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Fort Ritchie

Current Site Information

EPA Region 3 (Mid-Atlantic)

Maryland
Washington County

EPA ID# MD0000795211

6th Congressional District

Last Update: August 2009

Other Names

None

Current Site Status

A site investigation has been completed in an effort to identify potential sources of contamination located on the site. Any sites that exceeded certain levels of contamination have been investigated under the Remedial Investigation (RI)/Feasibility Study (FS) part of the CERCLA process. Approximately 315 of the 631 acre site have been investigated for the possible presence of unexploded ordinance (UXO). In April 2006 the Army, EPA and MDE finalizd the last of the UXO Removal reports concerning removal actions as part of this process. A Record of Decision (Decision Document) was finalized in August of 2006 for Operable Unit 4, a former motor pool. The Army, EPA and MDE are currently in the process of finalizing the Finding of Suitability to Transfer #3 (FOST #3) document for the remaining approximately 91.4 acres at the facility. The FOST #3 includes Operable Unit 4, the former motor pool.

Site Description

The U.S. Army Garrison Fort Ritchie is a military communications center located in Cascade, Maryland. It has been approved for closure under the Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC). The official closure date for Fort Ritchie was October 1, 1998. The installation encompasses approximately 631 acres. Slightly more than half of the property has been developed into administrative buildings, residences and other facilities associated with a military installation. The facility is anticipated to be transferred for private use through the Pen Mar Development Corporation.

Ft. Ritchie's primary mission was as a communications base in addition to providing administrative, logistical, information systems and physical security support to contiguous and non-contiguous locations. During World War II, the property was utilized as the War Department Military Intelligence Training Center (MITC). Some of the activities included firing of ordnance into the hillsides. Some large segments of the wooded portion of the base were impact areas and have the potential to contain unexploded ordnance (UXO).

Site Responsibility

The site is being addressed through Federal actions by the U.S. Army under BRAC authority

NPL Listing History

This site is a BRAC site and has not been proposed for the NPL

Threats and Contaminants

Surface soil, subsurface soil, sediment, and groundwater are contaminated with volatile organic

compounds (VOCs) and heavy metals such as iron and arsenic. The local water supply does not come from the aquifer in question, however, drinking contaminated ground water could pose a threat to human health.

Approximately 315-acres has been investigated for the possible presence of UXO. Suspected UXO material that may be present range from small caliber (.22 and .45 caliber pistol rounds, .30 caliber and .50 caliber machine gun rounds) to medium and large caliber high explosives and practice rounds (60 mm, 81 mm, 105 mm).

Contaminant descriptions and risk factors are available from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, an arm of the CDC.

Cleanup Progress

To date, a comprehensive review of aerial photography and a site investigation has been completed in an effort to identify potential sources of contamination located on the site. A total of 16 operable units (OUs) have been identified for environmental investigation at the installation. In September 2001, EPA commented on the Final Finding of Suitability to Transfer (FOST) in a letter that outlined unresolved issues in the document. The proposed property to be transferred under FOST #1 consists of approximately 250 acres. A second FOST for an additional 257 acres was finalized in October 2003. EPA commented on the FOST in a letter that outlined unresolved issues in the document. A third FOST for an additional 91 acres was finalized in August 2007. EPA commented on the FOST in a letter that outlined unresolved issues in the document.

Contacts

Site Contacts

Administrative Record Locations