



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
New England District

Ninigret Restoration Advisory Board

Agenda | 23 June 2026

Time/Date: 5:00-6:30 p.m., 23 June 2026

Location: Kimball Pavillion, Ninigret Park, 5 Park Lane, Charlestown, Rhode Island

AGENDA

1. Welcome

Sheandra Sterling, Public Affairs Specialist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District (USACE)

2. Introduction of RAB members

A. Ninigret RAB Co-Chairs

- Government Co-Chair Greg Hencir
- Community Co-Chair Neal Walker

B. Individual RAB members (alphabetical order)

- Community Vice-Chair Dr. Catie Alves
- Jeff Allen
- Martin Durney
- Anna Herceg
- Joseph Martin
- Brian Nieves
- Peter Perrault
- Karrie Schwaab
- Peter Wronski

3. Overview of CNALF remediation project

USACE Team

4. Open question-and-answer period

5. Formal close with informal follow-up conversations and poster session

Ninigret Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)

Information Sheet | June 2026

The inaugural Ninigret Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) would like to welcome you to the organization's first meeting at Ninigret Park. This information sheet provides details about the RAB's formation and brief details about each board member's background and experience.

The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the new RAB to the Charlestown community and facilitate the process of communication regarding the former Charlestown Naval Auxiliary Landing Field (CNALF).

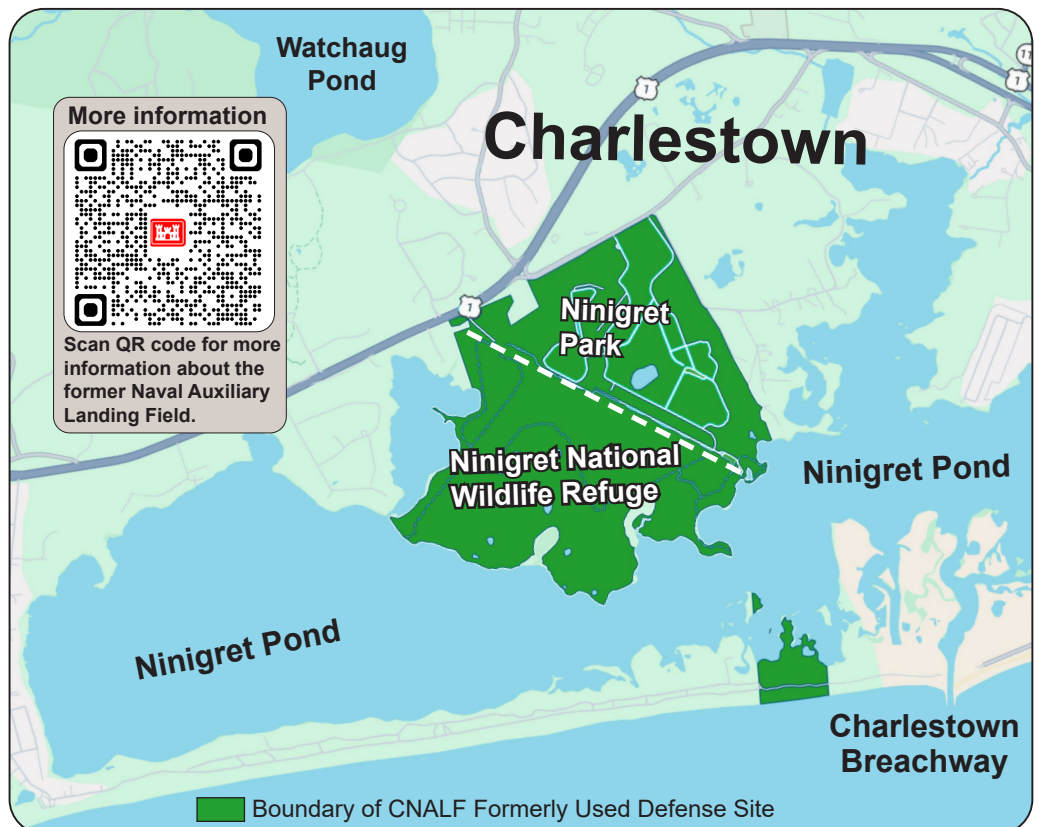
The Ninigret RAB was formed in 2025 after the community indicated strong support for establishing the board for the former CNALF property that today serves as Ninigret Park and the Ninigret National Wildlife Refuge.

A selection panel chose the inaugural RAB members from individuals who are living in Charlestown and the surrounding area.

The dates and times for future RAB meetings will be posted on the Town of Charlestown website and the CNALF project website, which is accessible using the QR code located on the map at right.



An undated historical photo of CNALF shows an aerial view looking toward the Atlantic Ocean. (Photo/Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management)



Sources: Google Earth/Hana

Ninigret Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)

Information Sheet | June 2026

The Ninigret Restoration Advisory Board would like to introduce themselves to the Charlestown community. Below you will find the names and brief information about each member. The RAB is in the formative stages, and would like to hear your interests and concerns.



