

# SUFFOLK COUNTY ARMY AIRFIELD BOMBING AND GUNNERY RANGE FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITE

Remedial Investigation  
through Decision Document  
Community Information Session

Julie Rupp  
Project Manager  
New England District  
Geo-Environmental Engineering  
Date: July 15, 2021



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®





# AGENDA



- Introduction
- Key Definitions
- Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) Program Overview
- Suffolk County Army Airfield (AAF) Bombing and Gunnery Range (BGR) Munitions Response Site (MRS) Site History
- Remedial Investigation Overview
- What Does This Mean for Me?
- Where to Find Information on the Project
- Project Schedule
- Safety Reminder, Closing Remarks, and Questions



# ACRONYMS



<b>AAF</b>	Army Airfield	<b>MC</b>	Munitions Constituents
<b>AGC</b>	Advanced Geophysical Classification	<b>MEC</b>	Munitions and Explosives of Concern
<b>BGR</b>	Bombing and Gunnery Range	<b>MM2x2</b>	MetalMapper 2x2
<b>CERCLA</b>	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act	<b>MPPEH</b>	Munitions Potentially Presenting an Explosive Hazard
<b>DoD</b>	Department of Defense	<b>MRS</b>	Munitions Response Site
<b>FUDS</b>	Formerly Used Defense Site	<b>ROE</b>	Right of Entry
<b>HD</b>	High Density	<b>USACE</b>	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
<b>HE</b>	High Explosive	<b>UXO</b>	Unexploded Ordnance
<b>LD</b>	Low Density		



# KEY DEFINITIONS



## WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

**Munitions and Explosives of Concern (MEC)** - Military munitions that may pose explosives safety risks

**Munitions Constituents (MC)** - Degradation or breakdown elements of unexploded ordnance or munitions (i.e., chemicals such as metals and explosives)



# KEY DEFINITIONS

## GEOPHYSICAL EQUIPMENT TO BE USED



**EM61-MK2-Electromagnetometer-**  
Professional grade metal detector that detects both ferrous (iron-containing) and non-ferrous objects with spatial resolution



**MetalMapper 2x2 (MM2x2)** –  
classifies buried metallic objects as scrap or a potential munition





# PROJECT TEAM



## USACE

- Project Manager – Julie Rupp
- Technical Manager – Todd Beckwith
- Public Affairs – Beth Gosselin
- Real Estate – Warren LaRiviere

## Contractor – Tetra Tech

- Tetra Tech Project Manager – Jennifer Harlan

---

Supported by a team including: Ordnance and Explosives Safety Specialists; Risk Assessors; Geophysicists; Chemists; Geologists; Public Affairs staff; Biologists; Cultural Resources Specialists; Real Estate Specialists



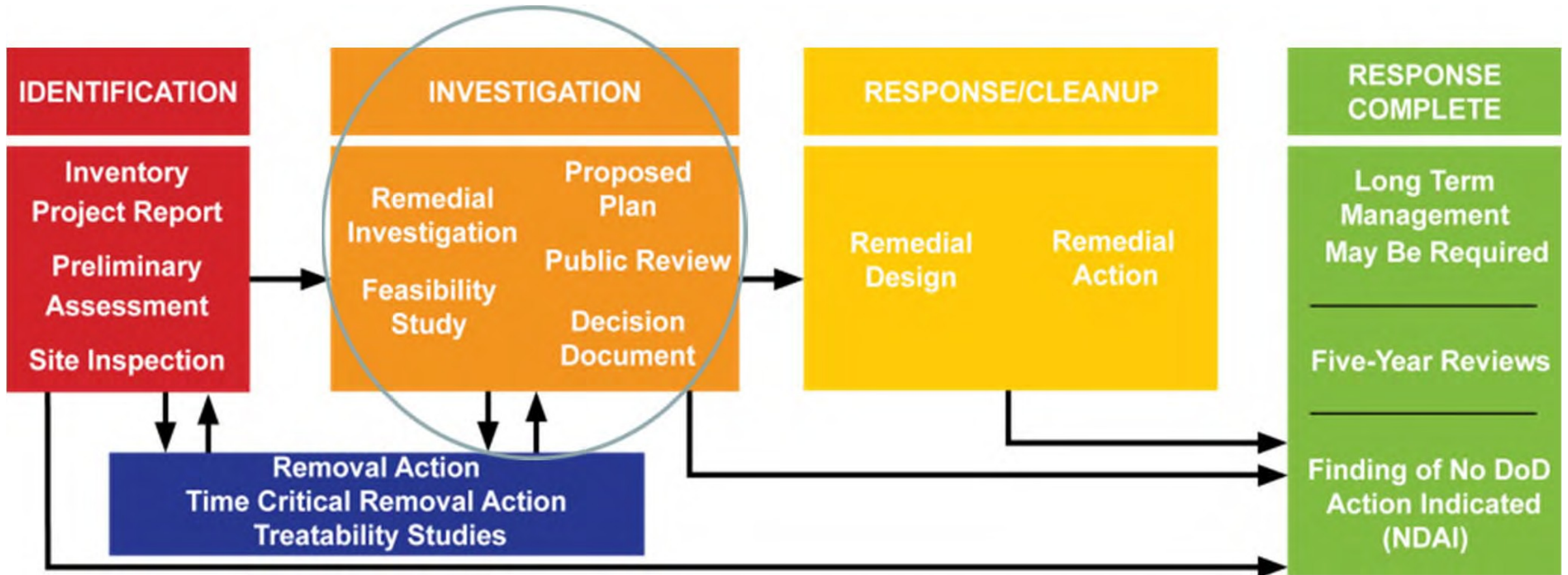
# FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)

