

RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)

PROJECT FACT SHEET

SEPTEMBER 1997

HNC REVISION: 17 JUNE 1998

TAG REVIEW DATE: 29 JULY 1998

1. **SITE NAME:** Nantucket Ordnance Site
(Tom Nevers Area)

SITE NUMBER: D01MA045600

LOCATION:

City: Nantucket
County: Nantucket County
State: Massachusetts

PROJECT NUMBER: D01MA045601

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 1

ASR RAC: 1

TAG RAC: 1

2. **POC'S:**

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ASR TECHNICAL REVIEWER:
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3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former Nantucket Ordnance Site is located along the southeast shore of Nantucket Island, Massachusetts between the former Tom Nevers Naval Base to the east and the Nantucket Memorial Airport to the west. **According**

to the INPR, site acreage consisted of 2,450, whereas research indicates the total acreage was 2,896. The site can be reached by taking Milestone Road east, bearing right on Tom Nevers Road, and proceeding west along unpaved New South Road. Currently, the majority of the property is owned by the Nantucket Conservation Commission and is undeveloped. The remainder of the land is owned by individuals with some of the land being used for residential use. Primary owners were Stephen Barnett, Rachel Mellon, Merrilleon Wing, and Susan Timken.

Nantucket Island is located off the coast of Massachusetts in the Atlantic Ocean. Most of the land has a gentle slope and the area is characterized by sand beaches and barrier islands. Nantucket Island is low and flat and there are marshes and standing water. Dense vegetation, including scrub oaks and beach grass, covers the entire area. The topography of the site consists of rolling hills and valleys. Maximum elevation at the site is 60 feet and the land slopes south to the coast where the elevation is 20 feet. The area drains south into the Atlantic Ocean through various creeks and natural surface runoff.

The ocean exerts a moderating influence on the climate. The average temperature for July is 73.5° F. The January average is 29.6° F with the average minimum at 11.9° F. Extremes have been 102° F and -12° F. Average yearly precipitation is 43.81 inches.

4. **SITE HISTORY:** According to the INPR, the United States Government acquired **approximately 2,450** acres leasehold on or about 21 September 1943 by purchase and condemnation for a period to expire on 30 June 1944. The site, Nantucket Ordnance Site (Tom Nevers Area), was to be used as a practice bombing area. The government later extended its right to the property until 30 June 1946. **A historical document in the ASR lists the leaseholds for the site totaling 2,896:** Lease NOy(R)35265 with the Curtiss-Wright Corp (33 acres); Lease NOy(R)34128 with Louis J. Hunter (2,125 acres); Lease NOy(R)35904 with Stanley T. Goss (8 acres); Lease NOy(R)35229 with Agnes F. Coffin (22 acres); Lease NOy(R)34845 with William C. Brook (80 acres); and Miscellaneous Civil Suit No. 6810, originally for a leasehold interest in 2,000 acres but reduced to 628 acres.

Nantucket Ordnance Site was used in connection with the Naval Air Station, Quonset Point, Rhode Island. The INPR refers to the site as a practice bombing area. One document indicates that it is a rifle range. Another document states that it may have been used for gunnery by ships. Most historical documents indicate that the site was a Rocket Projectile Range. Specific types of ordnance used at the site were not mentioned in available historical material. Newspapers, EOD reports, witnesses and the

SI team report the use and/or discovery of shell casings, bombs, a grenade, rockets, and projectiles. Improvements at the site included a range control house, a main target, five marker targets, a photo correlation target, a glide indicator target. The ASR research team determined that there were three target sites at Nantucket Ordnance Site. Plywood targets were strapped to concrete piers at these sites which Naval aircraft would attack from the south.

Training at the site was halted by 1 September 1945. Property leases were terminated in 1946. The language of the lease documents is not known. The one historical document states that the tracts for 2,125 and eight acres each have a restoration clause.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

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| Size, Acres: | 2,896 |
| Former Use: | Rocket training (Possibly bombing and artillery practice) |
| Present Use: | Nantucket Conservation Commission Lands, and private residences |
| Probable End Use: | Nantucket Conservation Commission Lands, and private residences |
| Ordnance Presence: | Confirmed |
| Type: | Shell casings, bombs, a grenade, rockets, and projectiles |

6. CURRENT STATUS: The draft Archives Search Report for Nantucket Ordnance Site (Tom Nevers Area) was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, in September 1997.

