporting structures. Following the war, shallow-draft fleet ships were stored at Lee Field after its conversion to a naval station. In 1963, the Department of Defense transferred ownership of Lee Field to the City of Green Cove Springs. In 1965, the City of Green Cove Springs sold the property to J. Louis Reynolds, who began developing the former Lee Field as an industrial park known as Reynolds Industrial Park. In 1981, Clay County Port, Inc. acquired the property and continued operation and development of the industrial park.

The Navy used the area known as Landfill Area 1 between 1947 and 1963 to store

compost, creosote-treated power poles, and materials removed from ships that could not be incinerated. From 1951 through at least 1958, the Navy used Landfill Area 3 to dispose of domestic waste and other refuse.

The approximately 6.2-acre Landfill Area 1 site is located on the south side of Wildwood Road. The approximately 7.4-acre Landfill Area 3 site is located on the north side of a dirt road that connects County Road 209 with Wildwood Road. These non-contiguous areas are located in undeveloped areas of the industrial park.

2.2. Previous Investigations

Engineering Report for Confirmation Study (1988): This study evaluated the former Lee Field to determine its eligibility for the Formerly Utilized Defense Sites Program. As part of this study, the Corps identified two areas that the military may have used as landfills and labeled them as Landfill Area 1 and Landfill Area 3.

Preliminary Contamination Evaluation Report (1992): The Corps completed a Contamination Evaluation in 1991 to determine if there were any impacts to the soil or groundwater associated with Landfill Areas 1 and 3 and if further investigation of the sites was warranted.

Background Chemical Data Study Report (2004): The Corps conducted an analysis of the soil at locations throughout the former Lee Field to identify compounds that are present in the soil outside of Landfill Areas 1 and 3. This information enabled the Corps to assess the background chemicals and levels and generate a baseline to compare with the samples collected from Landfill Areas 1 and 3.

2.3 Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act Enforcement Activities

There have been no Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act-related enforcement activities at this project site.

3. Community Participation

In accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act and Department of Defense and U.S. Army regulations, the Corps kept the local community involved throughout the environmental investigation process. The Corps facilitated community involvement through public notices and meetings, which allowed members of the community to provide comments during the site characterization and alternative selection process.

The Corps prepared a Community Relations Plan for the former Lee Field Naval Air Station prior to initiating the Remedial Investigation and revised it periodically, including after preparing the Proposed Plan. It will be revised again after the Decision Document is signed.

Prior to the Remedial Investigation fieldwork, the Information Repository was established at the Corps' Jacksonville District Office and at the Clay County Public Library. The Administrative Record file currently contains the Community Relations Plan, Installation-Wide Background Chemical Data Study, Remedial Investigation Reports, and Proposed Plan. Project documents were also placed on the Jacksonville District's website.

Representatives from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection participated in the environmental investigation process through Technical Project Planning meetings and reviewing and commenting on project plans and reports. Prior to finalizing the Proposed Plan, the Corps contacted the property owner to discuss the current and reasonably anticipated future land use.

The Corps ran a notice in a local newspaper of general circulation at the beginning of the Remedial Investigation to announce the Remedial Investigation, solicit interest in a Restoration Advisory Board, and notify the public of the availability of the Administrative Record file and the location of the information repository. On April 18, 2019, the Corps placed another notice in a local newspaper of general circulation to announce the Proposed Plan public meeting and public comment period.

The Corps placed the Remedial Investigation Report and Proposed Plan for Landfill Areas 1 and 3 in the Clay County Public Library. The Corps hosted a public meeting on April 23, 2019, at the Green Cove Springs Police Department Community Room in Green Cove Springs to present the Remedial Investigation results and recommendations and to solicit public comment. Representatives from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Clay County Port, Inc. were present for the meeting, but no members of the public attended.

The public comment period for the Proposed Plan was held from April 23, 2019, to June 4, 2019. The Corps did not receive any comments during the comment period.

4. Scope and Role of Response Action

Based on the findings of the Remedial Investigation, no Department of Defense action is necessary to protect public health or the environment, and a No Action determination response is appropriate for Landfill Areas 1 and 3.

5. Site Characteristics

Landfill Area 1 covers approximately 6.2 acres of land near the southeastern corner of the former Lee Field property. The site is heavily vegetated and bordered to the north by Wildwood Road and a drainage swale paralleling the road; to the south and east by a cypress wetland area (Three Mile Swamp); and to the west by a low, flat, wooded area that contains standing water during the rainy season and connects with Three Mile Swamp.

