

PUBLIC NOTICE

COMPLETION OF THE FIFTH FIVE-YEAR REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP ACTIONS FOR CERCLA SITES AT NAVAL AIR STATION WHIDBEY ISLAND, OAK HARBOR, WASHINGTON (SEPTEMBER 2014 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2019)

The U.S. Navy (Navy) in consultation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has completed the fifth five-year review of environmental cleanup actions for the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) sites, specifically Operable Units (OUs) 1 through 5, at Naval Air Station (NAS) Whidbey Island. The purpose of the five-year review is to ensure that the environmental cleanup actions (i.e., remedies) continue to be protective of human health and the environment. These environmental cleanup actions were established in Records of Decision (RODs) prepared under CERCLA. The five-year review is required under CERCLA because the cleanup actions have left some hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants in place at concentrations that do not allow for unrestricted use and unrestricted exposure.

Site Name, Location, and Address:

Naval Air Station Whidbey Island
Oak Harbor, Washington

Lead Agency Conducting the Review:

United States Navy

BACKGROUND

NAS Whidbey Island is located on Whidbey Island in Island County, Washington, at the northern end of Puget Sound and the eastern end of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. NAS Whidbey Island was commissioned in 1942 as a base for seaplane operations, missile training, and torpedo maintenance. These historical activities resulted in the release of contaminants to soil and/or groundwater. The base is comprised of eight geographically distinct sites, including Ault Field and Seaplane Base. Ault Field includes OUs 1, 2, 3, and 5 and Seaplane Base includes OU 4. Environmental investigations and/or cleanup actions to address the potential impacts of contamination to human health and the environment have been conducted at OUs 1 through 5 of NAS Whidbey Island.

The primary features of the remedies implemented include:

- land use controls (LUCs) at areas within OUs 1 through 5;
- groundwater monitoring at OU 1 Area 6 – Landfill Operations Area and Former Hazardous Waste Storage Area, OU 2 Areas 2/3 – Western Highlands/1969 to 1970 Landfills, and OU 5 Area 31 – Former Runway Fire School; and,
- a groundwater treatment system at OU 1 Area 6 – Landfill Operations Area and Former Hazardous Waste Storage Area.

An initial statutory five-year review was finalized in 1998, and subsequent five-year reviews were finalized in 2004, 2009, and 2014.

SUMMARY OF FIVE-YEAR REVIEW RESULTS AND PROTECTIVENESS

The review found that the remedies implemented at the following sites are protective of human health and the environment, as the remedial action objectives stated in the RODs are being met:

- OU 1 Area 5 – Highway 20/Hoffman Road Landfill,
- OU 3 Area 16 – Runway Ditches,
- OU 4,
- OU 5 Area 1 – Beach Landfill; and,
- OU 5 Area 52 – Jet Engine Test Cell.

At OU 1 Area 6 – Landfill Operations Area and Former Hazardous Waste Storage Area, the current groundwater treatment system is not preventing downgradient and off-site migration of vinyl chloride and 1,4-dioxane in the

shallow aquifer posing potential risk to future groundwater users downgradient of OU 1 Area 6. 1,4-Dioxane was not identified and not accounted for in the OU1 ROD. The review found that the remedy is protective in the short-term because of the LUCs in place and the fact that residents are on a municipal water supply. Therefore, there are no known exposures to groundwater contamination. However, the amended remedy selected in the Draft Final ROD Amendment (Navy, 2019), addressing vinyl chloride and 1,4-dioxane in groundwater, needs to be finalized and implemented in order for the remedy to be protective into the future.

At OU 2 and OU 5 Area 31 – Former Runway Fire School, the review found that, although there are no known exposures, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in groundwater may impact the future protectiveness of the remedy. Because known off-site drinking water exposures have been addressed and on-site LUCs prevent exposure to groundwater, the remedies at OU 2 and OU 5 Area 31 – Former Runway Fire School are protective in the short-term while on-going PFAS investigations and evaluations are conducted through the CERCLA process. Findings from on-going PFAS investigations and evaluations will be addressed in the next five-year review to determine if the current remedies at OU 2 and OU 5 Area 31 – Former Runway Fire School will continue to be protective with respect to PFAS in the future.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Site-specific information and links to documents, such as the RODs and all five-year reviews, are available on the EPA and/or Naval Facilities Engineering Command Northwest NAS Whidbey Island Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) websites:

EPA:

Ault Field: <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csinfo.cfm?id=1001122>

Seaplane Base: <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csinfo.cfm?id=1001127>

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Northwest NAS Whidbey Island RAB:

<https://navfac.navy.mil/NASWIRAB>.

The next five-year review of environmental cleanup actions for the CERCLA sites at NAS Whidbey Island is scheduled to be completed in 2024.

POINT OF CONTACT AND TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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