- **Definition:** Real property that was formerly owned by, leased to or otherwise possessed by the United States and under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Defense prior to October 1986.
  - As of Sept. 30, 2019, approximately 5,440 FUDS nationwide have been identified for investigation and cleanup.
  - Of these sites, 1,736 sites remain where cleanup actions still require a CERCLA response.
- **Goal:** “To reduce, in a timely and cost-effective manner, the risk to human health and the environment resulting from past DoD activities at formerly used DoD properties.”
  - FUDS cleanup is performed under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).
- For more information on the FUDS Program:  
<https://www.usace.army.mil/missions/environmental/formerly-used-defense-sites/>



# PROCESS OVERVIEW FOR FUDS

Project is currently at this stage



(U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Environmental Regulation 200-3-1, FUDS Program Policy, May 2004)





# GOALS FOR THE REMEDIAL INVESTIGATION (RI)

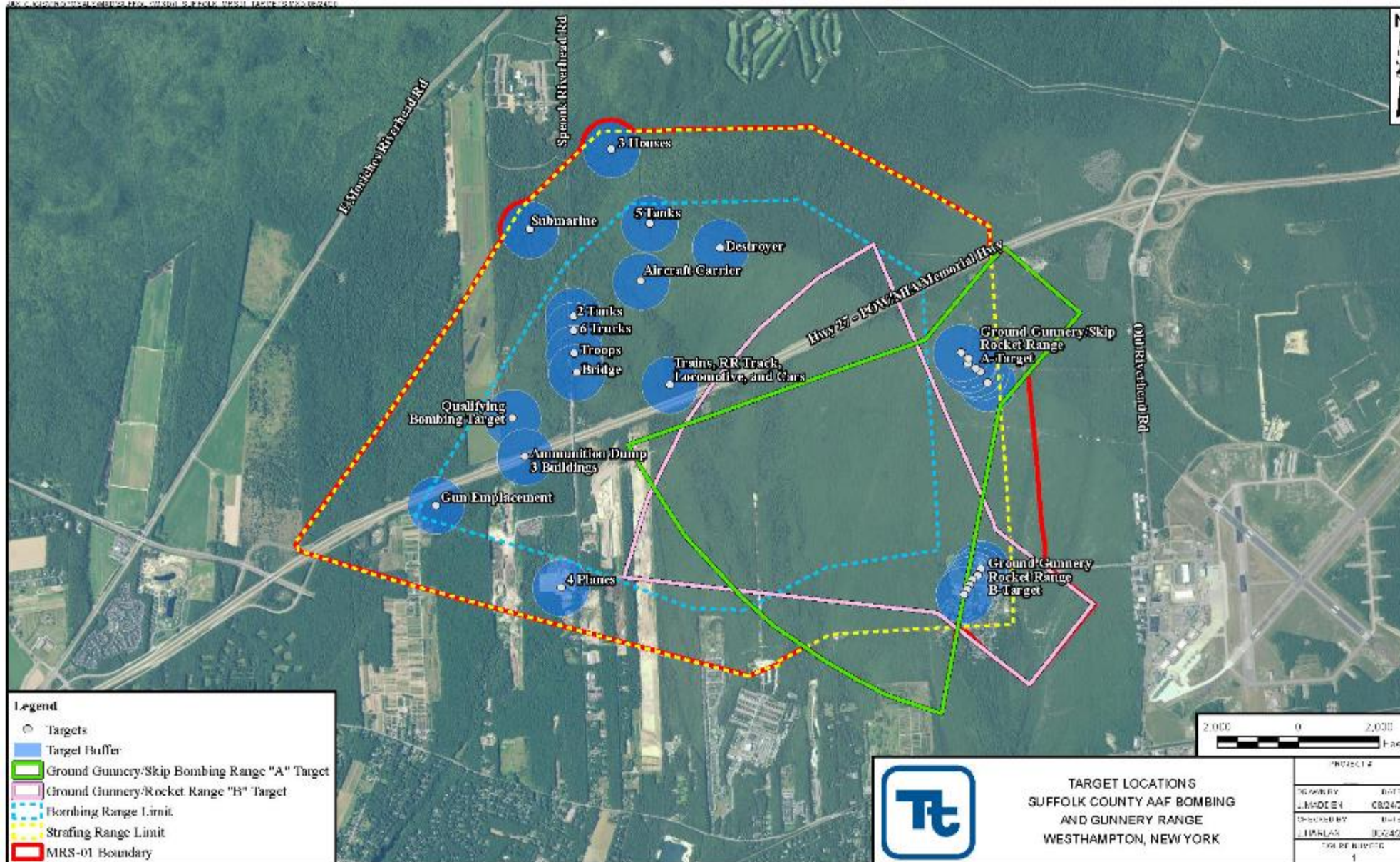
## Overall Goal:

- Gather sufficient information to determine the nature and extent of munitions and explosives of concern (MEC)/munitions constituents (MC) and assess the potential risks/hazards to support the evaluation of a no further action or remedial action alternative

## Remedial Investigation [RI] Objectives:

- Conduct field investigations to characterize the Munitions Response Site (MRS)
- Determine the type (nature), density, and distribution (extent) of MEC
- Determine the concentrations (if any) and extent of MC
- Assess potential risks/hazards to human health, safety and the environment
- Assess MRS boundaries