Neal Walker

Community Co-Chair

- Led United Nations civil efforts across several countries and continents
- Sustainable community development
- Ensuring political, cultural representation



Greg Hencir

Government Co-Chair

- Project Manager, Environmental Projects Branch, USACE New England District
- Environmental investigation and remediation
- Federal cleanup programs



Dr. Catie Alves

Community Vice-Chair

- Ph.D in ecology from UNC-Chapel Hill
- Marine ecologist, environmental social scientist with 15 years experience
- Research includes coral reef ecology and sustainable fisheries management



Brian Nieves

RAB Member

- Volunteer with Frosty Drew Observatory and Science Center
- DarkSky International Advocate
- Professional nature photographer



Jeff Allen

RAB Member

- Town of Charlestown Administrator
- Career in law enforcement and municipal government
- Lifelong resident of South County



Peter Perrault

RAB Member

- Sustainability experience working with government, NGOs, business, industry
- Education: Political science, economics
- Sustainability Management Certified



Martin Durney

RAB Member

- Professional Civil Engineer
- Extensive experience with complex federal projects as licensed engineer
- Experience with diverse stakeholder groups



Karrie Schwaab

RAB Member

- Project Leader, Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex
- Habitat and wildlife conservation
- Wildlife dependent recreation



Anna Herceg

RAB Member

- Extensive experience working with civil and charitable organizations
- Conservation, clean water advocate
- Fresh Water USA, Covenant House
- Co-founder Science Media Properties NYC



Peter Wronski

RAB Member

- Director of laboratory and research services for biomedical foundation
- Professional experience in chemical, electrical, and materials engineering
- Charlestown Conservation Commission



Joseph Martin

RAB Member

- Ph.D. Civil Engineering (Geotechnical)
- Professor Emeritus Drexel University
- Environmental/Hydrogeology researcher
- U.S. Army Veteran

Contact the Ninigret RAB

Please contact the RAB co-chairs for questions or comments:

gregory.m.hencir@usace.army.mil

nealgrant1@hotmail.com



U.S. ARMY



US Army Corps
of Engineers
New England District

Charlestown Naval Auxiliary Landing Field

Restoration Advisory Board Application

BUILDING STRONG®

Ninigret Restoration Advisory Board Community Interest Form

Conditions for Membership:

Ninigret Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) members volunteer to serve a term and attend all RAB meetings. Duties and responsibilities include reviewing and commenting on plans and activities associated with the restoration program at the former Charlestown Naval Auxiliary Landing Field (CNALF). Technical experts will be made available to the RAB. Members will be expected to be available to community members and groups to facilitate the exchange of information and/or concerns between the community and the RAB. This could involve distributing information gathered during RAB meetings, reviewing documents related to the site, and making recommendations to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project team about keeping the community informed. RAB community members can expect to devote approximately 40 hours per year to support the RAB.

Submit online



Scan QR code
to submit form
electronically.

Members must reside in, own property, work in, or serve the interests of the Charlestown, RI, communities.

Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

ZIP: _____

Phone 1: _____

Phone 2: _____

Email address: _____

☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Text Message ☐ Mail Delivery ☐ No Preference

Membership Questions:

Responses:

Are you affiliated with any group related to restoration or base closure activities? If yes, list the group and your position, if applicable.	
What has been your experience working as a member of a diverse group with common goals?	
Please explain potential personal or professional conflicts of interest, if any, that may arise as a result of your service on the Ninigret RAB.	
Are you able to attend 2 to 4 RAB meetings per year, both in-person and virtual?	
Please briefly state why you would like to participate on the Ninigret RAB:	

Timeline

History of the Charlestown Naval Auxiliary Landing Field

1941



During construction of Quonset Point Naval Air Station, the Navy sees need to build a landing field in Charlestown.

1942



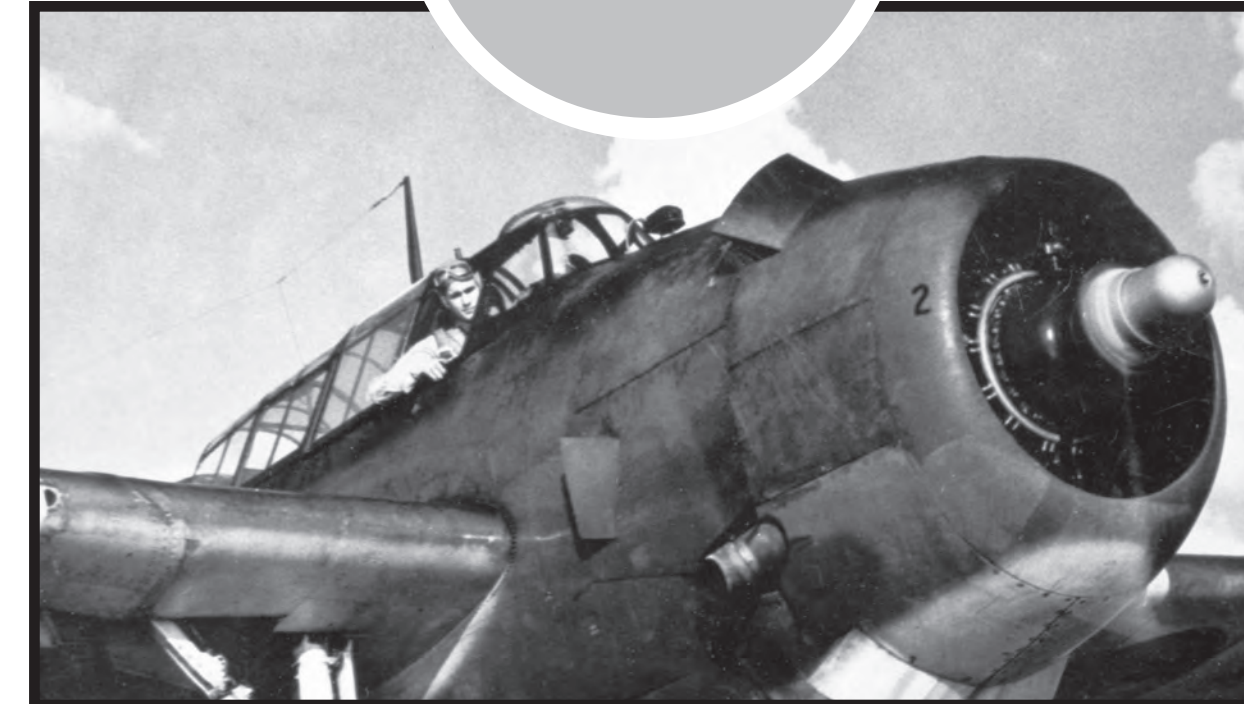
Navy acquires land for CNALF and expands with 3 runways to train pilots for World War II on former farmland.

