

**RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
September 1997
HNC REVISION: 23 December 1997
TAG REVIEW DATE: 28 January 1998**

1. **SITE NAME:** Suffolk County AAF Bombing and Gunnery Range

SITE NUMBER: C02NY071300

LOCATION:

City: Westhampton
County: Suffolk
State: New York

PROJECT NUMBER: C02NY071301

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 4

ASR RAC: 2

TAG RAC: 2

2. **POC'S:**

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3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former Suffolk County AAF Bombing And Gunnery Range consisted of approximately 9,224.60 acres of land

located approximately two miles north of Westhampton Beach, New York. The site is situated in a relatively flat area just to the south of the Pine Barrens in the Township of Southampton and approximately three miles north of the Atlantic Ocean. A predominant portion of the former facility is currently owned by private and commercial entities, with the remainder owned by the County of Suffolk and the State of New York. The area surrounding the range and within the range boundaries is comprised of light industrial, commercial, residential and undeveloped lands. Residential areas are located primarily to the east and south, with the southern areas being heavily populated during the summer months.

4. SITE HISTORY:

a. During the latter part of 1941, the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) began acquisition of parcels of land between the towns of Westhampton Beach and Riverhead, located in Suffolk County, Long Island, New York, for the construction of an airport for training purposes.

b. In the early part of 1942 it was recognized that the proposed field would be ideal for the construction of an Army Air Corps training and gunnery base for fighter aircraft.

c. Actual bombing and gunnery range area development, being the subject of this report, consisted of the clearance and development of the area into four separate ranges; a bombing range, a strafing range, and two 1500 by 3000 feet scoring ranges. Construction of targets and facilities in the range areas consisted of 23 strafing targets, 25 bombing targets, 12 target pits, 2 range houses, and 2 range towers. Bombing and strafing targets included elaborately constructed wooden trains, tanks, trucks, ammo storage buildings, planes, submarines, and houses. Ship silhouette targets, with features outlined on the earth in white stone, were also constructed.

d. The air field was first activated, on 17 May 1943, as a gunnery training base for fighter pilots and instructors. The base was a sub-base of the Army Air Base, Mitchel Field, New York. The fighter groups trained at this base received gunnery, bombing, small arms, rocketry, and chemical training before going overseas in World War II. The base was initially called the Suffolk Gunnery Training Center and Suffolk Airdrome. In August of 1943, the title became the Suffolk County Army Airfield. On 9 March 1944 the air field was removed from the jurisdiction of Mitchel Field and placed under the control of the Army Air Base, Bradley Field, Connecticut.

e. Upon site closure, the bulk of Suffolk County AAF Bombing and Gunnery Range lands were returned or sold to private property owners. The majority of this property remains barren and serves as an unofficial preserve. The remainder of returned private lands now serve for state, commercial, and private uses. Land usage is expected to remain constant in the future.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Area A:

Size Acres: 75
Former Use: Ground Gunnery/Skip Bombing Range "A"
Present Use: Private Undeveloped Land
Probable End Use: Same
Ordnance Presence: Confirmed
Type: 6 lb. Oil Incendiary Cluster Bombs, 4
lb. Incendiary Cluster Bombs, Red
Parachute Flares, Small Arms Ammunition
(SAA)

Area B:

Size Acres: 70
Former Use: Ground Gunnery/Rocket Range "B"
Present Use: Private Undeveloped Land/Housing Area
Probable End Use: Same
Ordnance Presence: Confirmed
Type: 4.5" High Explosive (HE) and Practice
Rockets, .50 Cal SAA

Area C:

Size Acres: 1,523
Former Use: Bombing Range
Present Use: Private Undeveloped Land
Probable End Use: Same
Ordnance Presence: Confirmed
Type: HE, Smoke and Incendiary Bombs, Practice
Bombs w/Spotting Charge, SAA

Area D:

Size Acres: 1,252
Former Use: Strafing Range
Present Use: Private Undeveloped Land

Probable End Use: Same
Ordnance Presence: Potential
Type: HE, Smoke and Incendiary Bombs, Practice Bombs w/Spotting Charge, SAA

Area E:

Size Acres: 2,730
Former Use: Buffer Zone
Present Use: Private Undeveloped Land/Developed State, County, and Commercial Property
Probable End Use: Same
Ordnance Presence: Potential
Type: HE, Smoke and Incendiary Bombs, Practice Bombs w/Spotting Charge, SAA

Area F:

Size Acres: 3,574.60
Former Use: Remaining Land
Present Use: Private Undeveloped Land/Developed State, County, and Commercial Property
Probable End Use: Same
Ordnance Presence: Uncontaminated
Type: N/A

6. **CURRENT STATUS:** This Draft Archives Search Report (ASR) was completed by Rock Island District in September 1997.

7. **STRATEGY:** Areas A thru E: EE/CA
Area F: NOFA

8. **ISSUES AND CONCERNS:** The Huntsville Center Technical Advisory Group reviewed this ASR on 28 January 1998 and concurred with the strategy of the ASR and the recommendation of HNC Safety.

The INPR FDE stated that the 11,871.12-acre site was eligible for restoration under DERP-FUDS. However, the site actually consisted of approximately 9,224.60 acres. Approximately 1973.56 acres of the remaining FDE acres were obtained for the Suffolk County Army Airfield and 652.96 fee for the relocation of a Radio Corporation of America facility from the Bombing and Gunnery Range lands. Recommend revision of the FDE to include actual site acreage.

Threatened and endangered species of wildlife may occur on site. Historical Sites of a Cold War significance may be present on the

subject site. The State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) should be contacted prior to any removal action. Personnel should be aware of the presence of a heavy deer tick population during the months of April through October. Access to the site lands is uncontrolled.