



Decision Document

Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01
Water Island, United States Virgin Islands

Formerly Used Defense Site Project Number: I02VI097701

United States Army Corps of Engineers
Jacksonville District
701 San Marco Boulevard
Jacksonville, Florida 32207

September 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States Army Corps of Engineers prepared this Decision Document to describe the Department of Defense selected remedy for the Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 Formerly Used Defense Site, Project Number I02VI097701, located on Water Island, United States Virgin Islands.

The Department of Defense designated the Army as the Executive Agent for the Formerly Used Defense Sites Program, regardless of which Department of Defense component previously owned or used the property. The Secretary of the Army further delegated the program management and execution responsibility to the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The United States Army Corps of Engineers is the lead agency for investigating, reporting, evaluating, and implementing remedial actions at Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 (Flamingo Bay Landfill and Test Areas 4, 5, and 8).

This Formerly Used Defense Site, comprising 17 acres, is in the southern portion of Water Island in the United States Virgin Islands (refer to Figure 1 on page 3). The Government of the United States Virgin Islands owns the property that includes Munitions Response Site 01. The most reasonably anticipated future land use is the same as the current land use (commercial/industrial/landfill).

Based on the findings of the Remedial Investigation and previous studies, the United States Army Corps of Engineers has determined there is no hazard or risk to human health and the environment from munitions, munitions constituents (the metals and explosives that comprise munitions), chemical warfare materiel, and chemical agents associated with Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01. Therefore, no action is necessary to protect human health and the environment. The No Action selected remedy is determined to be appropriate for the Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01.

A No Action determination was selected in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, 42 United States Code § 9601 et seq., as amended, and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 300.

The United States Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources is the lead regulatory agency for the site and concurs with the No Action determination for Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01.

Based on information currently available, the No Action selected alternative is protective of human health and the environment and satisfies the statutory requirements of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act.

The estimated cost for the selected remedy is \$0.00.

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PART 1: DECLARATION

1.0 SITE NAME AND LOCATION

Site Name: Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01

Formerly Used Defense Site Project Number: I02VI097701

The Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 is located on the southern portion of Water Island in the United States Virgin Islands. Water Island is located approximately 1,800 feet from St. Thomas, directly south from the capital Charlotte Amalie. The site includes 17 acres and consists of four non-contiguous areas (refer to Figure 1 on page 3). The areas include the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area and Test Areas 4, 5, and 8. The Flamingo Bay Landfill Area is in the southern portion of Water Island directly south of Flamingo Bay on a 5.4-acre tract of land that was used as a landfill. Test Area 4 is adjacent to the Flamingo Bay Landfill and consists of a 4.9-acre parcel of land. Test Area 5 is a 3.3-acre parcel east of Test Area 4. Test Area 8 is north of Flamingo Bay and consists of 3.5 acres.

2.0 STATEMENT OF BASIS AND PURPOSE

This Decision Document presents the selected remedy for the Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 Formerly Used Defense Site in the United States Virgin Islands. The selected remedy was chosen in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, 42 United States Code § 9601 et seq., as amended, and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 300. The Corps based this decision on the Administrative Record file for this site.

The United States Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources, the lead regulatory agency for the site, provided its concurrence with the selected remedy in its letter dated December 10, 2020.

3.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE SITE AND DESCRIPTION OF SELECTED REMEDY

As the lead agency, the United States Army Corps of Engineers determined that no action is necessary to protect human health and the environment. A No Action determination is the appropriate selected remedy for Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01. There is no risk to human or ecological receptors attributable to Department of Defense activities.

4.0 STATUTORY DETERMINATIONS

Statutory determinations to comply with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act § 121 are unnecessary. As the lead agency, the United States Army Corps of Engineers has determined that no remedial action is necessary to ensure the protection of human health and the environment at Fort Segarra. Five-year reviews are not required.

5.0 AUTHORIZING SIGNATURES

This Decision Document presents the selected remedy of no action for Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01. The United States Army Corps of Engineers is the lead agency for the Formerly Used Defense Sites Program and developed this Decision Document in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, as

amended, and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 300. This Decision Document will be incorporated into the existing Administrative Record file, which is available for public review at the following website: <https://saj.usace.army.mil/FortSegarra>. The addition of the Decision Document completes the Administrative Record for the Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01.

