

RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
MARCH 1997

HNC REVISION: 12 AUGUST 1997
TAG REVIEW DATE: 26 AUGUST 1997

1. **SITE NAME:** Fort Foote
SITE NUMBER: C03MD102100
LOCATION:
CITY: Fort Washington
COUNTY: Prince George's
STATE: Maryland
PROJECT NUMBER: C03MD102101
CATEGORY: OE
INPR RAC: 2
ASR RAC: 5
TAG RAC: 2

2. **POC'S:**

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3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former Fort Foote consisted of 66.62 acres located just south of the District of Columbia on the eastern banks of the Potomac River on Rozier's Bluff, Port Washington, Prince George's County, Maryland. Currently Fort Foote is part of the Fort Circle Parks region which consists of

sites from the Civil War Defenses of Washington, D.C. It is operated by the National Park Service of the Department of Interior. Residential homes are located east and south of the park.

The climate is warm and humid in the summer with typical high temperatures of 90°F, and cold in the winter with temperatures below freezing common. Most of the site has ground elevations of 30-90 feet NGVD. Maximum elevation on the ridge line is 95 feet NGVD and decreases towards the Potomac on the west and towards a small unnamed tributary of the Potomac on the east. Runoff from the site would be by sheet flow on the surface to small swales carrying the flow directly to the Potomac, or via the small stream to the Potomac. Only the lowest elevations (20 feet NGVD or lower) may be subject to occasional flooding. Durations of any flooding should generally be short. Site photographs show the site is covered with vegetation, including trees and brush.

4. SITE HISTORY: The United States Government began to occupy 66.62 acres of land on 10 May 1862 for the purpose of constructing Fort Foote. It is assumed that the government took control of this property without lease or other instrument due to Civil War needs. The fort was designed to guard and protect Washington D.C. from Confederate attack via the Potomac River during the Civil War. Construction lasted from 1863 until 1865. In 1866 the U.S. Government began to pay rent for the land. A copy of a lease was not available for review. In 1872 and 1873, the federal government acquired the 66.62 acres through an act of the Maryland State Legislature. The land was purchased in two parcels from F.W. Rozier (15.28 acres) and the heirs of Benedict Edelin (51.34 acres). Following the Civil War, the fort was maintained as a training facility from 1865 until 1878, at which time the garrison was withdrawn.

Improvements to the site consisted of several storage warehouses, barracks, officers quarters, ammunition magazines, bombproofs, a hospital, stables, a bulkhead, a pier, a boathouse and a cemetery. The armament varied at times but included two 15 inch Rodman cannons, four 200-lb Parrot rifles, seven 30-lb Parrot rifles, six 10-inch siege mortars, five 24-lb Coehorn mortars, six 12-lb field guns, five 8-inch siege mortars, two Gatling guns (1-inch and .45-inch caliber), two 4.5-inch rifled guns and four 3-inch rifled guns.

On 11 December 1917, the Engineering Department of the Corps of Engineers gave permission to the Bureau of Mines to use Fort Foote as an engineer training and practice site. In particular, the site was used to conduct gas service tests which included

practical tests on the official intensive bomb, incendiary bombs, comparison of incendiary dart mixtures and tests in the development of the Livens Projectile. The Chemical Warfare Service was transferred to the War Department in 1918 and the War Department continued the work previously started.

The fort was declared surplus by the Secretary of War on 10 July 1922 and was placed under the control of the Quartermaster General. A use permit was granted to the Department of Commerce on 3 March 1923 to maintain a post and light on the wharf. On 18 July 1924, Mr. Leo Langley, the caretaker, leased portions of Fort Foote for agricultural purposes. On 28 May 1928, the War Department, Welfare Service and the Girl Scouts of Washington were granted a license to use additional lands of Fort Foote for camping purposes. On 18 July 1931, the Secretary of War cancelled all leases and permits and transferred control of the fort to the Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks (now known as the Department of the Interior, National Capital Parks). According to National Park Service personnel at Fort Washington, Fort Foote was again used during World War II in conjunction with Fort Washington by the Adjutant General School for hiking and field exercises.

