

## **Plum Tree Island Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Where is Plum Tree Island?**

The Plum Tree Island Range Formerly Used Defense Site consists of approximately 3,276 acres of land and is located at the southwest corner of the Chesapeake Bay in the city of Poquoson, VA. The site is located approximately 30 miles southeast of Williamsburg, Va., and approximately 18 miles northeast of Newport News, Va. The property owner is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Shaw Environmental, Inc. is conducting a Remedial Investigation for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District.

### **What is the island currently used for?**

Plum Tree Island is owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and used for wildlife refuge.

### **What is the USACE work schedule at Plum Tree Island?**

The current phase of work includes a surface sweep and removal of Munitions and Explosives of Concern (MEC) from approximately 80 acres around the southern perimeter shoreline area to allow safe access. Geophysical transects are planned for the northern two-thirds of the island during this year's access period (January - April 2009). Additional work scheduled during next year's access period (January - April 2010).

### **Can I still take my boat out and fish nearby?**

Yes, but please observe the exclusion danger areas posted by the U.S. Coast Guard. Danger zones are marked with signs around Plum Tree Island. During clearance of MEC, these danger zones may be expanded up to 1,500 yards from the island for restricted access. This information provided by the Coast Guard in a Notice to Mariners via Channel 13 and 16.

### **What type of work are you doing at Plum Tree Island?**

The current phase of work is a Remedial Investigation under the CERCLA process, which determines the full nature and extent of the problem so that various potential cleanup alternatives are evaluated. Munitions experts are using geophysical equipment to locate MEC. The investigation will include 1) a surface sweep and removal of MEC from approximately 80 acres around the southern perimeter shoreline area to allow safe access to the investigation teams, 2) geophysical investigation of a representative portion of the interior of the property, and 3) sampling of soil, water and sediment for munitions constituents.

**What are the hazards?**

Unlawful entry to Plum Tree Island may result in arrest for trespassing, and may result in serious bodily injury or death from an accidental munitions detonation. Only trained munitions experts can safely assess and handle MEC.

**Are you removing all of the hazards?**

No, at this point we are conducting a Remedial Investigation that will help us identify the nature and extent of the hazards so that various cleanup options can be evaluated.

**If you are not removing MEC, what are you destroying at the island?**

We are destroying MEC as we encounter it during the course of the investigation.

**What safety measures do you have in place?**

An approved Health and Safety Plan and Accident Prevention Plan is used by the investigation team to reduce risk to workers. A Notice to Mariners, provided by the U.S. Coast Guard, will advise the public how far to stay away from the island to ensure their safety.

**Will I hear loud noises?**

Loud noises may occasionally be heard during controlled munitions detonation disposal activities.

**How will I be notified when the loud noises or detonations occur?**

Poquoson city officials will provide community notice through its community information TV Channel and community electronic billboard.

**Am I safe in my home?**

Yes.

**Can I picnic or walk around the island when work is completed?**

There is no way to determine that at this time.

**Who should I call if I see any unusual activities at Plum Tree Island?**

Call the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at 804-333-1470 or call 911.

**What are your work plans during inclement weather?**

The site manager for the investigation team will decide whether it is prudent to access the island during periods of inclement weather. If the weather is too foul to access the island, the investigation team will simply wait until the weather improves.