1943



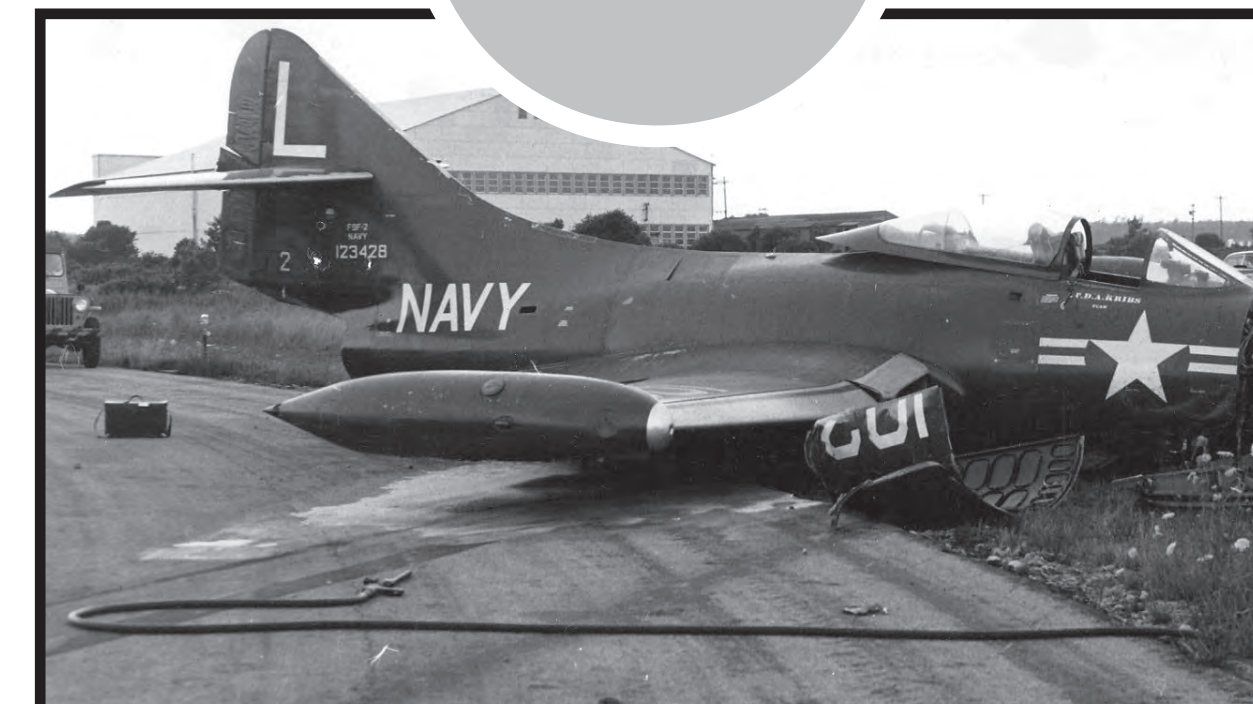
CNALF opens as a training site for fighter and bomber pilots and crews during WWII, with 8,500 service members.

1944



Pilot and future President George H.W. Bush trains to fly the Avenger at CNALF, an aircraft he would later fly in WWII.

1950



CNALF shifts to landing field support for Naval Air Station Quonset Point. CNALF sees reduction of on-base personnel.