The site is currently owned and operated by the Department of the Interior, National Capital Parks and is used as a national park. The Federal Aviation Administration reportedly leases a portion of the property to maintain a transmitter onsite. In addition, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission reportedly leases a portion of the site to maintain a small pump house onsite.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

AREA:

Size, Acres:	66.62
Former Use:	Fort
Present Use:	National park
Probable End Use:	National park
Ordnance Presence:	Potential
Type:	Cannon Balls and Ketchen Grenades; Various ammunition containing incendiary filler

6. CURRENT STATUS: The Archives Search Report (ASR) for Fort Foote was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, in March 1997.

7. STRATEGY: Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis (EE/CA)

8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS: The Huntsville Center (USAESCH) Technical Advisory Group (TAG) recommended a strategy of EE/CA based on a follow-up inspection of the site by Mr. Greg Bayuga, USAESCH Safety, initiated by Mr. Bill McPherson, USAESCH ASR/INPR Team Safety, who recommended that the ditch and abattis be swept with a magnetometer to determine if there was the potential for buried OE in this area. Paragraph 8.1.1 on page 8-1 of the ASR Findings states that guidance to officers serving in the defenses of Washington, D.C. during the Civil War were to "Bury percussion shells or hand grenades, to act as torpedoes, in the bottom of the ditch and outside the abattis." The ASR author comments that no specific information pertaining to Fort Foote regarding this order was found. Using a Schonstat 52, Mr. Bayuga encountered subsurface anomalies at regular intervals along the ditch and recommends a strategy of EE/CA for the site. The TAG also determined that there is no CWM hazard and that in addition to the potential for OE in the ditch area, the potential for incendiary filled ammunition exists on all site acreage.

Trip Report Dated 16 June 1997: Greg Bayuga, USAESCH, did find anomalies in the ditch, indicating a need for EE/CA at the site. He recommends an ESI in lieu of an EE/CA to identify these anomalies and believes there is a possibility of CWM at the site. He further states that if the anomalies are determined to be trash during an ESI and it is determined that CWM was not used at the site, then NOFA would be the appropriate strategy.

Comment Form 7 dated 20 June 1997 by RCWM Team: Mr. Richard Mahan, USAESCH, analyzed the testing and development procedures for OE used at the site and determined that the site should not be considered a CWM site. Incendiary darts and bombs were dropped from a tower. Test results of Livens projectors included distances to impact, flight times, and projectile depth following impact. Also, he points out that the need for continuous use of the range would not have permitted the use of persistent chemical agents or materials that would require extensive decontamination. In addition, the historical documents in the ASR do not indicate the use of CWM. Mr. Mahan concludes that the site should be rated a conventional site and disagrees with a strategy of NOFA.

HNC Safety Comments Dated 24 June 1997: Following receipt of results of the site visit and the RCWM Team evaluation, a strategy of OE EE/CA was recommended with a RAC score of 2 assigned based on a value for medium and large caliber ordnance (see updated RAC Form, attached). There was agreement with the RCWM Team evaluation that various chemicals/gases, but not CWM, were tested on this site. **Therefore, CWM is not a consideration.**

Other Comments Regarding OE at the Site: The ASR author found no evidence of artillery at the site, which was stored at Fort Foote during the Civil War until 1878. It was presumed that practice firing would have occurred into the Potomac River. Greg Bayuga indicated that possible OE presence at the site is limited to the ditches. The RCWM Team evaluation of OE usage at the site for test and development purposes is that the OE was strictly controlled and that this OE is not present as a result. The ASR author also stated that the tests of the Livens Projector included firing to a range of 1,000 yards and that this probably overshoot the property boundaries. However, as mentioned previously, controls were in place to retrieve items fired.

Natural Resources: Federally and State threatened species occur within the site area and are listed in ASR Findings, pages 3-4 through 3-5, para 3.5. An on-site inspection by appropriate State and Federal personnel may be necessary to verify the presence, absence or location of listed species, or natural communities.

Historical Resources: The ASR did not indicate if historical/cultural resources were found to be present at the site. Any intrusive measures taken within the area will require oversight by the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) and/or other like organizations.

9. SCHEDULE SUMMARY: EE/CA

10. FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY: For Official Use Only