Landfill Area 3 covers approximately 7.4 acres of land at the southern edge of the former Lee Field property. The landfill is bounded on the north, west, and east by a thick cover of trees. Currently, the landfill is heavily wooded with trees and undergrowth. Three Mile Swamp lies approximately 400 feet east and northeast of the landfill. The southern edge of Landfill Area 3 is bordered by a dirt access road that connects County Road 209 with Wildwood Road.

5.1 Site Overview

Landfill Areas 1 and 3 are undeveloped and are contiguous to land the Florida Department of Transportation recently acquired for the First Coast Outer Beltway. The property owner, Clay County Port, Inc., informed the Corps that the future land use for the landfill areas will remain the same as the current land use, which are as

commercial/industrial areas within the industrial park.

Potential human receptors could include maintenance workers, trespassers, construction workers, landscape workers, and recreational users. Ecological receptors, including the deer mouse, short-tailed shrew, eastern cottontail rabbit, marsh wren, red fox, and red-tailed hawk, are present within the project areas. For several reasons (e.g., spatial irrelevance), no site ecological receptors were deemed to be appropriate for evaluation. No threatened and endangered species are known or suspected to be present at Landfill Areas 1 and 3. Landfill Areas 1 and 3 are, however, designated as Rare Species Habitat. This designation means that, based on Florida Natural Areas Inventory habitat models, the areas may support one or more sensitive species that is(are) native to the area.

5.2 Summary of Site Contamination

The Corps conducted a supplemental Remedial Investigation from 2013 to 2018. This Remedial Investigation combined a supplemental data set with existing data from previous investigations to update human health and ecological risk assessments. During the various phases of the Remedial Investigation, the team reviewed historical records and aerial photographs; dug test pits; installed groundwater monitoring wells; and collected and analyzed more than 400 samples from the soil, sediment, surface water, and groundwater.

Generally, the concentrations detected in the samples collected from Landfill Areas 1 and 3 were below the corresponding Florida Department of Environmental Protection's screening levels (groundwater/surface water/sediment cleanup target levels, and the soil cleanup target level for industrial areas). Limited exceedances of screening levels are present at Landfills Area 1 - 3, so the Corps analyzed the sampling data and completed risk assessments to document potential risks to human health associated with exposure to the soil, surface water (if present), sediment, and groundwater based on various scenarios (i.e., a construction worker/ landscaper/ trespasser coming in contact with the soil or groundwater). The analysis concluded there is no unacceptable risk to human health or the environment associated with the Department of Defense activities in Landfill Areas 1 and 3 at the current and most reasonably anticipated future land use, which are as commercial/industrial areas within the industrial park.

Landfill Area 1:

In Landfill Area 1, nothing was detected in the surface water or sediment above the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's screening levels. Petroleum compounds and arsenic were detected above industrial limits in one subsurface soil sample (between two to four feet deep). Chlorobenzene was detected in one well at levels above the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's groundwater cleanup target level. While there was one exceedance of screening levels at Landfill Area 1, Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments were completed to determine if unacceptable risk to human health and the environment is present.

The Corps completed Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments (Appendices F G, Final Landfill Areas 1 and 3 Remedial Investigation Report, Former Lee Field Naval Air Station, Green Cove Springs, FL, November 2018) and the data indicates

there is no unacceptable risk to human health or the environment associated with the Department of Defense activities in Landfill Area 1 at the current and most reasonably anticipated future land use.

Landfill Area 3:

In Landfill Area 3, nothing was detected in the soil or sediment above the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's screening levels. Chlorinated hydrocarbons and chloroethene were detected in a localized area of the groundwater at levels above the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's groundwater cleanup target level. While exceedances of screening levels were present at Landfill Area 3, Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments were completed to determine if unacceptable risk to human health and the environment is present.

The Corps completed Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments (Appendices F G, Final Landfill Areas 1 and 3 Remedial Investigation Report, Former Lee Field Naval Air Station, Green Cove Springs, FL, November 2018), and the data indicates there is no unacceptable risk to human health or the environment associated with the Department of Defense activities in Landfill Area 3 at the current and most reasonably anticipated future land uses.

6. Current and Potential Future Site and Resource Uses

6.1 Land Uses

Clay County Port, Inc. owns the land comprising the project sites. The project locations are in an undeveloped area of the industrial park. While current land use is designated as commercial/industrial, neither landfill area is currently being used. Clay County Port, Inc. has indicated the future land use designation would remain unchanged. Consequently, no residential development is planned.

