



# Historical Radiological Assessment

Fact Sheet No. 1

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## Introduction

The Department of the Navy (Navy) is preparing a **Historical Radiological Assessment (HRA)** for the Inland Area at Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Detachment Concord, hereinafter referred to as the Concord Inland Area (see Figure 1). The HRA is being prepared because the Concord Inland Area was licensed to handle and store **radioactive material**. Through research, the HRA will expand, refine, and document the record for historical radiological activities at the Concord Inland Area in order to facilitate future transfer of the property for

nonmilitary use. It will be prepared in accordance with Federal and State guidelines.

Information for the HRA comes from records searches, interviews, and onsite inspections of locations at the Concord Inland Area where radioactive materials may have been used, stored, or disposed. The completed HRA will determine if additional **radiological investigations** are needed.

(Text in bold is defined on Page 3.)

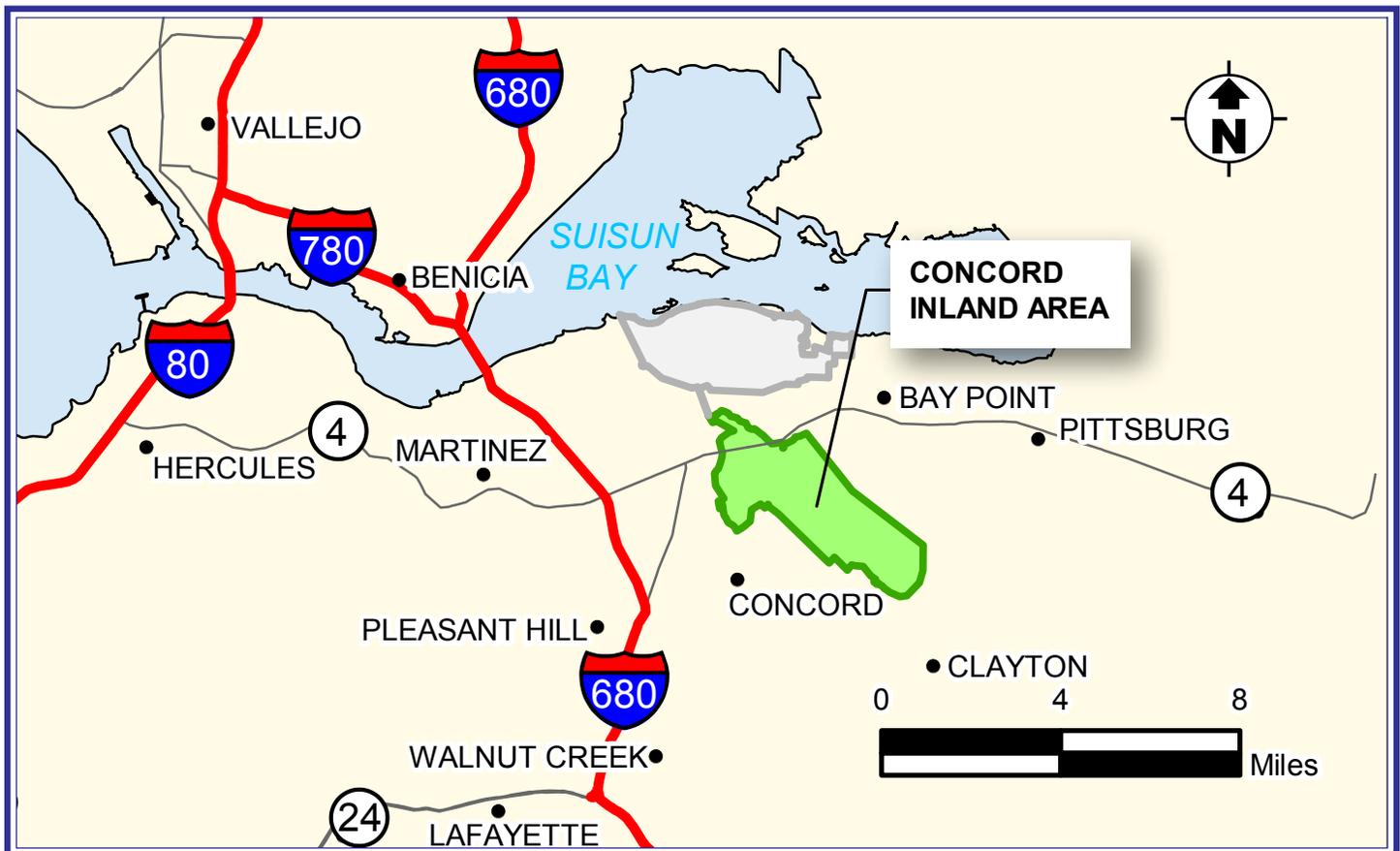


Figure 1 - Inland Area Location Map

The Navy desires to interview current and former Navy personnel, civilian employees, and contractors who can provide information regarding radiological activities at the Concord Inland Area. Face-to-face, telephone, or email interviews can be arranged. Information from the interviews will be used to prepare the HRA and is essential to augment historical records and develop an accurate and complete history of past radiological activities.

