



# U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Norfolk District

## *Media Advisory*

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### **Project Update: Former Nansemond Ordnance Depot**

**Suffolk, VA** – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) continues ordnance and environmental investigations at the Former Nansemond Ordnance Depot (FNOD) site under the Formerly Used Defense Site Program.

#### **Corps Experiments with New Munitions Removal Equipment**

The Corps is gearing up to try a mechanical sifter to speed up munitions investigation efforts on GE property. The new equipment is being brought in to expedite sifting of the vast amount of debris that exists on site. The Corps will begin operating the sifter during the first week of February in a remote wooded area approximately 300 feet from Welner Drive in the center of a site referred to as the Main Burning Ground. The sifter has been specially outfitted with protective steel armor and Plexiglas to protect the field crew and the public. In addition, video cameras were mounted on top of the sifter to observe the operation while it is in use. There will be a 243-foot safety perimeter established by the field crew in front of the sifter and a 1,700-foot safety perimeter behind the equipment while it is in use. No roads or occupied buildings will be affected by the safety perimeter or the sifter. The Corps is coordinating its field efforts with affected landowners. The noise associated with the mechanical sifter will be minimal due to its location and is similar to that of other types of construction equipment such as excavators and backhoes. “Despite the wet soils, we are hoping that the mechanical sifter will improve the rate of clearance,” says Adriane James, the Army Corps program manager.

The Corps has completed munitions response efforts at approximately 64 of the 78 acres that require clearance at FNOD. During calendar year 2004, the Corps removed 242 Discarded Military Munitions (DMM) items that contained some amount of explosive material, 1000 pounds of non-explosive

Munitions Debris (MD), and 171,743 pounds (nearly 86 tons) of non-munitions debris from the Former Nansemond Ordnance Depot (FNOD). The Corps has now completed munitions investigations at all the sites identified by the EPA as time-critical including the TCC Portsmouth Campus athletic fields and Renovation Plant area. The Corps continues munitions investigations at the Horseshoe Pond, the Nansemond River beachfront, Area J Lake, and Tracks A and B on TCC property.

### **Environmental Investigations**

The Corps has budgeted nearly \$3 million for environmental investigations across the site this year. The project team is currently evaluating the extent of residual contamination at the James River beachfront and human health and ecological risks. The Corps completed a removal action at the beach in 2001 and installed a stone revetment to prevent erosion. Confirmation samples following the removal effort have revealed metal concentrations in the bluff that do not meet conservative ecological safety benchmarks. The Corps will evaluate both current and future exposure scenarios and the risks posed by the site with and without the revetment in place. The Corps is also conducting investigations at the Nansemond River beachfront, the Horseshoe Pond, TCC Lake, and a number of other sites.

### **Next Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Meeting**

The status of the Corps' site activities will be discussed at the next Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meeting for the Former Nansemond Ordnance Depot (FNOD) project on Thursday, February 3 at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Bon Secours Health Center at Harbour View, located at 5818 Harbour View Boulevard in Suffolk, in the second floor conference room. RAB meetings are open to the public. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend. Meeting Topics will include:

- Background Study
- Munitions Response Update
- Environmental Studies Update
- Landowner updates

### **Background on the Restoration Advisory Board**

The Restoration Advisory Board was established in 1997. It is a communications forum that enables the public to provide input on cleanup efforts to the Corps and the environmental regulators. It is comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders including community members, local business representatives, local and state officials, a TCC representative and environmental staff from the Corps, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the EPA. For more information please check out the project website at

<http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/Projects/Nansemond/welcome.html>

or contact Adriane James, FUDs Program Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, at (757) 201-7701.

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