



U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Norfolk District

# RESTORATION *News*

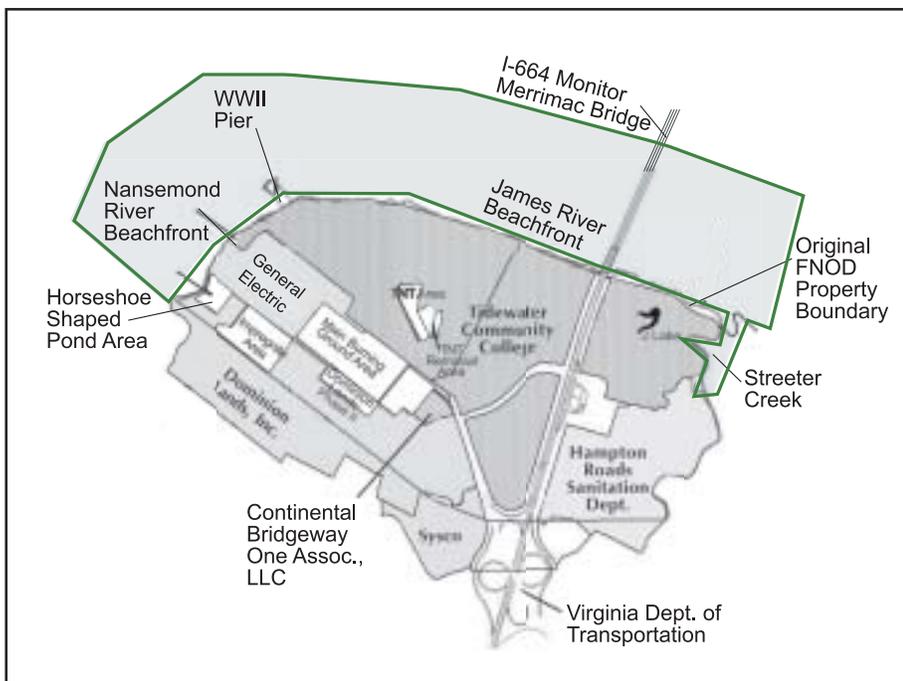
Former Nansemond Ordnance Depot Project Update • Volume 11 • September 2003

## Offshore Investigation Complete Near TCC

The U.S. Army Corps has completed a comprehensive environmental study of the James River and Nansemond River near the Tidewater Community College Portsmouth campus. Results of this study indicate that contaminants originating from the Former Nansemond Ordnance Depot (FNOD) are not present in the Offshore sediments at concentrations that would pose a risk to animals or humans. Based on these findings, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is proposing no further action for the “offshore area”.

The Corps is seeking public input on the *Proposed Plan* of no further action and is hosting a public meeting on December 4, 2003 at the Bon Secours Medical Center in Harbourview (Suffolk). The meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. with an open house and exhibit displays. A presentation will be given at 6:30 p.m. about the study and Proposed Plan. The FNOD Restoration Advisory Board meeting will follow at 7 p.m. All are welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings.

*continued on page 2*



*Offshore Investigation Area*

*Mark Your Calendar...*

### Offshore Proposed Plan Public Meeting



December 4, 2003

6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Poster Stations  
6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Presentation/  
Question &  
Answer Period

#### Location:

Bon Secours Health Center at Harbour View, 5818 Harbour View Boulevard (Suffolk)

Come and learn more about the Corps' Offshore Ecological study near TCC.

### Restoration Advisory Board Meetings



October 2, 2003  
7:00 p.m – 9:00 p.m.

December 4, 2003  
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

**All are Welcome!**

#### Location:

Bon Secours Health Center at Harbour View, 5818 Harbour View Boulevard (Suffolk)

## Offshore Investigation

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The offshore area of the Former Nansemond Ordnance Depot was designated as an Area of Concern in EPA's National Priority Listing of the site in 1999. The reason for the listing was a concern that contaminants from FNOD could have eroded into the river due to the more than 300 feet of shoreline erosion that has occurred at the site over the past 50 years.

The Offshore Investigation has consisted of environmental characterization activities and field surveys, screening level and Baseline Ecological Risk Assessments, and a Human Health Risk Assessment.

This effort began in 2000 with field surveys of the entire marine Offshore Area, sediment and surface sampling, and the preparation of a screening level Ecological Risk Assessment. The goal of the ecological risk assessment was to characterize marine habitat and to identify potential environmental impacts that may have resulted from disposal activities at the former Nansemond Ordnance Depot (FNOD). A supplemental survey of the Old Pier area was conducted in 2002. In addition, tissue samples (croaker and blue crab) were collected

at sediment grab locations to provide sediment and tissue chemistry data needed for the Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment. In 2002, SAIC also prepared a Human Health Risk Assessment to identify Contaminants of Potential Concern (CoPCs) that could pose risks to humans.

SAIC reviewed three miles of shoreline from the James River near the I-664 bridge to the Nansemond River near the GE facility. The field team used acoustic devices attached to boats to map layers of soil deposits and erosion from the former depot property in order to locate debris, metals, burn layers, and residual explosive compounds. The study also included offshore soil sediment sampling to determine if there have been any adverse effects on animals including crabs, croaker, black-crowned night heron, and raccoon. Crab and croaker samples were analyzed for chemicals such as metals, organics, pesticides, and ordnance related contaminants while food-chain models were used to predict effects on black-crowned night heron and raccoon.

### Public Comments

A 30-day public comment period for this Proposed Plan will begin on December 4, 2003, and end on

January 4, 2004. Written public comments should be submitted to: [Adriane.B.James@usace.army.mil](mailto:Adriane.B.James@usace.army.mil).