# SUFFOLK COUNTY AAF BGR MRS-01





# SUFFOLK COUNTY AAF BGR MRS-01

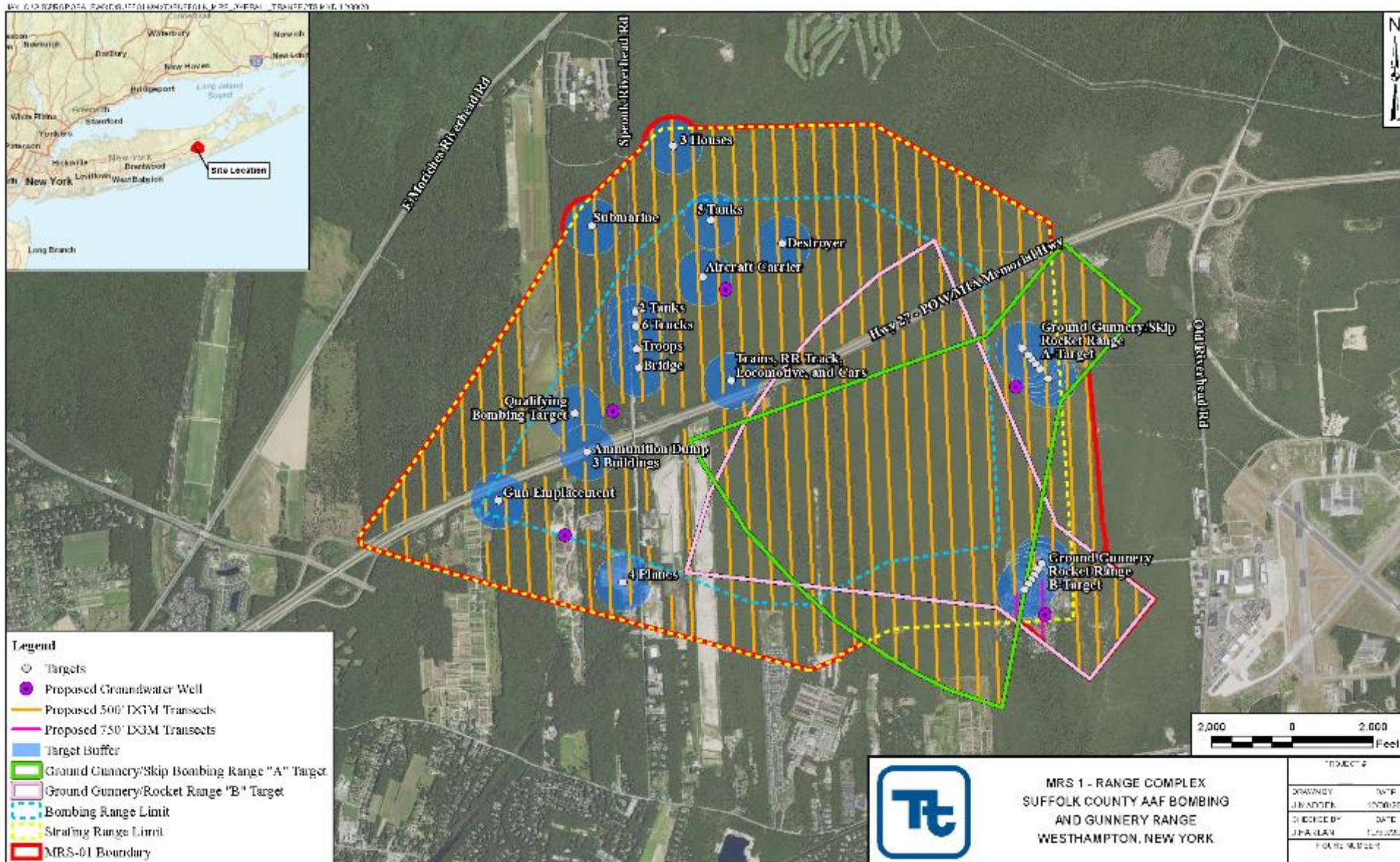
## SITE INFORMATION



- Suffolk AAF FUDS – 9,224 acres
- Suffolk AAF BGR MRS-01 – 4,297 acres
  - Site used from 1943-1946 for bombing, strafing, and rocket fire training exercises at 4 sub-ranges
    - Ground Gunnery/Skip Bombing A
    - Ground Gunnery/Rocket Range B
    - Bombing Range
    - Strafing Range
  - Majority of the training exercises appear to have been .50 caliber machine guns, practice bombs, and practice rockets
  - From May 1943 through January 1944 100-lb and 500-lb high explosive (HE) bombs, incendiary bombs, and 4.5-in HE rockets were reportedly used on the numerous targets located throughout the MRS
  - No military structures remain except for two target silhouettes
    - (a destroyer and aircraft carrier)
  - Records indicate a surface clearance was conducted in 1946



# OVERALL PROPOSED TRANSECT APPROACH





# TECHNICAL APPROACH SUMMARY

## SITE PREPARATION



### Site Preparation

- Site setup – onsite storage containers, portable toilets, etc.
- Vegetation reduction along transects and grids using mechanical equipment in non-residential areas
  - Will not remove trees 4 inches or greater in diameter
  - Stumps and roots will be left in place to protect the soil and foster regeneration
  - Brush material will be chipped and left in place which will foster regrowth
  - Appropriate precautions will be taken to ensure site activities do not cause a wildfire
- Vegetation reduction is not expected in residential areas



# TECHNICAL APPROACH SUMMARY



## Preliminary MRS Characterization (Phase 1)

- EM61-MK2 (metal detector) transect survey at 500-foot spacing throughout the MRS, covering 374,355 linear feet or 28.2 acres
- Transects will be walked by contractor personnel to map any areas to locate metal in the ground (metallic responses)
- Final coverage amounts dependent on Rights of Entry (ROEs)
- Transects in residential areas will be spaced slightly farther apart – 750 feet spacing



