



Facts About...

Fort Howard (MD-528) FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITE (FUDS)

Site Location

Fort Howard consists of a 62-acre parcel located on North Point at the end of North Point Road in Fort Howard, Baltimore County, Maryland. The site is situated in a rural/suburban area east of Baltimore City at an elevation of roughly 6 feet above mean sea level. The center of the site is at 39° 12' 11.34" north latitude and 076° 26' 13.88" west longitude. The Maryland Grid coordinates for the center of the site are 498,300 north by 958,500 east. Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation lists the property as map 115 parcel 55/Libre 5405 folio 907.

Site History

Fort Howard was a military battery from the late 1800s through 1940. In the 1700s, the site served as an important part of the transportation route between the Eastern Shore and the Port of Baltimore. The Canton, Sparrows Point, and North Point Railroad operated in the area in the 1800s. The fort, created in 1896 to protect the Port of Baltimore, was originally known as North Point, but was renamed Fort Howard in 1902. The fort was closed in 1926 and the property excised to the Veterans Administration in 1940. At that time, the military aspect of the facility ended and the property was used as a hospital for servicemen injured during the Second World War. During the years of the Vietnam War (1955-1973), parts of the Fort Howard complex were returned to military activity when a mock Viet-Cong village was set up for use by Fort Holabird as a training ground for its intelligence officers.

Environmental Investigation and Action

USACE performed several investigations on dump sites located on the historic Fort Howard property. Heavy metal, polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), volatile organic and radioactive contamination has been documented on the property. USACE contends that the levels of contamination are below action levels. Munitions and Explosives of Concern (MEC) have also been documented on the site. USACE does not believe that these materials are widespread and therefore feels that they are not a threat.

In 1988, Engineering Science and Technology conducted a Site Investigation for the USACE; three fill areas were identified on the property. USACE references them as Areas A, B, and C.

In 1993 Ecology and Environment, Inc. conducted a Contamination Evaluation on the site and ranked the hazardous potential of the property.

USACE conducted confirmatory sampling of Fort Howard Area C in 1999. Thirty-seven surface soil samples were collected and field screened for PCB and lead contamination. Eleven of these samples, plus four subsurface samples, were submitted to a laboratory for further analysis. Lead was detected in levels above action limits in five of the eleven surface soil samples and three of the four subsurface soil samples. USACE determined that the elevated levels of contamination were due to the materials deposited in the landfill.

In August 2008, Alion Science and Technology conducted a Site Inspection (SI) of Fort Howard for USACE. This inspection focused on MEC and the findings were that there was not enough evidence to warrant concern.



Current Status

The Veterans Administration Hospital that stood on the site has been primarily abandoned. The only functional building on the property is a new, one story outpatient clinic on the southeast end of the property.

The facility is currently slated to be converted to a public/private enterprise for veteran and senior housing.

An inspection of the site was performed by MDE personnel in December of 2009, and a Preliminary Assessment finalized in June 2010. MDE recommended that the three landfill areas be further evaluated due to the pending planned use of the facility.

Contact

For additional information, please contact the Land Restoration Program at 410-537-3440.

Last Update: June 30, 2010

