

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

AUGUST 1996

TAG REVIEW DATE: 26 March 1997

**1. SITE NAME:** Fort Miles Military Reservation

**SITE NUMBER:** C03DE006300

**LOCATION:**

City: Lewes  
County: Sussex  
State: Delaware

**PROJECT NUMBER:** C03DE006304

**CATEGORY:** OE

**INPR RAC:** 1

**ASR RAC:** 1

**TAG RAC:** 1

**2. POC's:**

**TECHNICAL MANAGER:**

Name: Richard L. Pike  
Office: CEHNC-OE-DC  
Phone: 256-895-1559

**GEO DISTRICT POC:**

Name: Sheila Bloom  
Office: CENAB-PP-E  
Phone: 410-962-6782

**GEO DIVISION POC:**

Name: Celia Orgel  
Office: CENAD-PP-S  
Phone: 212-264-6484

**HEADQUARTERS POC:**

Name: J.R. Gibson  
Office: CEMP-RF  
Phone: 202-761-4709

**SUPPORT DISTRICT (ASR) POC:**

Name: Gerald V. Schwalbe  
Office: CELMS-PM-M  
Phone: 314-331-8788

**ASR TAG REVIEW POC:**

Name: Thomas M. Meekma  
Office: SIOAC-ESL  
Phone: 815-273-8739

**3. SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former Fort Miles Military Reservation, consisting of 2,011.25 acres, is located on Cape Henlopen, just east of the Town of Lewes, Sussex

County, Delaware. The site can be accessed via US Route 9. The site is at approximately Latitude 38°47'30" and Longitude 75°05'08". The primary current use of the property is as a state-owned and operated public park, the Cape Henlopen State Park. The U.S. Navy operates a reserve center on approximately 16 acres, and the University of Delaware and City of Lewes each control certain tracts. The lands are readily accessible by the public.

Development activity is limited. New commercial development activity in the area is concentrated along Highway 1, several miles to the west of Fort Miles and the City of Lewes. Within the City of Lewes, no new development is occurring except for scattered development of residential buildings.

The site is located on the Atlantic Coastal Plain, consisting of flat, low land with many marshes. The Atlantic Ocean borders the northern and eastern boundaries. The Delaware Bay is on the western boundary. Marshes border the site on the remaining boundary. High tides, caused by strong winds, can result in flooding of the lowlands. Stormwater from the area drains through ditches and storm sewers.

**4. SITE HISTORY:** The United States acquired 1,344.10 acres fee, 18.94 acres easement, 155.00 acres permit, 0.41 acres license, and 492.80 acres lease from various owners through various deeds and condemnation proceedings between February 1873 and May 1957. The original reservation of 140 acres, known as Delaware Breakwater, was ceded to the United States War Department by the State of Delaware on the express condition that defenses be built by the U.S. at the Delaware Breakwater Harbor. The remainder of the property was acquired beginning in 1940. Prior to the War Department's acquisition, much of the property was under the control of the Departments of Agriculture and Interior and used as a bird refuge.

Originally known as Cape Henlopen Military Reservation, the site was part of the Harbor Defenses of Delaware Bay during WW I and WW II. A 6-inch gun emplacement was located on Cape Henlopen Point during WW I. During WW II, numerous gun emplacements of sizes eight, twelve and sixteen inch were scattered about the reservation. The entire site was officially called Fort Miles by an Act of Congress in 1938. A fort was built in the early 1940's. The 261st Coast Artillery was present. The Navy set up a Harbor Entrance Control Post and mines were laid across the channel in Delaware Bay. Post facilities were built. A small arms firing range was established. Fort Miles continued as an army post after WW II and was quite active as a training post during the Korean War in 1950. It was then used to support anti-aircraft gun firing units and for reserve component training. In 1958, the Army decided to close Fort Miles. The Army officially transferred 614 acres to the Department of the Navy for a Naval Oceanographic Research Station on February 13, 1961. The Navy resurveyed the property and determined it contained 593.47 acres. The Army retained 190 acres of land for the establishment of the First Recreation Area(FARA). The Navy retained 13.77 acres for a Naval Oceanographic Research Station.

Disposal of 488.46 acres leased from The State of Delaware was by termination on or before May 15, 1959. The lease for an additional 4.34 acres expired June 30, 1963. On October 15, 1964, 523.72 acres fee, 18.72 acres easement, and 0.41 acres license were conveyed to The State of Delaware for education and/or public park and recreation purposes. On February 23, 1965, a permit for 155.0 acres was terminated. By Quitclaim Deed dated September 5, 1967, 3.27 acres fee were conveyed to the Commissioners of Lewes Delaware. The remaining acreage was conveyed to the State of Delaware for park and recreation purposes as follows: 240 acres fee on October 31, 1972; 0.78 acres fee and 1.37 acres easement on November 24, 1978; 94.24 acres fee on May 14, 1980; 335.67 acres fee on July 19, 1983; 16.2 acres fee on September 15, 1983; 95.92 acres fee and 0.22 acres easement on October 23, 1991.