6.2 Groundwater and Surface Water Use

There are no surface water bodies or known water wells (drinking, irrigation, etc. within the boundaries of the project sites.

7. Summary of Site Risks

A Baseline Human Health Risk Assessment and a Screening-Level Ecological Risk Assessment were performed as part of the Remedial Investigation to evaluate potential human health and ecological risks attributable to the Department of Defense associated with exposure to Landfill Areas 1 and 3. The Risk Assessments concluded that, based on the scenarios evaluated, there is no unacceptable risk to human health or the environment attributable to the Department of Defense's use of Landfill Areas 1 and 3.

8. Documentation of Significant Changes

The Proposed Plan was released for public comment on April 23, 2019. The Proposed Plan identified a No Action determination for Landfill Areas 1 and 3. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection provided comments on the Proposed Plan, but the comments did not necessitate any changes to the Proposed Plan. Therefore, the Proposed Plan remains unchanged.

Part 3: Responsiveness Summary

This Responsiveness Summary summarizes all comments for the Proposed Plan received during the comment period from the public and regulator regarding the preferred alternative and general concerns related to the site.

1. Stakeholder Issues and Lead Agency Responses

The public comment period began on April 23, 2019 and ended on June 4, 2018. The Corps hosted a public meeting on April 23, 2019, but no one from the public attended.

1.1 Florida Department of Environmental Protection Comments

Comments received from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection are summarized below:

Comment: **Public Involvement Process, First Paragraph, Page 2:** The last sentence in this paragraph should state the Department does not concur with the Corps' preferred alternative.

Response: The sentence states the following: "Representatives from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection reviewed and commented on the Remedial Investigation and do not agree with the Corps' preferred alternative."

Comment: **Site Background, Previous Investigations, Background Chemical Data Study Report (2004), Page 4:** Background sampling and comparison to site related samples were not completed as promulgated in Chapter 62-780, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) and outlined in Department Background Guidance documents. Based on the fact these Department standards were not followed, the Department does not concur with the removal of several contaminants from the site (contaminants of concern (COCs) list and the fact they do not meet the no further action criteria defined in Chapter 62-780, F.A.C.

Response: The Final Installation Wide Background Chemical Data Study Work Plan was approved by FDEP on August 1, 2000. The Final Installation Wide Background Chemical Data Study, Revision 1, prepared in February 2004, incorporated two sets of comments from FDEP and the University of Florida Center for Environmental and Human Toxicology. The Corps compared the sampling results to background and Florida Department of Environmental Protection's cleanup target levels. Based on the current and reasonably anticipated future land use, there is no unacceptable risk to human health or the environment.

Comment: **Site Background, Remedial Investigation, Page 4 and 5:** Based on many of the Department's unresolved comments pertaining to the Department's December 22, 2017 response letter for the Draft Final Remedial Investigation (RI) Report, and the Department's April 15, 2019 response letter for the Final Remedial Investigation Report, the evaluation of Landfill Areas 1 and 3 did not meet the Department's Site Assessment process outlined in Rule 62-780.600, F.A.C. Therefore, the Department cannot concur with the USACE findings from the activities completed during the RI and the recommendation for No Action.

Response: The Corps is required by Congress to perform remedial investigations

pursuant to CERCLA and the NCP and not according to state law and procedures. The investigation of this site was done in full compliance with CERCLA and the NCP. The Corps attempted to respond fully to all of the regulator's questions, comments, and concerns, but the Corps cannot violate Federal law to comply with these requests. Whether state procedures have not been fully complied with is arguable; however, in this context, it is not relevant.

Comment: Site Background, Remedial Investigation, Page 4 and 5: It is not appropriate for USACE to use a risk evaluation for groundwater contaminants to demonstrate a site meets No Further Action (NFA) for groundwater when those contaminants are above the Department's promulgated groundwater cleanup target levels. Please see Rule 62-780.680, F.A.C., for the NFA conditions groundwater contaminants need to meet.

Response: The Corps is required by Congress to perform remedial investigations pursuant to CERCLA and the NCP and not according to State law and procedures. The investigation of this site was done in full accordance with CERCLA and the NCP. Based on the current and most reasonably anticipated future land use, there is no pathway for receptors to come into contact with groundwater. No Action is the appropriate alternative.

1.2 Public Comments

The Corps did not receive any comments on the Proposed Plan or Preferred Alternative during the public comment period.

2. Technical and Legal Issues

There are no technical or legal issues.