



NAVAL BASE, CHARLESTON

Environmental Cleanup Program

This fact sheet is one of a series to inform interested citizens about the environmental investigations and cleanup actions at Naval Base, Charleston. Distribution is coordinated through the Public Affairs Office at Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Southern Division, (843) 820-5771.

HEADING FOR PROPERTY TRANSFER

This fact sheet will focus on the steps leading to property transfer, and ways that community members can provide ideas and opinions as part of the environmental cleanup process at the former Naval Base.

THREE STEPS TO TRANSFER

Property at the former Naval Base is being prepared for transfer to the community. To do this, the Navy and the community have to work simultaneously to complete the steps needed to transfer property. Before any parcel of property can be transferred, the following main steps must be completed.

1 Some sites have been identified as having environmental conditions that require action. Before a remedy (such as cleanup or deed restrictions) can be determined, several alternatives must be evaluated to determine the one best suited for the site. In the end, a Corrective Measures Study recommends one alternative (or a combination) for remediating the site.

The sites will be addressed in a variety of ways, from soil removal to groundwater cleaning systems to restrictions on property use. The remediation choice will be based on the future use of the property, as proposed by the Redevelopment Authority. Regardless of the action chosen, the Navy must show that the action protects human health and the environment. Without this assurance, the property will not be eligible for transfer.

2 *No remedy can be chosen without considering the public's opinion.* For this reason, each Corrective Measures Study is made available to the public. A public comment period is announced. Comments on these reports, and the remedies proposed, are encouraged. To assist the public in reviewing the Corrective Measures Study reports, the following steps will be taken:

- ✓ Each Corrective Measures Study Report (which can be several volumes of information) is summarized in a document called a "Statement of Basis," which is usually only six to twelve pages long. Statements of Basis will be mailed to everyone on the base's mailing list.
- ✓ The report will be placed in the Information Repository for public review. The Repository is a collection of documents related to the environmental investigations and cleanup at the base. The Repository is kept at the Dorchester Road branch of the Charleston County Library.
- ✓ The comment periods will last for thirty days and will be announced in a public notice in the *Charleston Post and Courier*.
- ✓ Public comments will be considered before a final remedy is put in place.

3 Once the remedy is complete or in place, the property becomes eligible for transfer. The environmental condition of property to be transferred will be detailed in a document called an Environmental Baseline Survey for Transfer (or EBST) for each parcel. This will form the basis for the Finding of Suitability to Transfer (or FOST), which declares that the parcel is environmentally eligible for transfer. Each of these documents will be available for public review and comment before the property is transferred.

- ★ Each Finding of Suitability to Transfer will be available during a thirty-day comment period that will be announced in the *Charleston Post and Courier*.

PROPERTY TRANSFER METHODS

The ultimate goal of all the investigations, documents and processes is transfer of the property to the community. Several mechanisms are available that allow the Navy to transfer federal property. These include:

- ★ Economic Development Conveyance (EDC) requests. These must be submitted to the Navy to allow property to be transferred to a public agency (Redevelopment Authority) or municipality (City of North Charleston) for beneficial economic reuse. Most of the property at the former base will be transferred to the Redevelopment Authority with this method. An EDC application consists of a Community Reuse Plan (first completed and approved in 1994), a business plan (which is a more detailed outline of how the property will be used), and a property appraisal.
- ★ Public Benefit Conveyance requests. These must be submitted to the Navy, and allow property to be transferred for public use. The marina and possibly the Chicora Tank Farm will be transferred using this method. These properties may be transferred at no cost to the local community.
- ★ Public Sale of property is also possible. Former Navy land and facilities could be sold by the Navy directly to the public or, more likely, by the Redevelopment Authority to the public.
- ★ Early Transfer of property. In this scenario, former navy property is allowed to be transferred to a public or private entity while environmental cleanup activities continue to take place. In essence, the Navy deeds the property away, but keeps responsibility for cleaning up past environmental contamination.
- ★ Legislative Action. Congressional members may initiate the transfer of property from the Navy directly to another federal agency.

PROPERTY TRANSFER

While the last parcel of the former Naval Base will not be transferred to the community for several years, some parcels are already being made available for reuse. For example, the property which contains the old Credit Union has recently been found suitable for transfer to the South Carolina Federal Credit Union. Other parcels have been transferred directly to other Federal agencies, like the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, the Border Patrol, and the State Department. The remaining property is expected to be transferred in three groups.

- ★ EDC Phase I. These are parcels of land that do not have environmental contamination of any significance, or the cleanup/remedy is complete. These will be the first to transfer to the Redevelopment Authority.
- ★ EDC Phase II. These parcels of land will require some kind of remediation, such as tank or soil removals, or interim measures, before they can be transferred.
- ★ EDC Phase III. These are the parcels of land that will require long term remediation, such as groundwater cleanup. Once the remedies at these parcels are considered to be operating properly and successfully, they will become eligible for transfer.

RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD

In addition to submitting written comments on the documents above, community members may bring questions or comments to a meeting of the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB). The RAB is a group of interested citizens, Navy personnel, and representatives from the US Environmental Protection Agency, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and other agencies that meet regularly to discuss the environmental progress at the former Navy base. All RAB meetings are announced to the media and open to the public. Comments and questions on environmental topics are encouraged.

For more information on the Naval Base Charleston environmental program or the next RAB meeting, contact Mr. Jim Beltz, Public Affairs Officer, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Southern Division - (843) 820-5771.

Environmental program documents are available for public access at the Information Repository at the Dorchester Road Branch of the Charleston County Library - (843) 552-6466.