1971



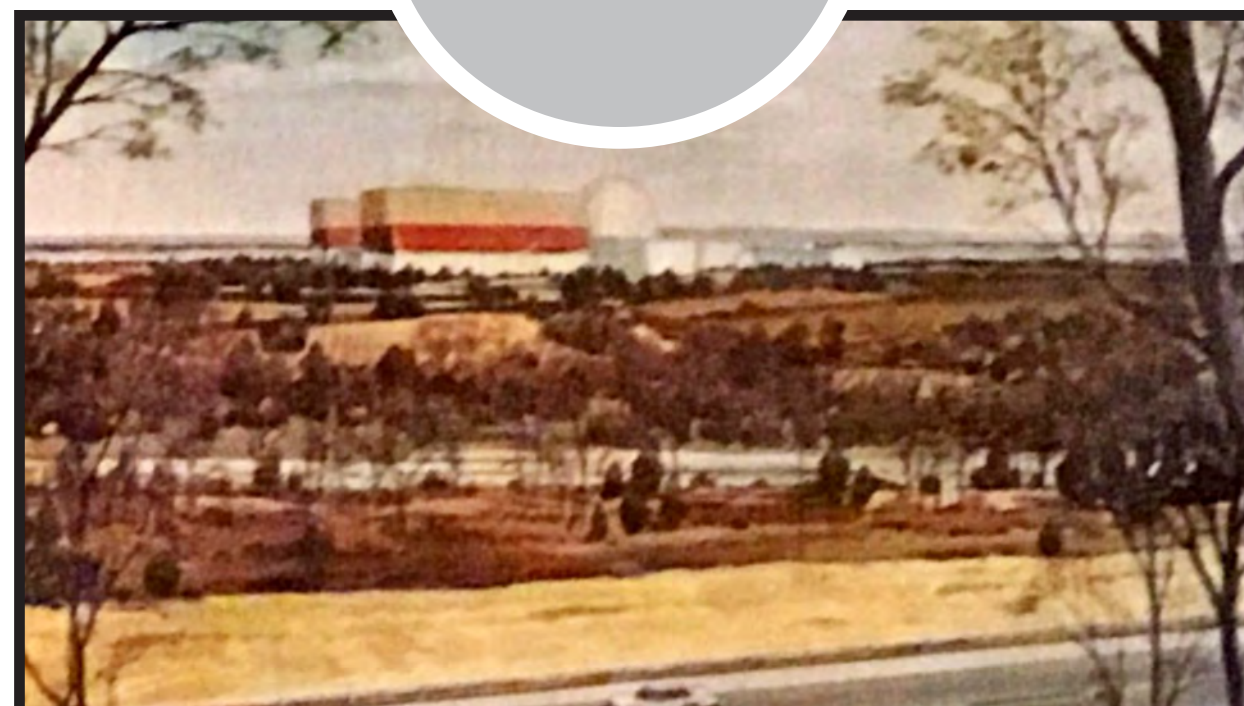
Ninigret National Wildlife Refuge starts with 27.5 acres. Hundreds of acres will be added after CNALF closes.

1974



Navy ceases operations at CNALF and Quonset Point, with land transferred to General Services Administration.

1976



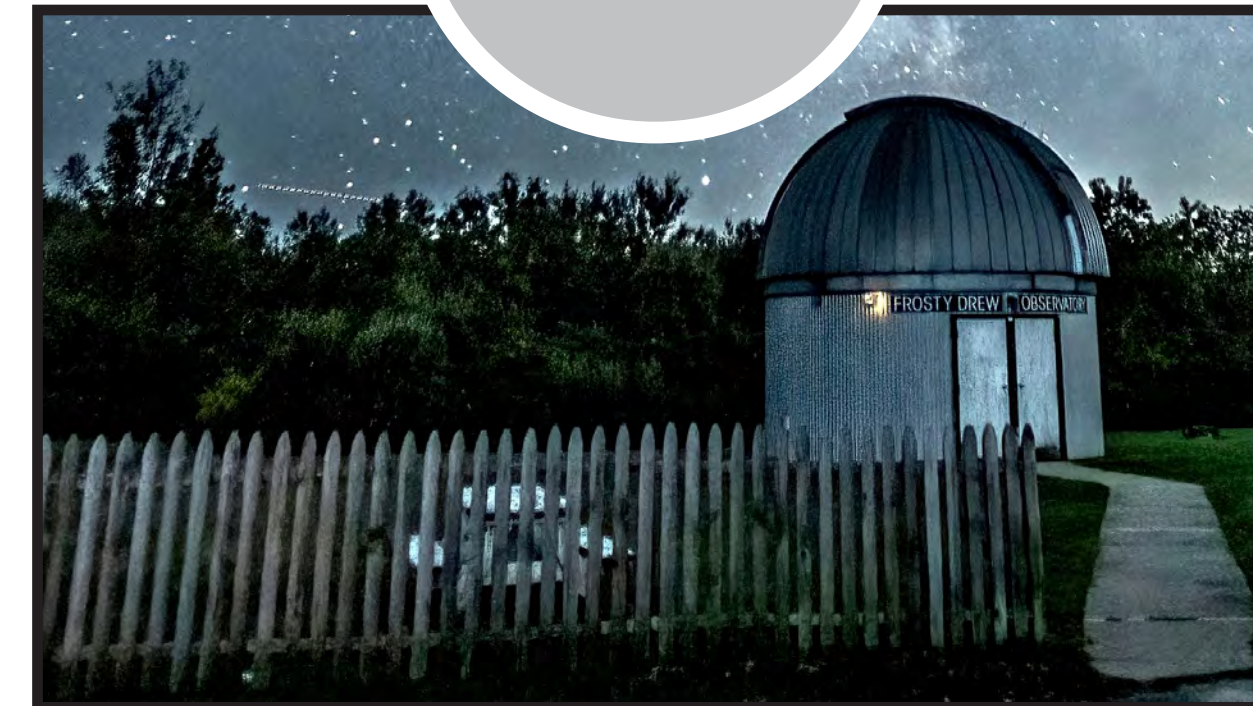
An application to build a nuclear plant at the site by New England Power Co. fails after strong community opposition.