This document, presenting the selected remedy of no action for the Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01, is approved by the undersigned, pursuant to Memorandum, CEMP-CED (200-1a), "Re-delegation of Assignment of Mission Execution Functions Associated with Department of Defense Lead Agent Responsibilities for the Formerly Used Defense Sites Program," dated 10 August 2019; the CESAD-PMD memorandum re-delegating the approval authority to the South Atlantic Division Director of Regional Business for decision documents for Formerly Used Defense Sites response actions with an estimated cost of up to \$5 million, dated 17 September 2019; and Engineer Regulation 200-3-1, *Formerly Used Defense Sites Program Policy*.

APPROVED:

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28 SEP 2021

THEODORE A. BROWN, P.E., SES
Director of Regional Business

Date

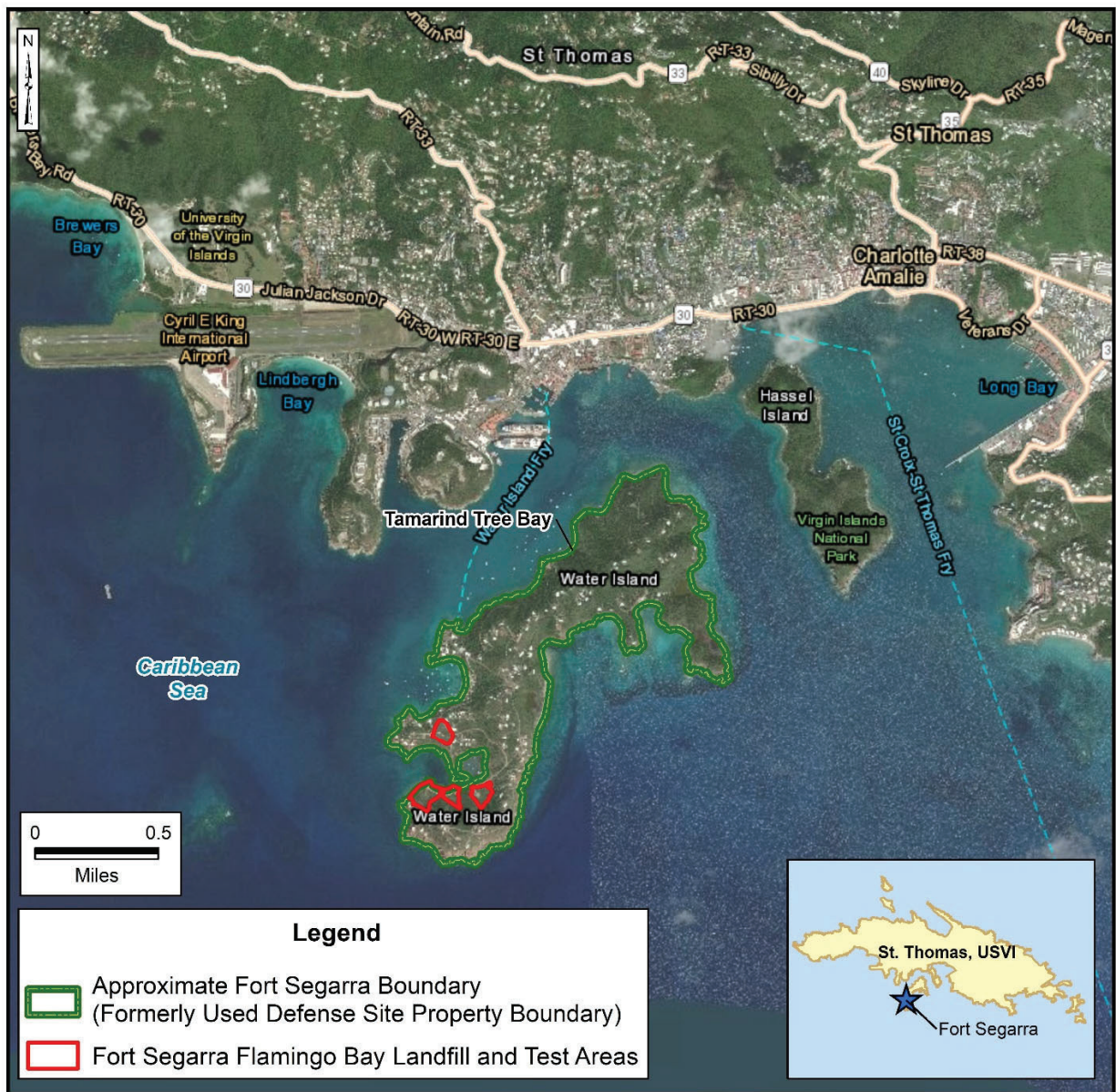


Figure 1: Site Location

PART 2: DECISION SUMMARY

1.0 SITE NAME, LOCATION, AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 is in the southern portion of Water Island in the United States (U.S.) Virgin Islands. The Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands and private entities own portions of the Formerly Used Defense Site property and use it for residential and commercial purposes. The focus of this Decision Document is the 17-acre Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 (Flamingo Bay Landfill Area and Test Areas 4, 5, and 8), which is comprised of four non-contiguous areas that are on land owned by the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Refer to Figure 2 on page 11. Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 is also referred to as Project 01 in historical documents and previous studies.

2.0 SITE HISTORY, PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS, AND ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

2.1 SITE HISTORY

Construction of Fort Segarra started in 1944, with a battery on the southern tip of Water Island to defend the Roosevelt Roads Naval Facility on Puerto Rico. While the concrete gun positions and supporting buildings were completed, the guns were never installed. Fort Segarra was deactivated in 1946. The U.S. Army Chemical Corps used portions of Water Island from 1948 to 1950 for limited testing and storage of chemical munitions as part of the San Jose Project. Six tests were conducted on Water Island, which included tests with bombs filled with chemical agents. In 1950, the San Jose Project operations were moved to Dugway Proving Ground in Utah. Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 is comprised of four non-contiguous areas that were used in conjunction with the military's testing activities on Water Island. The four areas include the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area and Test Areas 4, 5, and 8.

In 1952, the military permanently transferred Water Island to the U.S. Department of the Interior, which subsequently leased the island to a private party for two 20-year terms for development as a resort area. The Water Island Hotel was in use from 1954 until 1989, when Hurricane Hugo badly damaged the hotel, and it never reopened. After the Department of the Interior transferred Water Island to the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands in 1996, the hotel and associated structures were demolished in 1998. In September 2017, Hurricanes Irma and Maria caused wide-spread damage to the island.

2.2 PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) completed a series of studies at the site to determine the potential presence of munitions, munitions constituents, chemical warfare materiel, and chemical agents following the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act process, including the following.

- *Inventory Project Report (1989)* – This report documents that 500 acres at Water Island were eligible for the Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) Program. While the visual survey completed in conjunction with the report did not identify evidence of munitions, munitions constituents, chemical warfare materiel, or chemical agents, it recommended that an investigation be conducted at the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area where several possible chemical bombs were found in 1966.
- *Archives Search Report (1991)* – The Corps completed this report to determine if sites the

Army Chemical Corps used for the San Jose Project contained munitions or chemical warfare materiel. The report provides a description of the site, history of use, and findings for the visual survey and interviews conducted for the report. While no physical evidence or documentation was found indicating the presence of munitions or chemical warfare materiel, the report determined there was a potential for their presence and recommended additional investigations.

