

**RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM  
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)  
PROJECT FACT SHEET  
27 DECEMBER 1994  
HNC REVISION: 30 JULY 1997  
TAG REVIEW DATE: 28 JANUARY 1998**

**1. SITE NAME:** Naval Air Station Tongue Point

**SITE NUMBER:** F100R048300

**LOCATION:**

City: Astoria  
County: Clatsop  
State: Oregon

**PROJECT NUMBER:** F100R048304

**CATEGORY:** OE

**INPR RAC:** 4

**ASR RAC:** 2

**TAG RAC:** 5

**2. POC's:**

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**3. SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former Naval Air Station (NAS) Tongue Point is located in Clatsop County, Oregon, three miles east of the city of Astoria. Ten miles inland from the Pacific Ocean, on the south shore of the Columbia River, the site forms the western edge of Cathlamet Bay. The site appears on the Astoria, Oregon-Washington Quadrangle of the 7.5 minute series of the U. S. Geological Survey topographic maps. It falls within Sections 2,

10, 11, and 12, Township 08 North, Range 06 West, Willamette Meridian. The approximate coordinates of the center of the site are Latitude 46 degrees, 12.5 minutes North, Longitude 123 degrees, 46 minutes West.

The site is currently owned, in parts, by the Oregon Division of State Lands, the U. S. Department of Labor, which operates a Job Corps Training Center, and the U. S. Department of Interior.

The land owned by the Department of Interior was formerly the ordnance storage area and is presently controlled by the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). It is the site of the Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge.

**4. SITE HISTORY:** In 1919, Congress approved the construction of a submarine and destroyer base on the present site of U.S. Naval Air Station, Tongue Point. In 1921, Clatsop County transferred ownership of 395 acres to the federal government and dredging began that same year. Construction was completed in 1924, with a breakwater and four wooden finger piers extending into Cathlamet Bay. However, with decreased military appropriation following World War I, the base was never used. The actual ground breaking for the naval station began in 1939; three out of the four old wooden finger piers were removed. Tongue Point was to be a base for amphibious seaplane patrols of the coastline. This proved difficult due to the logs and other floating debris on the Cathlamet Bay which made takeoff and landing conditions hazardous. The facility's most significant role during World War II was as a pre-commissioning and commissioning site for escort aircraft carriers (better known as "jeep flattops") built in the big Victory ship yards in the Portland-Vancouver area. Other wartime activities included air crew training and routine patrol flights.

Following World War II, the base was converted to a moorage facility for the Ready Reserve fleet. To accommodate this fleet, eight new concrete piers were built out into Cathlamet Bay. From 1946-1962, the Navy stored as many as 250 mothballed Liberty ships at the facility. By 1962, the Tongue Point Naval Air Station was transferred to the General Services Administration as excess property. When the station was deactivated by the Department of the Navy it consisted of 842.03 acres of land and water areas and 320 structures (various documents report the size of the NAS as being anywhere from 840 acres to 915.334 acres). In that same year 99.14 acres were acquired by the U. S. Maritime Commission and 748.4 acres by the Office of Economic Opportunity to use as a Job Corps Center (the property itself was transferred to the Department of Labor in 1971). In 1981, the federal government sold 43 acres of the former naval air station property to the Oregon Division of State Lands for \$2.1 million. This included most of the filled land, two of the three hangars, and five of the eight concrete piers constructed for the mothballed

fleet in 1946.

An Archives Search Report (ASR) was prepared to identify the potential for ordnance and explosives (OE). Facilities at the Tongue Point Naval Air Station in 1942 included: large high explosives magazines (3), small high explosives magazines (108), y-gun ammunition magazines, fuse and detonator magazines (4), bombsight and torpedo shop, smoke drum and storehouse, fixed ammunition magazine, and small arms and pyrotechnics magazines (2). Additional facilities (constructed between 1944-1947) included: a machine gun range, eight concrete piers, and a mine observation tower. Stored materials included: blasting caps, CN grenades (tear gas), fragmentation grenades, smoke grenades, gas test sets, fuses, detonators, torpedoes, and demolition charges.