If you are a current or former member of the Navy, civilian employee, or contractor and have

information about radiological operations conducted within the Concord Inland Area, please call **1-866-218-0457**, and tell us when and how to contact you. A member of the HRA team will return your call and schedule an interview, either in person or by phone. You can also email Mr. John Hiraas at [john.hiraas@gmail.com](mailto:john.hiraas@gmail.com).

**In order to expedite the HRA process and to schedule an interview, please contact the Navy before October 11, 2008.**

### ■ Overview of Base History

The weapons station at Concord is one of the oldest naval ordnance support bases on the Pacific Coast. It dates from 1942 when the Navy constructed munitions transfer facilities at Concord (known as Port Chicago at the time) as an annex to an ordnance storage magazine at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard. As the annex grew in size and importance to the World War II Pacific victory effort, it became a separate command and was renamed Naval Ammunition Depot, Port Chicago. By April 1945, three large piers, support buildings, and many ordnance storage magazines had been constructed on approximately 13,000 acres of land. The property currently consist of two parcels: the Tidal Area (approximately 6,200 acres) and the Inland Area (approximately 5,200 acres), connected by a narrow surface transportation corridor.

From its inception in 1942, the primary purpose of the weapons station at Concord was the transfer of munitions from ground transport (railroad and highway) to ships. Munitions from World War II and other conflicts of the late twentieth century also were returned from naval vessels to Concord for transshipment to disposal facilities elsewhere. In the Inland Area, weapons and munitions were stored in

magazines, and maintenance and inspection of ordnance were performed in various buildings. As its importance diminished late in the twentieth century, the station became an annex of the Seal Beach Weapons Station in southern California and was renamed Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Detachment Concord.

In October 1999, Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Detachment Concord was placed in "reduced operating status." Major military operations ended and the facility was prepared for possible future use and/or reactivation. In 2005, most of the Inland Area was designated for closure under the authority of the Department of Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act. This act requires the Navy to perform certain environmental investigations as part of the base realignment and closure (BRAC) process. One of these is the preparation of an HRA. The Inland Area is the property that is currently undergoing the HRA investigation.

The Tidal Area, the transportation corridor, and 115 acres of the Inland Area will be transferred to the Army. These comprise an active military base and are not part of the HRA.

## Definitions

**Historical Radiological Assessment (HRA)** – a detailed investigation to collect historical radiological information and data for a particular site and its surroundings where radioactive materials were used, stored, or disposed.

**Radioactive material** – a substance that contains or emits radiation. Radioactive materials and radiation occur in nature. These materials are also used by the military and private industry and are present in common household items. Common items that use radioactive materials are smoke detectors, radioluminescent devices, including dials, ships' deck markers and gauges, lead paint analyzers, static eliminators, non-electrically powered exit signs, and biological and chemical agent detectors.

**Radiologically impacted site** – a radiologically impacted site is one that has a potential for radioactive contamination based on historical information or is known to contain radioactive contamination. Areas immediately adjacent to the primary impacted site may be included in this designation. Radiologically impacted sites include: sites where radioactive materials were used or stored; sites where known spills, discharges, or other unusual occurrences involving radioactive materials have occurred, or may have occurred, that could have resulted in the release or spread of contamination; and sites where radioactive materials might have been disposed of or buried.

**Radiological investigation** – a systematic examination of an area to determine if radioactive materials are present and, if so, at what levels.

### ■ What is a Historical Radiological Assessment?

Historical documentation indicates the potential past use and/or storage of radioactive materials at the Concord Inland Area. The HRA will define the extent of former activities involving radiation and radioactive materials, including special weapons. The HRA will:

- Document information about radiological operations, investigations, and surveys discovered during searches of historical records and interviews;
- Identify potential, likely, or known sources of radioactive material and areas where these materials might have been used;
- Classify as “**radiologically impacted**” those **sites** where radioactive materials were known to have been used, stored, or disposed with reasonable potential for residual contamination (all other sites are, by definition, “non-impacted” by radiological operations);
- Assess the likelihood of any potential residual radioactive material to migrate into other areas or to the environment;

- Identify sites that need further action; and recommend actions that will achieve site closure.

The Navy is currently conducting on-site inspections and record reviews at Concord and comprehensive records searches and review of relevant documents at various Federal archives.

### ■ What's Next?

Because individual knowledge of activities involving radioactive material at the Concord Inland Area is essential to understanding work performed there, we will interview personnel who respond to this request for interviews. The Navy has put advertisements in local newspapers to reach as many potential interviewees as possible.

The HRA is anticipated to be completed and published in the fall of 2009. We will provide regular updates at the Navy's Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meetings. For a schedule of RAB meetings, see the Navy's environmental website at: <http://www.bracpmo.navy.mil/brac2005/bracbases/ca/concord/default.aspx>



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