- *Photo Analysis (1991)* – The Corps analyzed aerial photographs from 1948, 1954, and 1958 and determined that there was only one area identified, located in Test Area 5, which may have been used for testing and possible disposal.
- *Scoping Study (1993)* – This document provides additional information regarding the Army Chemical Corps' activities at the site based on archival research and interviews. The interviews indicate that the six tests conducted at Fort Segarra in conjunction with the San Jose Project were controlled and well-documented, and decontamination occurred after each test. Furthermore, the types and limited numbers of test items used allowed for easy removal after the testing was complete. The study confirmed that chemical warfare materiel was removed following completion of the project; no further investigation was needed for most areas at Water Island, and an additional investigation was recommended for only Test Areas 4 and 5 and the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area.
- *Site Characterization - Phase I Remedial Investigation Report (1995)* – Site characterization and debris removal operations were conducted in 1993 and 1994 at Water Island, including at Test Areas 4, 5, and 8, and the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area. The characterization activities included surface inspections, magnetometer sweeps and surveys, and investigation to find munitions and chemical warfare materiel, and soil sampling for chemical agents. While there were no munitions, chemical warfare materiel, or munitions debris found and no chemical agents were detected in the surface soil samples, an additional investigation was recommended for portions of Test Areas 4 and 5, and the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area.
- *Historical Photo Analysis (2001)* – The Corps analyzed historical aerial photographs of Water Island to identify areas where chemical warfare materiel testing potentially took place, with a focus on Test Areas 4 and 5 and the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area.
- *Revised Archives Search Report (2002)* – This report summarizes the additional archival research, interviews, aerial photographic analysis, and a site visit that focused on historical munitions and chemical warfare materiel use at the site. Although potential munitions related activities were noted for two batteries and Test Area 4, the report confirms that guns were never installed at the batteries and munitions and munitions debris were not found at Test Area 4. No further action was recommended for munitions. The report also documents the chemical warfare materiel used and removed from the site in conjunction with the San Jose Project and concluded that there was no contamination associated with the Army Chemical Corps' activities.
- *Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (2005)* – This evaluation and analysis included soil sampling at Test Areas 4, 5, and 8, and the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area, including 46 test pits, 17 trenches, 88 soil samples, and eight background soil samples. No munitions or chemical warfare materiel were identified, and the only chemical warfare materiel-related

items were scrap metal found at the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area. No munitions constituents or chemical agents were detected in the soil samples.

- *Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis Action Memorandum (2006)* – This memorandum recommended removing the scrap metal identified at the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area during the 2005 investigation and implementing site-wide institutional controls for Fort Segarra.
- *Site Specific Final Report (2009)* – This report documents removal of the scrap metal from the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area and installation of two signs describing the historical chemical warfare materiel testing done on Water Island as site-wide institutional controls.
- *Five-Year Review Report (2012)* – This report concluded the activities the Corps completed, including removing the scrap metal and installing the signs, were protective of human health and the environment. The report also documented that there were no reported incidents involving munitions, chemical warfare materiel, or munitions debris at the site.
- *Revised Inventory Project Report (2013)* – This document revised the Inventory Project Report to change the size and scope of Munitions Response Site 01 to 17.1 acres and added Test Areas 4, 5, and 8 to the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area.
- *Site Specific Final Report (2016)* – This report documented the replacement of the two informational signs on Water Island.

Additional documents and studies completed for the site include the following.

- *San Jose Project Progress Reports (1947-1950)* – The progress reports document the chemical warfare materiel testing completed from November 1947 through March 1950, including testing that took place at Water Island.
- *Navy Report Regarding Ordnance Discovery at Flamingo Bay Landfill (1966)* – The Navy reported several metal objects found during a dredging operation at the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area in 1966. The metal objects were identified as possible chemical bombs. The report stated there was no noticeable release of chemical agent.
- *Environmental Assessment (1995)* – This report presented the findings from a site inspection of Test Areas 4 and 5 and the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area. While abandoned vehicles, household and construction debris were noted in multiple locations, no munitions or chemical warfare materiel were observed.
- *Preliminary Assessment (2001)* – The Department of Interior completed a Preliminary Assessment on non-munitions related activities at the site from 1952 to 2001. Although non-munitions related activities did not require further investigation, soil sampling was recommended related to the site's former use for chemical warfare materiel testing.
- *Site Investigation Report (2004)* – The Department of Interior conducted a Site Investigation in conjunction with the fieldwork for the 2005 Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis. They collected soil samples from Test Areas 4, 5, and 8 and the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area and analyzed them for explosives, chemical agents, and other non-munitions related chemicals. The results indicated there was no potential risk to human health or the environment in Test Areas 4, 5, and 8, and the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area, and no further

investigation was required.

Based on the historical documents and previous studies, there is no evidence of munitions use at Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01. The data show that the guns were never installed; there is no documentation of conventional munitions use, and neither munitions nor munitions debris have been found at Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01. Since there is no evidence of munitions use, no source for munitions constituents is expected. Historical documents indicate that only six chemical warfare materiel tests were completed or partially completed on Water Island before the testing program was moved to Utah. Chemical warfare materiel associated with the testing included chemical-filled bombs and smoke pots. Although a few suspected chemical warfare materiel-related items were found within Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01, the items did not contain chemical agents and were removed; no additional chemical warfare materiel-related items have been found since 1994. No chemical agents or their breakdown products were detected in the environmental samples collected on Water Island.