A list of reports that have been prepared for the Offshore Investigation and the Proposed Plan are available for public review at the TCC Portsmouth Campus library and on the Corps' Project web site (see Web Site Links – Page 3). They form the basis of the Corps' proposed plan of no further action for the Offshore area.

### What's Next?

Following the public comment period, the Corps will prepare a *responsiveness summary* to address significant comments or new data received during the public comment period. The responsiveness summary will be available for public review on the project website at the information repository at TCC Portsmouth Campus library. Once the remedy is agreed upon, the Corps will prepare a Record of Decision that will document the plan for the site and place a public notice in the *Virginian-Pilot* newspaper. EPA will then initiate the delisting of the Offshore Area from EPA's National Priority List.

## Reports for the Offshore Investigation

**Findings of an Environmental Survey of the Marine Offshore Areas of the Former Nansemond Ordnance Depot**, prepared by Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Norfolk District, September 2002.

**Final Report: Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment for the Marine Offshore Areas of the Former Nansemond Ordnance Depot, Suffolk VA**, prepared by Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Norfolk District, September 2002

**Human Health Risk Assessment for the Marine Offshore Areas of the Former Nansemond Ordnance Depot, Suffolk, VA**, prepared by Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC). 2002 for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Norfolk District, August 2003.



# Project Updates

## Ordnance & Explosives (OE) Update

As of August 3rd, the Corps has completed OE removal efforts at approximately 51 of the 67 acres that require clearance at FNOD. On July 9th, the Corps completed OE work at TCC in the TNT area at the entrance to the Tidewater Community College campus. During the final week of this effort, planned detonations were executed throughout the day to safely dispose of OE items that were found in Pit 18. Approximately 230 OE items were removed from the TNT area since 2001.

The Corps is continuing OE clearing efforts in the Main Burning Ground area on GE property. Approximately 258 OE items have been removed since 2001. There are approximately 51 investigation grids left to clear at the site. Since many of the remaining grids are full of construction debris, they take considerably more time to clear. The Corps is hoping to complete the OE efforts at the Main Burning Ground in 2 years.

The Corps found a 6-inch shrapnel round on the Nansemond River beachfront in June and is working on a strategy to investigate the beachfront further.

In August, the Corps found another empty 170mm shell on the James River beachfront in the same area where a number of empty 170mm shells were previously removed. A geophysical analysis of that area has just been completed to help focus further investigation and possible removal work.

### Planned Detonation Time

Planned detonations for OE items are usually executed between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. However, detonations may occur at other times depending on weather conditions and other safety requirements. In most cases the report from a detonation is a dull thud, but in some cases it can be a sharper sound like a large firecracker. A detonation is usually a single event, but on occasion may consist of a series of shots a fraction of a second apart. This minimizes the noise and ground disturbance when a large amount of explosives has to be destroyed. Because of the duration of the sound, this type of shot is generally more noticeable. If you have questions or comments about the Corps' planned detonations, please contact Adriane James, FUDS Program Manager, Norfolk District Corps of Engineers, 757-441-7765, [adriane.b.james@usace.army.mil](mailto:adriane.b.james@usace.army.mil).

## TNT Area Site Investigation

The Army conducted both soil and groundwater sampling in the TNT Area this spring in an effort to characterize the soil and groundwater near the entrance of the TCC Portsmouth campus. These soil samples contain high levels of TNT and lead.

The contaminated soil was placed back into the pit, after the pit was lined. The Corps will cover the area of concern and surrounding soils with a geofabric liner and topsoil until the full investigation of the site can be completed. EPA and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality are requiring the Corps to control access to the affected soils to prevent people from handling or inhaling it until the Corps can complete the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility study and determine an appropriate cleanup strategy for the site. Signs will be placed around the TNT area/entrance to TCC campus to notify the public as an additional safety precaution.

### What is Ordnance & Explosives?

Ordnance and Explosives (OE) include ammunition, ammunition components, or explosives that have been abandoned, lost, discarded, buried, or fired. *20mm Projectile*



### 2003 Accomplishments at FNOD

- ◆ Partial NPL delisting of the Impregnite Kit Area
- ◆ Completion of O/E time critical removal actions and intrusive investigations including the removal of 86 OE items, 493 pounds of bulk explosives, 396 pound of OE scrap, and 87,037 pounds of non-OE scrap.
- ◆ Soil and groundwater sampling for the Site Investigation of the TNT area
- ◆ Soil sampling at the James River beachfront for TCE
- ◆ Sediment soil sampling at the GE pond
- ◆ Relocation & reburial of human remains from the James River beachfront

### What's Planned?

- ◆ TNT area Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study & Risk Assessment
- ◆ Closeout efforts for the Pesticide Drum Area
- ◆ Completion of Site Screening at GE Pond & Nansemond River Beach
- ◆ Completion of the North Athletic Field Investigation
- ◆ Record of Decision/Completion of work in the Offshore Area
- ◆ Completion of the Site Screening for the near shore streams and lakes
- ◆ Completion of Risk Assessment for the Track K dump
- ◆ Completion of the TCE Investigation at the James River Beachfront

## Web Site Links

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers FNOD Project Web Site:  
<http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/projects/nansemond/welcome.html>

Environmental Protection Agency:  
<http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/super/VA/nansemond/index.htm>

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ):  
<http://www.deq.state.va.us>

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**Information Repository**  
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Phone: (757) 822-2130  
Hours: 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. M-Th  
8 a.m. to 4 p.m. F



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