1983



Ninigret Park opens after government deeded an additional 172.4 acres to Charlestown to be used for a public park.

1988



Frosty Drew Observatory opens inside Ninigret Park in honor of Edwin Foster "Frosty" Drew's legacy of conservation.

Investigation and Remediation

1987

USACE tasked with environmental restoration at CNALF under Formerly Used Defense Site program and begins a CERCLA Preliminary Assessment.

1993

Site Inspection conducted and Remedial Investigation begins for potential contaminants.

2003

USACE completes asbestos abatement and demolition of buildings.

2007

Installed monitoring wells, soil borings, collected soil and groundwater samples to define area in need of treatment.

2008

Site investigation into possible military munitions completed by USACE. Final year of 2 years of quarterly groundwater monitoring at former tank farm site.

2023

USACE initiates Time Critical Removal Action and installs drinking water treatment systems for PFAS. More treatment systems to be installed as needed.

2024

The EPA establishes Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for PFAS in drinking water across the United States.

2025

USACE completes demolition and remediation of contaminated soils around a buried electrical vault.

2026

Inaugural public meeting of newly formed Ninigret Restoration Advisory Board held in Ninigret Park.

CNALF Historical Photos

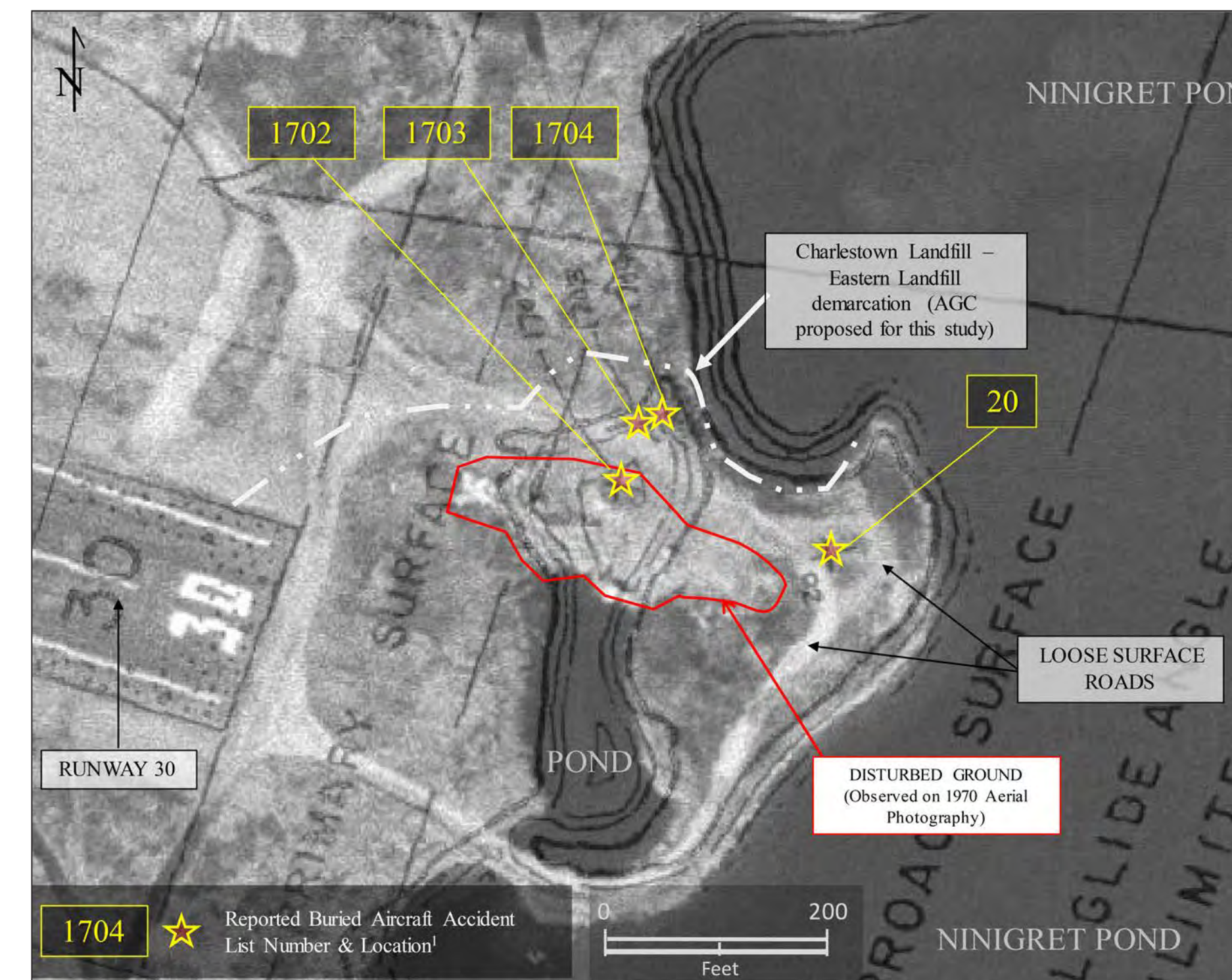
Water Supply Area



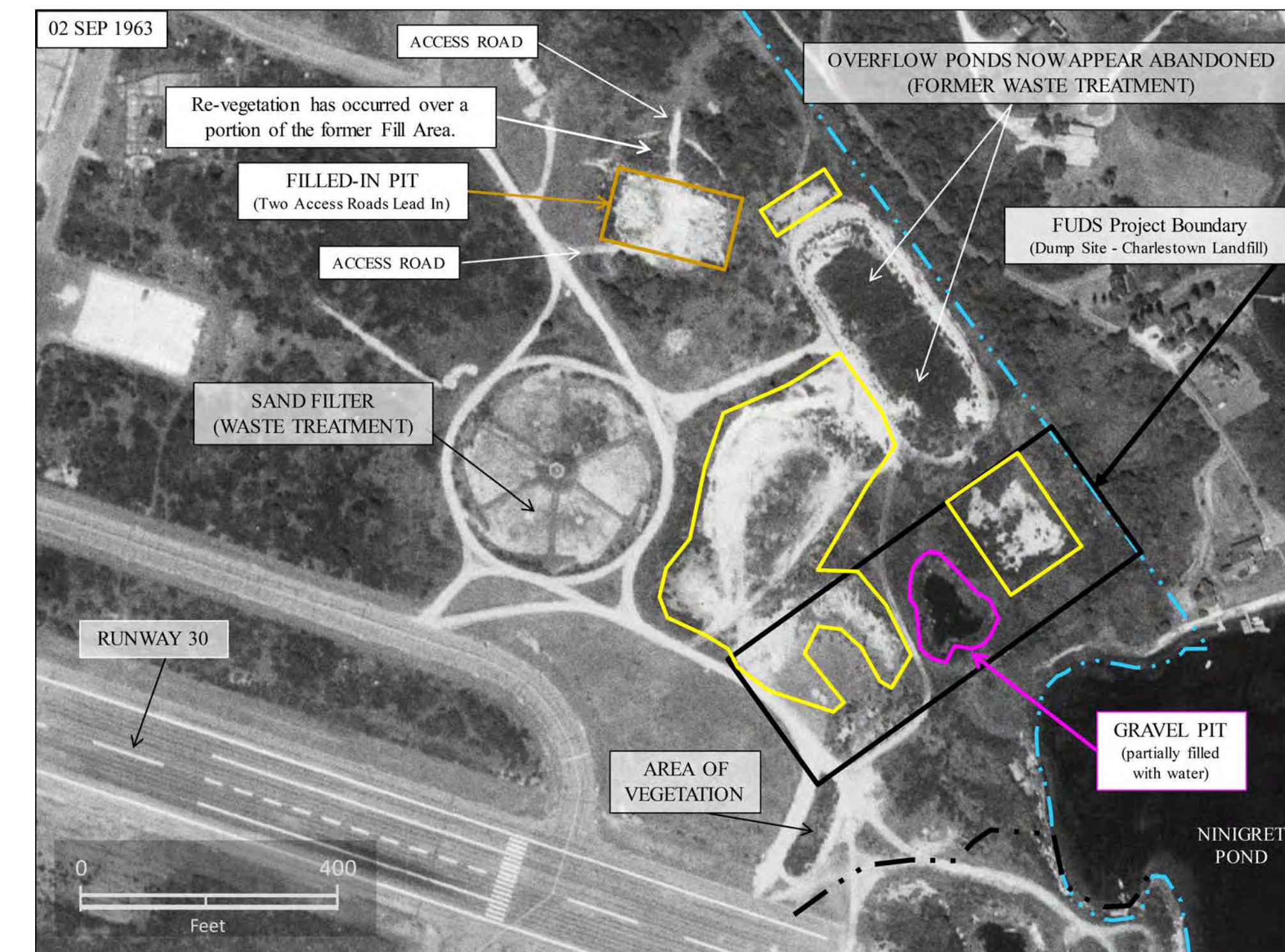
Burn Pit used for Firefighting Training



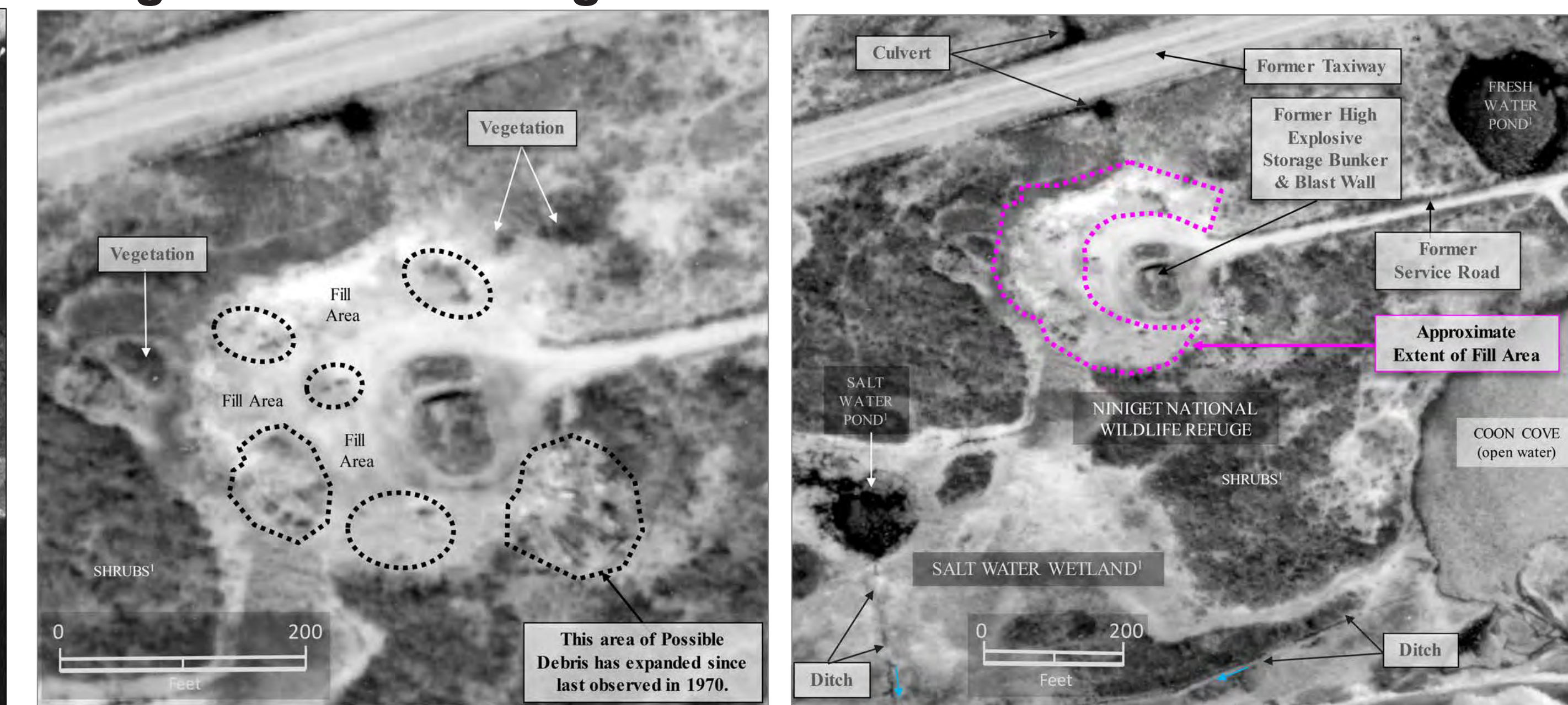
Eastern Area Landfill



Charlestown Landfill



Ninigret Wildlife Refuge Landfill



Source: Historical Environmental Photographic Analysis prepared by U.S. Army Geospatial Center, August 2018

Federal Cleanup Program

Charlestown Naval Auxiliary Landing Field (CNALF) is a Formerly Used Defense Site under the Defense Environmental Restoration Program. The cleanup process follows the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA).

CERCLA Process*

PA/SI

Preliminary
Assessment/
Site Inspection

RI/FS

Remedial
Investigation/
Feasibility Study

RD/RA

Remedial Design/
Remedial Action

RA-O

Remedial Action
Operations

LTM

Long-Term
Management

**A removal action may be initiated at any time during the process if imminent threat to human health, safety, or environment exists.*