## High Density/Low Density (HD/LD) Area Characterization (Phase 2)

- Based on results of Phase 1 work, establish ~50 mini-grids measuring 50 feet x 100 feet (approximately 5.7 acres) through selected areas of high metallic responses
- Conduct advanced geophysical classification (AGC) survey with Metal Mapper 2x2 (MM2x2) to determine if metal detected in Phase I is potentially a munition
- Develop a target dig list



# TECHNICAL APPROACH SUMMARY – PHASE 3

## Intrusive Investigation & MC Sampling (Phase 3)

- Unexploded ordnance (UXO) technicians will dig on the target locations to determine the sources of the metallic response with hand tools
  - When excavating potential munitions, an exclusion zone of up to 638 feet will be established around the dig area and evacuations may be needed
- For any munition that is found, we will safely detonate it at the existing location, OR if necessary and it's safe to move, we will detonate it elsewhere within the MRS project area. We will work closely with local public safety officials during this phase.
- Collect soil samples for metals and explosives associated with munitions
- Groundwater is being considered as part of the Remedial Investigation; however, widespread groundwater impacts from the MRS are not anticipated



# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

- Fieldwork
  - Contractors will be in the area during fall 2021/winter 2022
  - Expect fewer than 10 personnel conducting investigation activities
  - Equipment staging will be set-up at central locations (TBD)
- Fire mitigation activities will be utilized, including coordination with the Pine Barrens Commission Fire Management Specialist
- During digging (intrusive) operations, safety exclusion zones will be set up and buildings may need to be evacuated, and some roads may need to be shut down. This will be coordinated in advance with affected residents and the local municipality.
- No vegetation reduction from June 1 – July 31 due to Northern Long Eared Bat nesting
- No field work planned during summer tourist season
- Coordination has been occurring with town of Southampton, Pine Barrens Commission and Suffolk County, New York State DEC, etc.



# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

## Rights of Entry (ROEs)

- USACE is contacting property owners where investigation may occur to request a right-of-entry to the property
- If access is granted, USACE and/or our Contractor will coordinate directly with property owners
- We will not need access to anyone's home
- We will ensure your property is protected and do not plan on removing any vegetation at residential parcels during the investigation, other than grass immediately above a dig target
- All digging will be done with hand tools
- Prior to digging, an arborist will appraise the landscaping on developed properties and provide the property owner with an appraisal for approval prior to digging, which will be used if there is any damage
- Developed properties will be restored to their original condition at the start of field activities, where needed.



# WHERE TO FIND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT

- USACE website:  
<https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-Topics/Suffolk-County-Army-Air-Field-Bombing-and-Gunnery-Range-FUDS/>
  - Fact Sheet
  - Project Documents
  - Contact Information
- Town of Southampton website: <http://www.southamptontownny.gov>
- Westhampton Free Library
  - Project documents will be available for public review, as they are finalized





# SCHEDULE

- **Spring/Summer 2021** - Remedial Investigation Work Plan Preparation
- **September 2021 – January 2022** – Remedial Investigation fieldwork [conducted in phases]
  - ***Phase 1 (September 2021)*** - Vegetation Reduction (non-residential areas) and Geophysical Survey Transects
  - ***Phase 2 (November)*** - Focused Geophysical Survey
  - ***Phase 3 (January 2022)*** - Digging and Soil and/or Groundwater Sampling
- **Spring/Summer 2022** – Remedial Investigation Report
- **Fall 2022/Winter 2023** – Feasibility Study Report
- **Summer 2023** – Proposed Plan Public Meeting
- **Spring 2024** – Decision Document



# SAFETY REMINDER

## FOLLOW THE 3 'R's OF EXPLOSIVES SAFETY:

### Recognize:

When you may have encountered a munition and that munitions are dangerous.

### Retreat:

Do not approach, touch, move or disturb it, but carefully leave the area.

### Report:

Call 911 and advise the police of what you saw and where you saw it.





# QUESTIONS / OPEN DISCUSSION



## **Project Manager Contact Info:**

Julie Rupp

Office: 978-318-8962

Email: [Julia.M.Rupp@usace.army.mil](mailto:Julia.M.Rupp@usace.army.mil)