



Remedial Investigation at Formerly Used Defense Site Charleston Air Force Station, Charleston, Maine

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Overview

This fall, under the Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP) Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) program, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, New England District (District) will be starting an environmental investigation at the former Charleston Air Force Station (AFS or Site) located in Charleston, Maine. The purpose of the investigation, also known as a Remedial Investigation (RI), is to evaluate whether historical activities at the former AFS have affected current environmental quality at the Site, and if so, to identify what cleanup or remediation is needed to protect human health and the environment. The investigation and remediation process will be conducted in accordance with federal regulations and will be coordinated with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MEDEP).

History

The former Charleston AFS consisted of 82.3 acres, approximately 25 miles northwest of Bangor, Maine and 2.5 miles east of Charleston, Maine. The Air Force built Charleston AFS as an Aircraft Control and Warning Station which became fully operational in 1952. Its radars scanned the offshore airspace of the Bangor Defense Area, searching for incoming enemy aircraft. The Air Force declared Charleston AFS surplus in 1979. The property is currently owned by the state of Maine and is occupied by the Mountain View Youth Development Center and the Charleston Correctional Facility.

Planned Investigation

As described in the RI Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP), the environmental investigation will include:

- sampling of soil and shallow groundwater to determine the presence/absence of contamination at potential contaminant source areas, such as underground storage tanks, septic systems, dry wells and transformers;
- sampling of drinking water wells at the Mountain View Correctional Facility and nearby private residences;
- background soil sampling to identify organic compounds and metals that may be present in areas not impacted by former AFS operations;
- sampling areas where groundwater is seeping from bedrock outcrops to evaluate if groundwater discharging to the ground surface has been impacted by former Site operations;
- comparing sampling results to background concentrations and standards protective of human health and the environment; and
- identifying whether additional sampling data are needed to evaluate human health and ecological risks and to develop cleanup options.

Public Involvement

A Community Remediation Plan (CRP) has been prepared to ensure that the community is continuously informed about and provided opportunities to be involved in the environmental restoration process at the Site. The CRP, as well as the RI SAP, are available for public review in hard copy at the document repository established at the Charleston Town Offices, 125 School Road, Charleston (207-285-3637). Documents may be downloaded electronically from the project website: <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-Topics/Charleston-Air-Force-Station-Formerly-Used-Defense-Site/>

Communications describing the progress of the sampling activities will also be posted on the project website. The investigation is expected to be completed in 2021. The results of the investigation will be presented in the Remedial Investigation report, which will be shared for public comment and presented at a public meeting in early 2022.

During the public comment period which runs from July 30 to Sept. 18, 2020, community members and interested parties are invited to submit comments on the planned investigations described in the RI Sampling and Analysis Plan. Comments on the planned investigations and questions regarding the entire environmental restoration process can be submitted following the instructions provided on the project website. Questions regarding the project can also be directed to the District Community Relations Advisor, Ms. Sally Rigione at 978-318-8237 or by email at sally.m.rigione@usace.army.mil.

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