



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

4/30/03-02297

APR 30 2003

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Sam D. Hamilton
U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)
Regional Director
Southeast Region
USFWS
1875 Century Blvd
Atlanta, GA 30345

Re: Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Facility (AFWTF) - EPA I.D.# PRD980536221
Munitions and Explosives of Concern (MEC) Investigation Report for Blue
Beach and Red Beaches

Dear Mr. Hamilton:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2 has reviewed the April 2003 "Final Draft Preliminary Munitions and Explosives of Concern (MEC) Investigation Report for Red and Blue Beaches" (the Report). Blue and Red Beaches are located in the Eastern Maneuver Area of Vieques Island. As you know, based on preliminary comments on the Report provided to the Navy and DOI by EPA, as well as by the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (EQB), the Navy implemented additional MEC investigation work at Blue and Red beaches between April 26 through April 29, 2003.

Based on the results of that additional MEC investigation work, EPA concurs with the Navy's and DOI's recommendations that Blue and Red beaches can be opened for recreational usage. Our concurrence is based on:

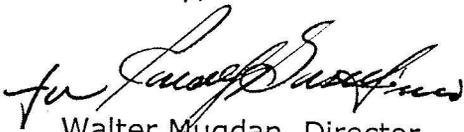
- a) the largely negative findings [only 1 clearly military item found, and it was wholly inert] during the "reacquisition" to 4 feet below ground surface of 30% of the geophysically identified anomalies that, based on the previous "reacquisition," were determined to be deeper than 1 foot below ground surface;
- b) the wholly negative findings of the underwater visual inspection by divers for any possible sea-bottom MEC related surface items in the waters to approximately 4 - 5 foot depth; and

- c) implementation of access restrictions [and warning signs] for the uninvestigated areas behind the beach.

However, access restrictions should be maintained for the land areas behind the beaches, pending implementation of additional MEC investigations of those areas.

If you have any questions, please telephone either Mr. Carlos Ramos, of Region 2's Office of the Regional Administrator, at (212) 637 - 3588, or Mr. Tim Gordon, EPA's designated Project Coordinator for the RCRA Order, at (212) 637 - 4167.

Sincerely,



Walter Mugdan, Director
Division of Environmental Planning and Protection

- cc: Captain John R. Warnecke, Commanding Officer, U.S. Naval Station
Roosevelt Roads
Christopher T. Penny, Naval Facilities Engineering Command
John Seymour, U.S. Department of the Interior [via Fax]
Shelly Hall, U.S. Department of the Interior [via Fax]
Bud Oliviera, U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service [via
Fax]
Felix Lopez, U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service [via Fax]
Esteban Mujica-Cotto, President, PR Environmental Quality Board (PREQB)
Yarissa Martinez, Office of the Chairman, PREQB [via Fax]