The land owned by The State of Delaware makes up the Cape Henlopen State Park. The deed dated May 14, 1980 conveying 94.24 acres fee included a map which identified areas restricted to surface use only. A copy of the map was unavailable. The conveyance of 95.92 acres fee and 0.22 acres easement on October 23, 1991 contains the following condition, "The State of Delaware is aware that the property may be contaminated with explosives or toxic materials. The State of Delaware accepts the property in its present condition and agrees to indemnify the Government against all liability in connection with any hazardous materials, substances, or conditions which may be found on the property being conveyed." Finally, the Navy, which used the property as a reserve center, had the remaining 13.77 acre parcel resurveyed and determined the acreage to be 16.5 acres fee. The Navy Reserve Center was scheduled to be closed in September 1996, and the property transferred to the state for additional park land.

**5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The ASR specified that OE presence is possible for the following areas with the last area being all that area of the site that does not have a potential for OE:

#### AREA A

Size, Acres:	90 acres
Former Use:	Rifle, pistol and skeet ranges and a fenced DUD area
Present Use:	Primary current use is as a state-owned and operated public park, the Cape Henlopen State Park
Probable End Use:	Same as present
Ordnance Presence:	Confirmed: Live small arms ammunition found in the past; spent small caliber projectiles found by SI Team. Potential: Unknown OE may be present in a DUD area formerly fenced off in the rifle range area.

#### AREA B

Size, Acres: 100 acres  
Former Use: 3.5" Practice Rocket Ranges  
Present Use: Primary current use is as a state-owned and operated public park, the Cape Henlopen State Park  
Probable End Use: Probably Same as present  
Ordnance Presence: Confirmed: 3.5" debris and rocket casings found in the past by park visitors and during the site visit by the SI Team.

#### AREA C

Size, Acres: 300-400 acres  
Former Use: Training area  
Present Use: Primary current use is as a state-owned and operated public park, the Cape Henlopen State Park  
Probable End Use: Same as present  
Ordnance Presence: Potential: Unknown--no information regarding the specific training conducted in this area was collected other than a 1952 map identifying the location of this area

#### AREA D

Size, Acres: All acreage other than that in Areas A, B, and C  
Former Use: Other land  
Present Use: Primary current use is as a state-owned and operated public park, the Cape Henlopen State Park  
Probable End Use: Same as present  
Ordnance Presence: None:

**6. CURRENT STATUS:** The draft Archives Search Report for Fort Miles Military Reservation was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, in August 1996.

#### **7. STRATEGY:**

AREAS A-C: EE/CA;(RAC 1)  
AREA D: NOFA;(RAC 5)

**8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS:** The strategy is EE/CA with a score of RAC 1 for Areas A-C and NOFA with RAC 5 for Area D. The ASR RAC form includes values for Medium/Large Caliber and Grenades, Practice, which are not included as confirmed or potential OE in the Project Description above. Large caliber ammunition fired from the site into the Atlantic Ocean would not be a factor as far as EE/CA of the site unless

some are buried in the plot identified as “Dud area” in Area A. The Grenade, Practice was included because one was present as a souvenir in an office at the site, but it was not determined where it was actually found on the site.

**HNC Safety Comment:** HNC concurred with ASR author that the possibility of OE exists at the designated locations in the ASR, that there is no evidence of CWM at the site, and the RAC score is 1.

**Comments Regarding Use of OE at Site Areas Where There is No Potential for OE:** Weapons at numerous gun emplacements of different sizes were certainly tested in practice, firing out into the Atlantic Ocean. There are no records that OE has washed ashore at Fort Miles. It can be concluded that it is highly unlikely high explosive projectiles were left behind in temporary igloo magazines, storage magazines and bunkers, or disposed/ buried on the FUDS. No further action for OE is appropriate at seacoast defense and anti-aircraft gun and battery locations within the main boundary of the former reservation.

The former underwater defense project consisted of 35 groups of thirteen M4 submarine mines each containing 3,000 pounds of granular TNT. Support facilities included mine loading rooms, a mine storage house, two explosive storage magazines, and four concrete magazines. Observation of conditions at these sites indicates no possibility of hazardous ordnance having been left on site. All mines were removed at the conclusion of WW II. No further action is warranted in the vicinity of mine storage and firing facilities.

**Other Associated DERP FUDS Site:** The INPR states that the 492.80 acre portion of land, associated with Fort Miles and leased from the State of Delaware, has been designated as the Delaware Target Areas, Site No. C03DE0064, and is addressed by a separate INPR.

**Other Projects at the Site:** Other projects at the site include BD/DR, CON/HTRW, and HTRW projects which are described in paragraph 3.3, pages 3-1 through 3-3 of the ASR Conclusions and Recommendations.

**Natural Resources:** There are known Federally- and State-listed species which may occur within the site area. Listings are provided in the ASR Findings, page 3-5, paragraph 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:** No cultural or historical sites associated with this site are reported in the ASR. However, 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**

---

[Return to State List index page](#)

[Return to OE Home Page](#)