2.3 ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

There have been no enforcement actions issued for this site.

3.0 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

In accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act and Department of Defense and Army regulations, the Corps has kept the local community involved throughout the investigative process. The Corps facilitated community involvement through public notices, letters, and a virtual public meeting, which allowed members of the community to provide comments during the site characterization and alternative selection process.

The Corps prepared a Community Relations Plan for the Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 at the beginning of the Remedial Investigation and revised it periodically, including after preparing the Proposed Plan. The Corps will revise it again after the Decision Document is signed.

Prior to the Remedial Investigation, the Information Repository was established at the Corps of Engineers' Jacksonville District office and on the Corps' Fort Segarra website. (There are no suitable locations on Water Island to serve as the local Information Repository, and the Corps confirmed that everyone in the community had devices suitable for Internet access.) The Administrative Record file contains the previous investigation reports, as well as the Remedial Investigation Report and the Proposed Plan. Other project documents were also placed on the Jacksonville District's website: <https://www.saj.usace.army.mil/FortSegarra>.

Representatives from the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources participated in the environmental investigation process through Technical Project Planning meetings and reviewing and commenting on reports and the Proposed Plan.

Water Island is approximately two miles south of Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. The Corps published a notice in the *Virgin Island Daily News* regarding the public meeting and comment period on August 7, 2020. While the *Virgin Island Daily News* covers all the U.S. Virgin Islands, there is no method to focus a notice on the impacted community. As such, the Corps evaluated methods of communicating with the potentially impacted community. The Water Island Civic Association represents property owners and residents of Water Island and has been willing to share information about the Corps' investigations and place notices on their

website. The Corps placed a notice on the Water Island Civic Association's website at the beginning of the Remedial Investigation to announce the Remedial Investigation and notify the public of the availability of the Administrative Record file. In coordination with the Water Island Civic Association, the Corps sent letters and the Proposed Plan fact sheet to the property owners and stakeholders and placed a notice on their website to announce the Proposed Plan public meeting and public comment period.

The Corps posted a virtual public meeting on May 28, 2020, to present the Remedial Investigation findings, present the Proposed Plan, and to solicit public comment. The Corps notified the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources, lead regulatory agency, about the meeting and provided a copy of the Proposed Plan prior to the meeting; representatives acknowledged agreement with the Preferred Alternative. In addition to the presentation, the Corps placed the Proposed Plan and Proposed Plan fact sheet on the project website.

The first public comment period for the Proposed Plan was held from May 28, 2020 to July 6, 2020. A second public comment period was held from August 7, 2020 to September 11, 2020. The Corps received only positive feedback, in the form of "thumbs up," from the public regarding the presentation and selection of the Preferred Alternative. As of September 14, 2020, the YouTube video had been viewed 91 times. No one called or emailed the Corps about Fort Segarra, and no one submitted written comments.

4.0 SCOPE AND ROLE OF THE RESPONSE ACTION

For sites with no hazard or risk, such as Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01, risk management is not needed, and No Action is the selected remedy. No Department of Defense action is necessary to protect human health and the environment, and a No Action determination is appropriate. The U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources is the lead regulatory agency and concurs with the selected remedy.

5.0 SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 is located on the southern portion of Water Island, the smallest of the U.S. Virgin Islands, approximately 1,800 feet from the island of St. Thomas, directly south of the capital city, Charlotte Amalie. The site consists of four non-contiguous areas.

- The 5.4-acre Flamingo Bay Landfill Area is located south of Flamingo Bay.
- The 4.9-acre Test Area 4 is located adjacent to the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area.
- The 3.3-acre Test Area 5 is located east of Test Area 4 and south of Flamingo Bay.
- The 3.5-acre Test Area 8 is located north of Flamingo Bay, adjacent to the Water Island Fire Department.

There are no structures present at the Flamingo Bay Landfill Area or at Test Areas 4, 5, and 8. Test Area 8 is the approximate location of a former hotel constructed on Water Island during the early 1960s. The U.S. Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority provides electricity to Water Island from St. Thomas through a power line under East Gregerie Channel. Water Island does not maintain a municipal drinking water treatment system. Residents on the island obtain their drinking water by collecting rainwater, which is stored in cisterns. Water may also be obtained by truck from St. Thomas if a cistern runs dry. Individual homes use septic tanks for their sewage.

