

RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
MARCH 1998

HNC REVISION: 10 JUNE 1998
TAG REVIEW DATE: 29 JULY 1998

1. **SITE NAME:** Little River Battery

SITE NUMBER: D01ME052000

LOCATION:

City: Belfast
County: Waldo County
State: Maine

PROJECT NUMBER: D01ME052001

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 3

ASR RAC: 3

TAG RAC: 5

2. **POC'S:**

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3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The remains of the former Little River Battery is currently located on a 0.36 acre parcel of land that was part of an estimated total site acreage of four to five acres. Little River Battery is located in Belfast, in Waldo County, Maine off Route 1, at the end of a private access dirt

road called Battery Road. Most of the battery area, including the ammunition storage bunker, was on land now owned by Jonathan A. Kriebel. The entire site is privately owned and used for year-round and summer residences.

The site borders Belfast Bay on the eastern border of the site. The maximum elevation of the site is approximately 25-30 feet above sea level and inclines eastward down to the bay. There are no permanent surface water features within site boundaries and surface drainage is directly into Belfast Bay.

The climate of the site is modified by the immediate proximity of the Atlantic Ocean so that summer temperatures are cooler and winter temperatures are higher than areas inland. The average temperature for July is 68.3° F with an average maximum of 79.6° F. The January average is 22.2° F with the average minimum at 11.9° F. Extremes have been 98° F and -28° F. Average yearly rainfall is 48.7 inches and the average for snow is 59 inches.

4. **SITE HISTORY:** The United States Army built and used the Little River Battery during the period of the Civil War as a coastal defense against confederate raiders. The land was owned by Mr. Erastus Freeman, who had purchased it in 1855. No deeds have been found which show how the site was acquired, exactly when it was acquired, or the acreage acquired. A deed in Book 221/Page 433 located at the Waldo County Registry of Deeds indicates that the battery lot was five acres. However, a historical map in the ASR at L-2 indicates that the site was four acres in size.

At the height of the Civil War, the Governor of Maine urged the War Department to provide additional defenses along the Maine Coast. CPT Thomas L. Casey of the regular army arrived in Belfast to make arrangements for the construction of two temporary batteries, Little River Battery and one on the opposite shore of Belfast Bay at Minister's Point. A contractor under the supervision of the United States Army Corps of Engineers completed the batteries in November, 1863.

The battery was 150 feet long with five parapets that were eight feet high, 18 feet wide at the top, and 28 feet wide at the base. Earth and stone were pounded into a solid mass and the entire mass was covered with turf. Five cannon were mounted at the battery: two 24 pound rifled cannon and three 32 pound smooth-bore cannon. Approximately 40 feet to the rear of the parapets, a magazine of logs, earth and stone was built with walls and a roof 10 feet thick. The magazine was completed in November 1863, but no ammunition was stored there until after

January 1864. Wooden barracks were built in June 1864. A storehouse was also built at the site.

By September 1865, only three guns manned by three soldiers were left at the site and it was recommended that the use of the battery be discontinued. In December 1865, the remaining guns of Little River Battery were removed and sent to Fort Knox, Maine, and the battery was dismantled. No information was found regarding the date or method of disposal of the site. On 4 May 1889, Mr. Freeman sold the land to Mr. George Johnson. The only remaining part of the battery is the southern corner. The magazine is still present, but has caved in and is in a state of disrepair. No other structures remain.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

AREA A

Size, Acres:	1
Former Use:	Battery Area
Present Use:	Residential
Probable End Use:	Residential
Ordnance Presence:	None

AREA B

Size, Acres:	3
Former Use:	Remaining Land
Present Use:	Residential
Probable End Use:	Residential
Ordnance Presence:	None

AREA C

Size, Acres:	5
Former Use:	Firing Fan - Additional Lands
Present Use:	State of Maine-Public Waterway
Probable End Use:	State of Maine-Public Waterway
Ordnance Presence:	None

6. CURRENT STATUS: The Archives Search Report (ASR) for Little River Battery was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, in March 1998.

7. STRATEGY:

AREA A: RAC 5;NOFA

AREA B: RAC 5;NOFA

AREA C: RAC 5;NOFA (Not included as INPR acreage for site)

8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS: The Huntsville Center Technical Advisory Group met and discussed this ASR on 29 July 1998 and agree with the ASR recommendation, and with the USAESCH Safety Comments,

that the correct strategy for this site is RAC 5, NOFA, although the ASR indicated RAC 3. **In addition, Area C acreage, which was not included in the INPR, should not be added to the project, although it was added in the ASR.**

The ASR recommendation for a strategy of RAC 3 is based on the slight potential for ammunition, underwater in the bay, that may have been fired during practice from Little River Battery. However, there is no evidence that practice firings occurred and there are no reports that OE has ever been found. **Since there is no reasonable expectation that OE is present, and it is underwater, RAC 5, NOFA is the appropriate strategy.**

HNC Safety Comments: Does not concur with RAC 3 for Area C and recommends RAC 5, NOFA for Area C, thus making the entire site RAC 5, NOFA. Rational is: (1) A local historian **believes**, but does not **know**, that the cannons were fired during a celebration. Also, he did not know if rounds were fired. (2) Paragraph 7a(2) of the ASR defines potential OE: by definition, Area C does not have the potential for OE. (3) There are no reports of OE ever being found in Belfast Bay or on the beach due to storms. **In his response, the ASR author still contends that it is reasonable to assume that some practice firing occurred. Although the ASR recommended EE/CA while stating that NOFA should be considered, the author deferred making any changes to the ASR pending receipt of TAG results. An updated RAC for the site with a score of 5 is attached.**

CWM: The ASR does not mention that there is or is not any probability of CWM at this site.

Other Projects: None

Natural Resources: Federally and State threatened species do not occur within the site area. However, 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 Maine Historic Preservation Commission conducted a site inventory inspection on Little River Battery in 1986. No changes have occurred since the time of this inventory. Any intrusive measures taken at the site will require oversight by the State Historical Preservation Office and/or other like organizations.

9. SCHEDULE SUMMARY: NOFA

10. FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY: NA NOFA