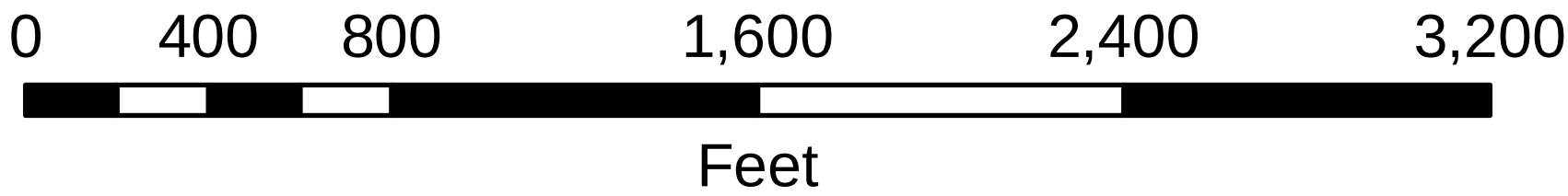
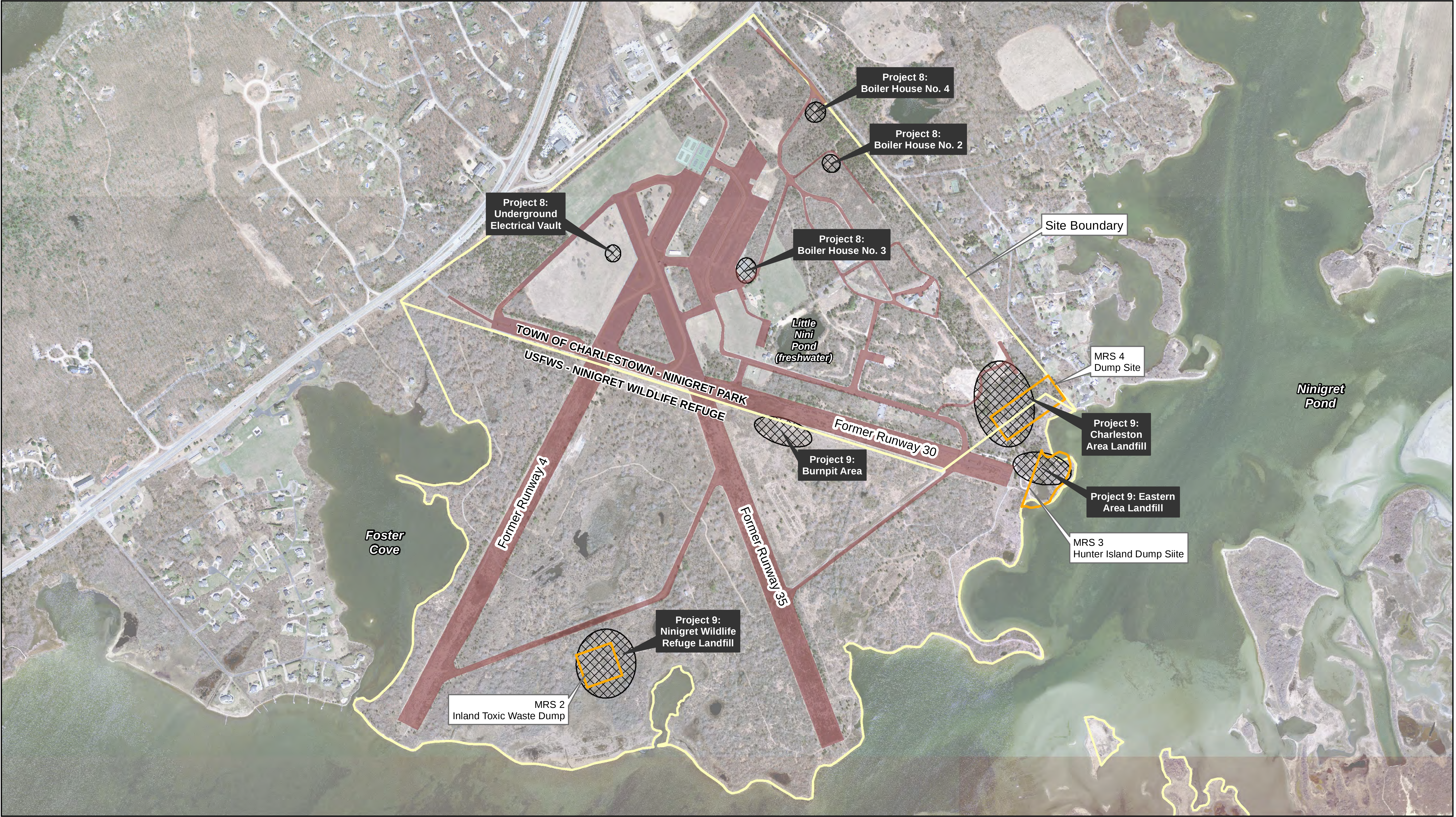


Remedial Investigation Tasks

- Wetland Delineation
- Vegetative Cover and Invasive Species Surveys
- Mobilization, Demobilization
- Vegetation Clearing
- Geophysical Surveying
- Tapwater Sampling
- Test Pit Excavation and Soil Sampling
- Surface and Subsurface Soil Sampling
- Sediment, Surface Water, and Porewater Sampling
- Background Soil, Sediment, and Surface Water Sampling
- Monitoring Well Installation, Well Rehabilitation, Bedrock Borehole Geophysical Logging
- Monitoring Well Sampling and Water Level Monitoring
- Groundwater Modeling, Data Validation, Analysis, and Reporting
- Public Communication



Former Charlestown Naval Auxiliary Landing Field



Sources:
Map of Auxiliary Air Station by U.S.N., June 30, 1951.
URS, 1996.
Alion, 2008.
Aerial imagery from USGS (2014).
Note: All locations and dimensions are approximate.

Legend

- Military Munitions Response Program Munition Response Site
- Historic Edge of Pavement
- Project Area



What is a Restoration Advisory Board?

A RAB is a community-based board that meets regularly with USACE to review progress and provide input about environmental restoration

- Made up of community volunteers and government members
- Have Community and USACE Co-Chairs as equal partners with the authority to undertake RAB chairperson responsibilities
- Establish a mission statement with goals and described purpose
- Develop and implement operating procedures to guide RAB members and RAB governance



RAB Roles and Responsibilities

Facilitator

- Neutral
- Provide technical advice
- Ensure all viewpoints are considered
- Ensure all agenda items are addressed
- Monitor the progress of action items between RAB meetings

Public

- Participate in community RAB meetings
- Observe rules and operating procedures at meetings or when interacting with RAB members
- Ask questions to ensure understanding of RAB activities and impact on the community

Tribal

- Attend RAB meetings
- Ensure tribal env. standards and regulations are identified and addressed
- Educate RAB members regarding tribal sovereignty, tribal laws and their application to the property
- Assist with RAB member education and training

State Regulatory Agency

- Attend RAB meetings
- Ensure state env. standards and regulations are identified and addressed
- Serve as an information, referral and resource
- Assist with RAB member education and training

USFWS

- Attend RAB meetings
- Ensure federal environment standards and regulations are identified and addressed
- Assist with RAB member education and training