Based on the extensive archives searches performed, interpretation of aerial photographs, interviews with the owners and/or occupants of major portions of this DERP-FUDS site, and the results of the site investigation, there existed a possibility of OE presence at two separate locations within this site.

#### Area A - Berthing Area (Piers 1-8)

A Construction Inspector's daily report was found which suggests that 20 millimeter shells were expected to be found in the spoil from dredging activity around Pier 1.

Additional findings are the reports detailing high levels of metal contamination in the sediments at the "finger piers". Metals which were found to exceed established criteria include cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, and mercury. It is entirely possible that these elevated concentrations are attributable to sources other than the presence of ordnance, but ordnance disposal should be examined as a potential source of the contamination. Other non-military activities are known to have occurred at the docking facility which resulted in some degree of contamination.

#### Area B - Landfill/Disposal Area

Although no evidence of OE was observed during the site inspection, the INPR indicates that there has been at least one undocumented report of OE having been recovered. During the period in which this installation was active, burial of ordnance was an approved method of disposal. Based on the location of the landfill relative to other facilities of the installation, it was ideally situated for the disposal of ordnance.

### **5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

**Area A**

Size, Acres: Unknown  
Former Use: Berthing area (Piers 1-8)  
Present Use: Marine industrial use  
Probable End Use: Same as Present  
Ordnance Presence: Uncontaminated  
Type: N/A

**Area B**

Size, Acres: 4-5  
Former Use: Landfill/Disposal area  
Present Use: Closed Landfill/Disposal area  
Probable End Use: Marine industrial use  
Ordnance Presence: Uncontaminated  
Type: N/A

**Area C**

Size, Acres: Unknown  
Former Use: Ordnance storage area, cantonment and dock area  
Present Use: Job Corps Center, marine industrial use, wildlife refuge  
Probable End Use: Same as Present  
Ordnance Presence: Uncontaminated  
Type: N/A

6. **CURRENT STATUS:** The Draft Archives Search Report (ASR) was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, in December 1994.

7. **STRATEGY:** No Further Action (NOFA)

8. **ISSUES AND CONCERNS:** The Huntsville Center Technical Advisory Group reviewed this ASR and determined NOFA for this site. No evidence of any 20mm has been found; only suggested by the dredging report. A revised Risk Assessment Code form is attached reflecting a score of 5.

Core-drilling was done in the Berthing Area around the piers in the 1995 time frame as a prelude to additional development for a marine industrial facility that is expected to incorporate at least 2 of the 8 concrete piers. No evidence of OE has been found in this area in recent years. Extensive dredging has been done beyond the ends of the piers in the past by the Corps of Engineers.

Well-drilling and water sampling was done in the Landfill/Disposal Area in the 1996/early 1997 time frame using a magnetometer and blast mats to avoid any possible problems from buried OE. Well-drilling was not performed in areas having magnetometer anomalies. There is extensive surface and

subsurface metal debris and chemical contamination from petroleum, PCB's, etc. The landfill is now closed and fenced on the land side, but open on the water side, and is heavily overgrown. This sampling was done in this area as a prelude to development for future use as a marine industrial facility. There is no visible evidence of surficial OE presence in the landfill area. There is a distinct possibility for subsurface OE presence within the known landfill. In addition, the only potential for public exposure would be through excavation. Therefore, no further action is recommended for the landfill. If future excavation is done, UXO support would be required in the event that OE may be encountered.

There are known Federally- and State-listed species occurring in the site area. An on-site inspection by the appropriate federal and state personnel may be necessary to verify the presence, absence, or location of listed species, or natural communities.

**9. SCHEDULE SUMMARY:** NOFA

**10. FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY:** N/A