



# Former Grosse Ile Naval Air Station

## June 2019

### Introduction

This fact sheet describes the status of the ongoing investigations and cleanup at the former Grosse Ile Naval Air Station, Michigan. The site is located in Grosse Ile Township in Wayne County, Michigan on the southern end of the island. The island is 8 miles long and 2 miles wide and is on the Detroit River approximately 14 miles downriver from the central business district of Detroit, at the confluence of the Detroit River and Lake Erie. The former Grosse Ile Naval Air Station is also referred to as Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) E05MI012304 and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ); now Michigan Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Facility 0003388. The site is currently occupied by the Grosse Ile Commerce Park and Municipal Airport and is surrounded mainly by residential areas and the Detroit River.

As a FUDS, the Department of Defense (DoD) is responsible for its cleanup and environmental restoration. The U.S. Army is the lead agent for the restoration program, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) manages the program on behalf of the Army and DoD. Environmental cleanup at the FUDS is conducted in accordance with Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA). The CERCLA process includes activities designed to involve the public in the decision-making process, such as community involvement, site investigations, studies of cleanup options, proposed cleanup plans and designs, and cleanup actions.



*Aerial photograph of the Former Naval Air Station Grosse Ile site.*

### Site History

Prior to government use, the site was used for farming (Groh farm). From 1926 through 1969, the U.S. Navy occupied the property. In 1927, Aircraft Development Corporation (ADC) purchased 403 acres of land that is now known as the Grosse Ile Airport. ADC constructed a hangar for the purpose of building blimps. Additional hangars and buildings were constructed in 1928. The site was dedicated in September 1929 and served as a Navy airplane, seaplane and blimp training site and U.S. Coast Guard Rescue Station during WWII. It was comprised of approximately 670 acres of land.

In 1954, a 52-acre portion of the site was transferred to the U.S. Army for use as a NIKE missile site. Three missile magazine sites and supporting buildings were constructed. The NIKE site operated from 1954 through 1963. The DoD declared the facility obsolete in 1964, and operations ceased in July 1969. In November 1969, the U.S. General Services Administration transferred about 549 acres of the site to Grosse Ile Township. In 1990, the former NIKE site was converted to a wetlands research area by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Portions of this area are maintained as a nature park.

### Previous Investigations

In 1990, an initial contamination evaluation was conducted. Soil, surface water and groundwater samples were collected for laboratory analysis. Additional environmental activities continued through the 1990s including removal of underground storage tanks (USTs) and submittal of 23 leaking UST reports to EGLE. Other

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investigations were conducted through the 1990s at the 23 former leaking UST areas of concern (AOCs), a waste water treatment plant, a NIKE base area, a surface spill area, and a fire training area.

Twenty-five AOCs were identified in 2002. Potential contaminants for each of the AOCs varied depending on past DoD use. There have been numerous site cleanup investigation activities since 2002.

### Investigation/Study of Cleanup Alternatives

USACE is continuing investigation of AOC 12 – Building 28 to determine the presence and amount of chemicals of concern associated with battery storage. If there is an unacceptable risk from chemicals, USACE will develop appropriate cleanup alternatives. Planned activities include subsurface soil and groundwater sampling. The field work is tentatively planned to begin in the fall of 2019. Data collected in this field investigation, along with historical environmental data, will support the analysis and design of cleanup actions, if necessary. USACE is also completing investigation activities at AOC 20 – Quonset, AOC 24A Debris Disposal Area, and AOC 24B Tar/Sludge Disposal Area. These AOCs do not require further investigation. USACE will summarize previous environmental investigations in a report that confirms that no further action is needed, and then prepare a proposed plan for each of these AOCs to be reviewed by EGLE. The public also will have an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed plans for each of the AOCs.

### UST Closures

USACE is continuing investigation of AOC 1 – Former Fuel Farm, AOC 18 – Former Paint Shop, and AOC 21 – former Radar Tracking and Control Area to investigate the presence of chemicals of concern associated with former USTs at the AOCs. Planned activities include subsurface soil, groundwater, and soil gas sampling. The field work is tentatively planned to begin in the fall of 2019. Data collected during this field investigation, along with historical environmental data, will support the analysis and design of cleanup actions, if necessary. USACE also is completing UST closure activities at AOC 3 – Former PX Service Station, AOC 4 – Former Navy Paint Shop, AOC 5 – Former Missile Assembly Building, AOC 6 – Former Building 60, AOC 7 – Former Officer's Club, AOC 10 – Former Hangar 1, AOC 11 – Building 22 (Former Dope and Spray Building) and Building 23 (Former Paint and Oil Storage Building), AOC 12 – Former Tank North of Building 28, and AOC 17 – Former Fuel Lines from the Fuel Farm to the Flight Line. These AOCs do not require further investigation. USACE will prepare UST closure reports in accordance with EGLE regulations and will prepare corrective action plans, where applicable.

### Next Steps

Public involvement is a key part of the investigation and reporting activities. USACE is scheduled to hold an informational public meeting from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. EST, Aug. 14, 2019, in Grosse Ile Township. The meeting will be held at the Grosse Ile Township Hall located at 9601 Groh Road, Merle Solomon Boardroom, Grosse Ile, Michigan. USACE staff will be available to provide more information and answer questions. For additional information you may contact Shatara Riis, Louisville District Public Affairs Office, at 502-315-6769 or visit the USACE Louisville District Grosse Ile Naval Air Station website: <https://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/GrosselleNavalAirStation/>.



*Exterior soil gas probe sampling (Jacobs stock photo).*