7. STRATEGY: RAC 1; EE/CA

8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS: The Huntsville Center Technical Advisory Group (TAG) met and discussed this ASR on 29 July 1998 and decided the strategy is RAC 1; EE/CA. Based on findings of OE at the site and observations made by the ASR team, three individuals from USAESCH traveled to the site 10-12 December 1997 to determine if a Time Critical Removal Action (TCRA) was required. They found a 2.25 expended SCAR Rocket and a complete 5 inch Rocket Warhead which had been reported to the proper authorities by the owner representative. The owner was warned not to disturb these items. Based on these findings, the visitors determined that a TCRA was not required(see copy of the trip report attached). **The focus of further actions should center on the area by Target #1. However, the ASR indicates that the possibility for OE exists for the entire site and the USAESCH**

team detected subsurface contacts in the vicinity of Targets #1, #2 and #3.

HNC Safety Comments: The following was requested: (1) Delete one date that was repeated at the beginning and end of a paragraph, (2) Include the Nantucket Commission lands in the category of having a potential OE presence, (3) Include grenades on the RAC form, and (4) Look at a strategy of TCRA for the site. **The response was concurrence with all comments; five page for page changes are attached which make the recommended changes. These need to be switched with like pages in the ASR.**

102nd EOD Explosive Ordnance Disposal Reports: Reports from Otis AFB, dated from 1982 to 1996, state that the 102nd EOD responded to several incidents on the island. The items uncovered included 5" rocket warheads, 2.25" rockets, 3.5" rockets, 5" rockets, and a grenade. The reports do not always mention where on the island the OE was found.

14th Ordnance Detachment (EOD), Fort Devens: This unit conducted a surface walk through part of the property in 1990. A copy of a map at Plate 3 of the ASR shows where this unit indicated an area of heavy contamination surrounded by an area of sparse contamination in the vicinity of Target #1. **The report also states that contamination may and probably does exist elsewhere in the area.**

Bombs Found: In March 1995, a telephone company uncovered four bombs (unknown type) when installing a new line at a subdivision in the Tom Nevers Section on the island's south shore. Mr. Bruce Watts, Nantucket Fire Chief, stated that property owners and construction workers uncover approximately six UXO per year.

Mellon Property(Target #1): **Most of the OE reported at the Nantucket Ordnance Site was on the Mellon property.** A concrete pad, a remnant of Target #1, is located on this property. When Mrs. Mellon's house was constructed approximately 5 years ago, several items were uncovered. The Caretaker uncovers items frequently when planting or when he puts in a fence. Remnants of practice rockets and 3" and 5" projectiles were found during the site inspection. Use of a magnetometer indicated the presence of subsurface metal. The POC at the Fire Department stated that approximately 5% of the ordnance items uncovered on the island is live.

Barnett Property: This property is adjacent to the Mellon property. The SI inspection team found a 2.25" rocket sticking out of the ground and several rusted items. Use of a magnetometer indicated that subsurface metal was present.

However, the further east from the Mellon property that the SI team traveled, the less the magnetometer gave any indications of subsurface metal.

Targets #2 and #3: There was no evidence of OE at either target and use of a magnetometer did not indicate the presence of subsurface OE. A concrete pad remains at Target 3. Target #2 is no longer on land due to beach erosion. **Note: The team from USAESCH did detect numerous subsurface contacts in the vicinity of Targets #1, #2 and #3 in their visit to the site in December 1997.**

Ordnance Burial Site: The map at Plate 3 of the ASR shows the location of an ordnance burial site in the vicinity of Target #1. The ASR does not mention any other information regarding this site. It is possible that a reference in the INPR alludes to this site: "The representative of one current landowner reports that ordnance that had been discovered at the site was temporarily buried on property owned by Stephen Barnett, behind telephone marker #84."

Other Site Land: Several houses have been constructed on the island within the Nantucket Ordnance Site property boundaries north of the targets. However, the only location the Fire Department and State Bomb Squad frequents is on and around Mrs. Mellon's property. The Nantucket Conservation Commission, Inc. owns quite a bit of land north of the targets. This property is covered with heavy vegetation (brush six feet high) and it is unknown if anyone has found ordnance items in this area. **Mr. McGrath, of the commission, stated that they wanted to burn off the brush and return the land to grasslands, but were hesitant to do so because of the potential ordnance problem.**

CWM: Research did not uncover any information concerning the use of chemical warfare materials at the site.

Landowner Policy Concern: The caretaker for the Mellon Property, Neil Patterson, and others, have stressed that Mrs. Mellon does not want anyone touching her property. She cherishes her privacy and is content to call the police when an OE item is found in the normal course of activity on her property.

Other Projects: None

Natural Resources: Federally and State threatened species do occur within the site area or in the immediate area. 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 and/or other like organizations.

9. **SCHEDULE SUMMARY:** EE/CA

10. **FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY:** For Official Use Only