Water Island is under the administrative jurisdiction of the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Although there are some privately-owned parcels on Water Island, the four parcels comprising the Munitions Response Site are owned by the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Access to Water Island is primarily by boat with access points at two docks: one small dock located on the west side of the island and the deep-water dock on the south side of Flamingo Bay. There is also a helicopter pad on the northern side of Flamingo Bay. There are no known access restrictions to the Munitions Response Site.

5.1 SITE OVERVIEW

While the Corps conducted the numerous studies and investigations noted above, a Remedial Investigation was needed, as required by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act. As such, the Corps prepared the Remedial Investigation report to document the types, densities, and distribution, or in the case of Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01, the lack of evidence, of munitions, chemical warfare materiel, munitions constituents, and chemical agents. The Corps completed the Remedial Investigation based on the information presented in the previous studies and investigations; no additional fieldwork was needed.

5.2 SUMMARY OF SITE CONTAMINATION

The Remedial Investigation findings substantiate the conclusion that munitions, chemical warfare materiel, munitions constituents, and chemical agents are not present at Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01. More specifically, no munitions or munitions constituents are expected at the Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 since construction of the former Fort Segarra was not completed prior to the end of World War II, and no guns were installed. Additionally, the Department of Defense did not conduct munitions training on Water Island. Although limited chemical warfare materiel and chemical agent use is documented, previous studies and investigations have confirmed that the few chemical warfare materiel-related items found on Water Island were free of chemical agents. These items were removed and disposed offsite. Sampling documented in the previous studies and investigations further validates that chemical agents are not present at the site. As such, no chemical warfare materiel or chemical agents remain at the Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01; this is supported by the studies and investigations that are documented in the Remedial Investigation report.

6.0 CURRENT AND POTENTIAL SITE AND RESOURCE USES

6.1 LAND USES

The Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands owns the four parcels that comprise the Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01. Munitions Response Site 01 is primarily undeveloped with some commercial/industrial use (such as a landfill/refuse transfer station). In 2014, a development company reportedly signed an agreement with the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands to develop the land within Munitions Response Site 01. Therefore, the most reasonably anticipated future land use is for development for commercial and/or residential use. As of September 2021, there was no indication the development is likely to occur in the near future.

6.2 SURFACE WATER USE

Freshwater ponds apparently were present at some point, and the island's name derived from the freshwater ponds that could replenish the water supply on sailing ships. Currently, the only surface water is salt ponds at various locations around the island, generally on the southeastern side. These ponds are at sea level and likely are replenished through a combination of seawater intrusion and shallow groundwater flow. No data is available on the quality of the water in these ponds.

7.0 SUMMARY OF SITE RISKS

Hazards and risks were evaluated based on the potential for people and the environment to be exposed to munitions, munitions constituents, chemical warfare materiel, and chemical agents. The potentially exposed population includes all those who pass through, live, work, or visit the area. Previous investigations and studies at the site found no evidence of hazards, and therefore, exposure is not anticipated. Based on the Remedial Investigation findings, there is no risk at Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01 attributable to prior Department of Defense activities.

8.0 DOCUMENTATION OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

The Proposed Plan was released for public comment on May 28, 2020. The Proposed Plan identified No Action as the Preferred Alternative for Fort Segarra Munitions Response Site 01. The Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources concurred with the Preferred Alternative, and there were no comments from the public on the Proposed Plan during the comment period. Therefore, the Proposed Plan remains unchanged.

