



Newtown Neck Recovery Test Field, MD

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

FACT SHEET as of February 1, 2015

AUTHORIZATION: Defense Environmental Restoration Program

TYPE OF PROJECT: Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS)

PROJECT PHASE: Various stages of CERCLA Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP) and Hazardous Toxic Radioactive Waste (HTRW) Investigation

CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST: Senators **Cardin** and **Mikulski (MD)** and Representative **Hoyer (MD-05)**



BACKGROUND: Newtown Neck Recovery Test Field (previously called Newtown Neck Proving Ground) is a 461.5-acre site southwest of Leonardtown, Maryland, St Mary's County, and is located on the grounds of Newtowne Neck State Park. ("Newtowne" is the official spelling of the park by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR); "Newtown" is the historical spelling). The park is on a peninsula that is surrounded by Breton Bay, St. Clements Bay, and the Potomac River. The park, established in 2009, has seven miles of ecologically and recreationally important waterfront.

In January 2012, USACE was notified of a potential WWII-era testing site at the park:

- On Jan 1, two munitions items were found by a park visitor.
- On Jan 5-6, 11 items were found and DNR closed the park.
- On Jan 7, the Corps conducted a visual sweep of the beach; 10 items were found, concentrated in a cove. An Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team safely detonated all items.
- On Jan 10, the Maryland State Fire Marshal conducted an underwater survey; 4 items were found and detonated by EOD.

To facilitate communications regarding munitions safety, USACE provided a site-specific brochure and other unexploded ordnance safety materials to the DNR. The park remained closed for approximately 2 years. A citizens group was formed for park development issues.

STATUS: No projects are recommended, and no additional work is anticipated at this FUDS property. DNR re-opened the park for public use on April 21, 2014.

Before making its determination, USACE conducted an archives search to determine the property's military history and identify munitions or other environmental hazards. This research verified that Johns Hopkins University-Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU-APL) and the U.S. Navy leased the property and conducted recovery testing operations for a variable time (VT) fuze. This involved vertical firing of 57mm shells that contained fuze components. The shells were manually retrieved in farm fields on the

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – BALTIMORE DISTRICT

P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, MD 21203

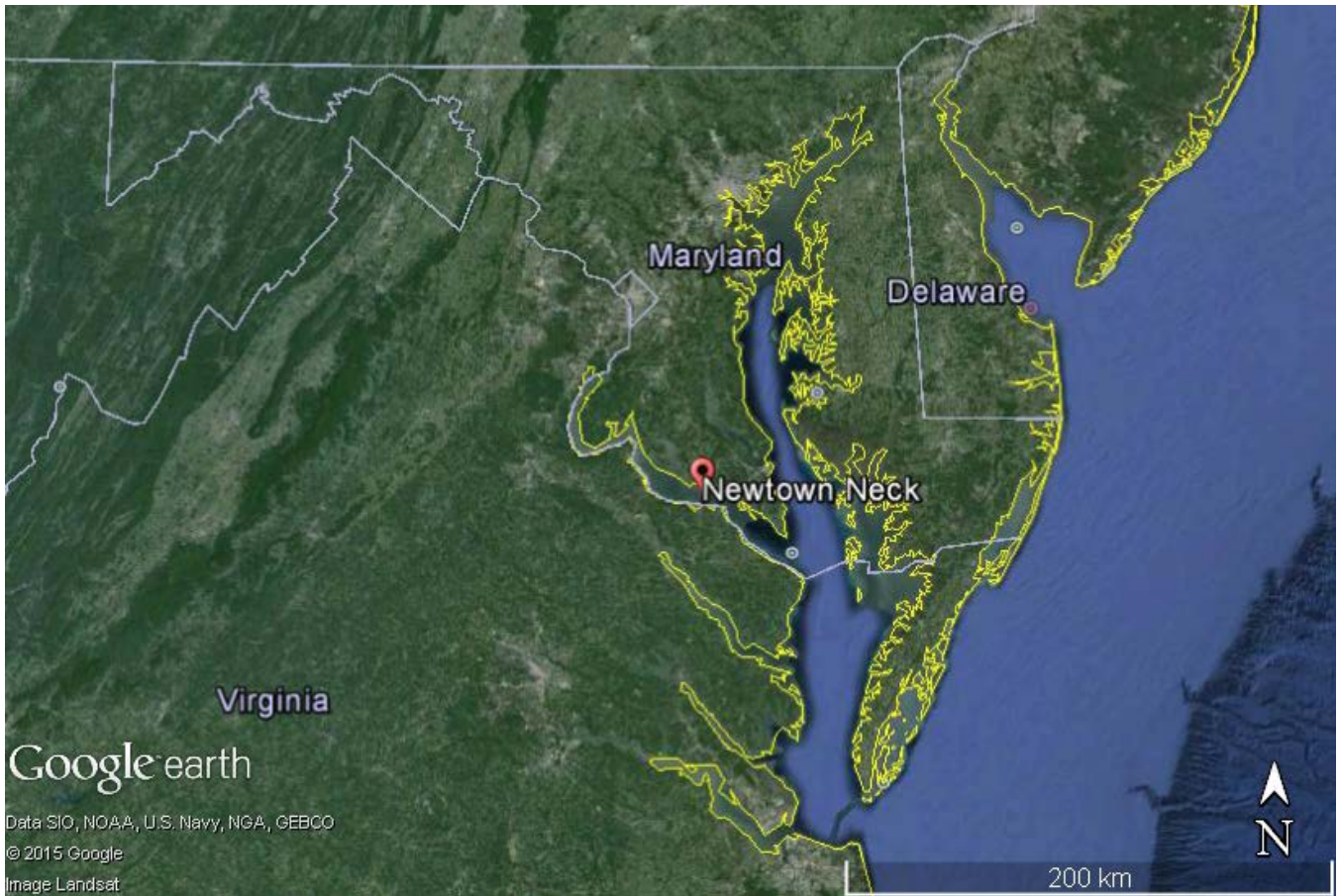
<http://www.nab.usace.army.mil>

Page 1 of 3

property and the components were sent off-site for analysis. No explosives were involved in this testing process, only black powder that would produce a puff when the fuze functioned. Many shells likely exist in the waters surrounding the peninsula, but they are considered inert.

No other military operation at the property besides fuze component testing occurred. Therefore, no hazards are thought to exist. Since site discovery, USACE regularly updated DNR representatives, the Maryland Department of the Environment, and other stakeholders, regarding the status of the project and the results of its research.

For more information regarding the Newtown Neck Recovery Test Field FUDS project, please contact Julie Kaiser, CENAB-EN-H, (443) 986-3449, e-mail julie.e.kaiser@usace.army.mil.



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – BALTIMORE DISTRICT

P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, MD 21203

<http://www.nab.usace.army.mil>

Page 3 of 3