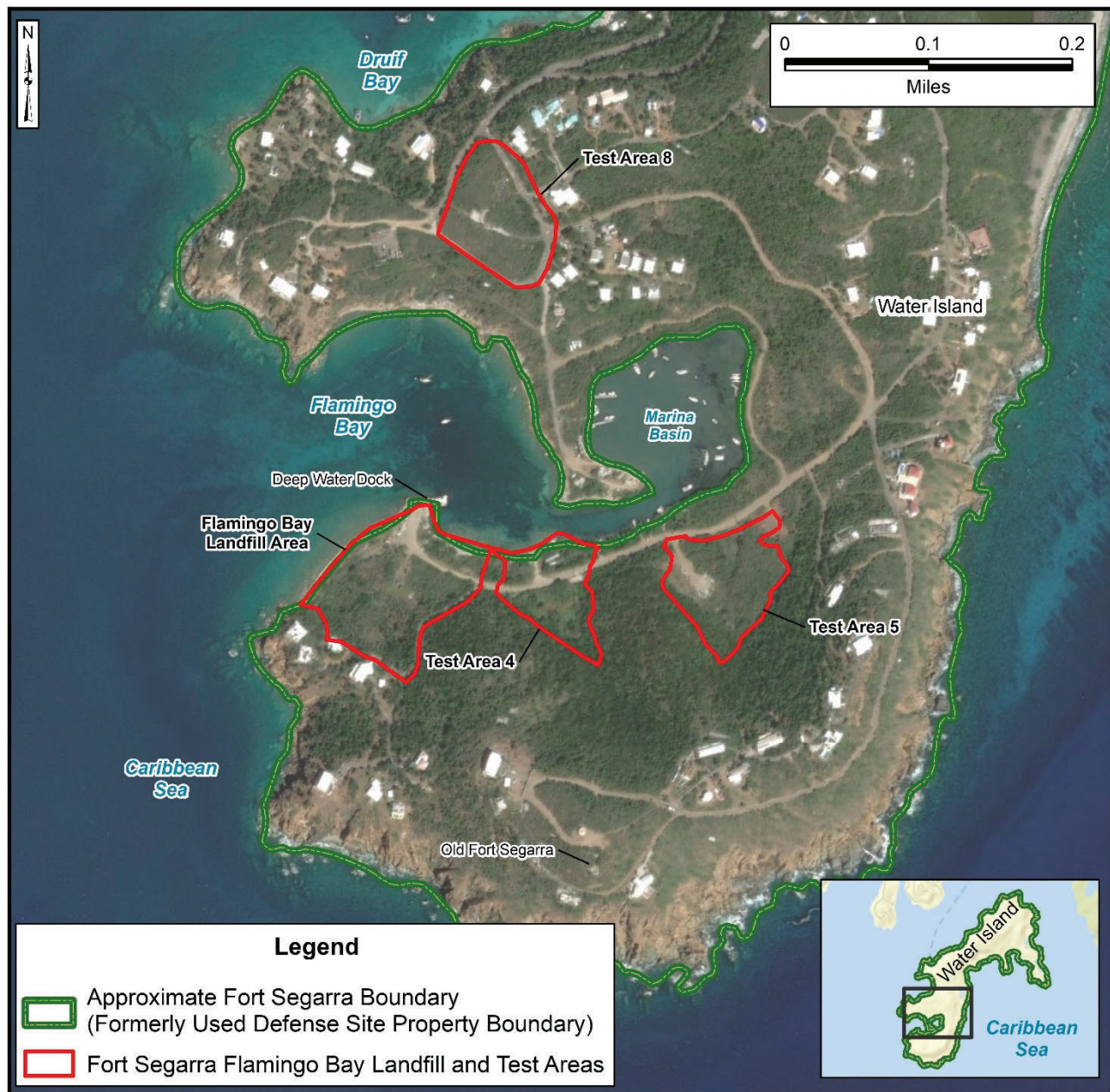


Figure 2: Site Details

PART 3: RESPONSIVENESS SUMMARY

This Responsiveness Summary summarizes the comments received on the Proposed Plan during the two comment periods.

1.0 STAKEHOLDER ISSUES AND LEAD AGENCY RESPONSES

The first public comment period for the Proposed Plan was held from May 28, 2020 to July 6, 2020. A second public comment period was held from August 7, 2020 to September 11, 2020. The Corps posted a virtual public meeting on May 28, 2020. The narrated presentation, fact sheet, and Proposed Plan were available for review during both public comment periods.

1.1 UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMENTS

The Department of Planning and Natural Resources provided written concurrence with the Preferred Alternative by letter dated December 10, 2020.

1.2 PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one from the community called, emailed, or mailed the Corps with comments on the Proposed Plan or Preferred Alternative. As of September 14, 2020, the presentation had been viewed 91 times.

2.0 TECHNICAL AND LEGAL ISSUES

There are no technical or legal issues.