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QUARTERLY ENVIRONMENTAL NEWSLETTER FOR NS MAYPORT FL
6/1/1996
NAVAL STATION MAYPORT

A Quarterly Environmental Newsletter

NAVY Green

Naval Station Mayport

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Dear Neighbor

In preparing to address a group of environmental regulators last month, I had the opportunity to reflect on all the good things Naval Station Mayport has done to preserve and protect our environmental resources over the past 2 years. As this will be my last column before leaving Mayport in August, I thought I would share with you some of the results of my informal research.

Protecting the environment is one of the most important things we do here at your Naval Station. So, in December of 1994, we revised our vision statement, making environmental stewardship one of the four cornerstones of our operations. With a mile of beach front, 4.5 miles of river shoreline, and nearly a third of our land area classified as wetlands, brackish marshlands, or beaches, everyone here truly realizes what an immense responsibility we have.

Earlier this year, Mayport was selected as the winner of the 1995 Chief of Naval Operations Pollution Prevention (P2) Award and as a runner-up for the 1995 Secretary of the Navy P2 Award. I am especially proud of these honors because P2 is one of the areas in which we have concentrated our efforts. We have taken a big step in the right direction toward our goal to cut our pollution emissions in half by 1999.

One of our biggest P2 successes has come in our program to control and manage hazardous materials. In just 3 years of operation, our program, which has been called the best in the Navy, has saved the Navy and taxpayers more than \$2.6 million through a system of centralized storage, reclamation of materials, and reduction of costly hazardous waste.

We have made great strides under our charter as the Navy's East Coast Environmental Leadership base. Naval Station Mayport has been charged with leading the Navy into the 21st century by developing innovative new cleanup techniques and protection practices and exporting them throughout the Navy and Marine Corps.

We have experimented with innovative technologies to clean up areas of contamination, established an extensive environmental training and awareness campaign, created an environmental support program for our ships, and formed strong partnerships with State and local environmental regulators.

Our recycling program continues to enjoy tremendous success. In 1995, our efforts removed more than 2 million pounds of recyclable materials from the waste stream, saving more than \$70,000 in disposal costs.

Our Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) has been up and running for 18 months now. Since February 1995, the RAB has served as a two-way communication link between the Naval Station and the community to ensure that you have a voice in our environmental restoration efforts. It has been very encouraging to see the community interest in our RAB meetings and open forums.

It has been my privilege to command Naval Station Mayport for the past 2 years, and I have thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of the job, particularly overseeing our many environmental programs. I know my

successor, Captain Jan Gaudio, will carry on Mayport's tradition of excellence in environmental stewardship.



SCOTT T. CANTFIL
Captain, U.S. Navy
Commanding Officer
Naval Station Mayport

Group III

Environmental Studies Report Issued

Environmental studies at Naval Station Mayport have been completed at Group III, the northeastern part of the base. These investigations, known as Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) facility investigations (RFIs), are conducted to determine the nature, extent, and fate of chemicals released to the environment; provide information to conduct human health and ecological risk assessments; and recommend cleanup actions, if required.

No further investigation is currently recommended for Group III sites. Naval Station

Mayport will restrict residential development and the use of groundwater as drinking water at Group III sites.

Removal actions (as *Interim Measures*) were recommended for localized areas at an industrial site at the shipyard repair area and in a drainage ditch near the firefighting training area.

A report summarizing the studies at Group III, as well as studies at Groups I and II, is available to the public in the information repository. The information repository is located at the Beaches Branch Public Library. For more details, see the back page of this newsletter. ■

NELP Work

Innovative Technologies at Naval Station Mayport

Because Naval Station Mayport is part of the Navy's Environmental Leadership Program (NELP), we have been tasked to test and evaluate innovative cleanup technologies. Innovation comes not just from using newer technologies, but from using traditional technologies in new ways. Three innovative cleanup projects at Naval Station Mayport are being completed under NELP.

At Site 15, the Old Pesticide Handling Area, *bioaugmentation* was conducted by adding nutrients and biological organisms to the soil in this area. Bioaugmentation was conducted to assess the viability of this technology at this site and other sites with similar chemicals. These materials were distributed in the soil through an irrigation system in March 1996. The biological organisms metabolize pesticides present in the soil. Currently, test results are being analyzed to rate the success of the bioaugmentation technology.

At Sites 6 and 7, the Oily Waste Treatment Plant Area, *low temperature thermal desorption* was used to remove petroleum from soil. A low-temperature thermal desorber separates petroleum from soil by "baking" the soil and vaporizing

petroleum found in it. The soil is then tested, and if it meets State of Florida cleanup criteria, it is returned to the site. This technology was completed in May 1996. Currently, test results are being analyzed to rate the success of the technology.

At Site 14, the Fleet Training Center, *bioremediation* is being studied to determine how it can be applied to clean up petroleum-stained concrete and soil containing petroleum residues from fire-training activities. During this

process, microorganisms and nutrients are applied to the soil or are scrubbed into the concrete surface. The microbes digest hydrocarbons thus removing the contamination. Work on the concrete pad has been completed, and testing has been conducted to evaluate this technology. The application of the microorganisms and nutrients to the soil is in progress and is expected to be completed by the end of summer.

NELP is designed to improve the environmental restoration process throughout the Navy. The technologies tested today play an important part in how cleanup will be conducted in the future. ■

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The RAB welcomes the Public...

The Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) at Naval Station Mayport hosted an Open House April 9 at the Sea Turtle Inn. The Open House was held to educate our neighbors about the many facets of the environmental investigation and cleanup activities at Naval Station Mayport. Technical experts from the Navy were present to answer questions, and presentations included aerial photographs, informative posters, and a video. The aerial photographs showed the development of Naval Station Mayport from the 1950s to the 1980s, and accompanying posters highlighted risk assessment strategies, field sampling activities, and site cleanup

Open House

designs. The video detailed cleanup activities as well as day-to-day changes in base operations to make the Naval Station more environmentally friendly.

At Naval Station Mayport, we want to keep you informed about all our environmental investigation and cleanup activities. Our Open House is just one way we are doing this. Through newsletters — like this one — and technical fact sheets, we hope to let everyone know about our efforts to protect the environment. If you would like more detailed information, please attend our quarterly RAB meetings, or contact Cheryl Mitchell at 904-270-6730. =

Snakes Alive!

Indigo Snakes at Naval Station Mayport

Some of the longest snakes in North America are living in north Florida! The eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*) is listed as a State and Federal threatened species. It can grow to more than 8 feet long and has iridescent black scales and a pink throat, which results in its confusion with the smaller and similar black racer snake.

The eastern indigo snake lives in wetlands and scrublands and winters in gopher tortoise holes and under stumps. It swallows alive anything that it can overpower, including frogs, toads, fish, lizards, small turtles, birds, small mammals, and other snakes, even poisonous ones!

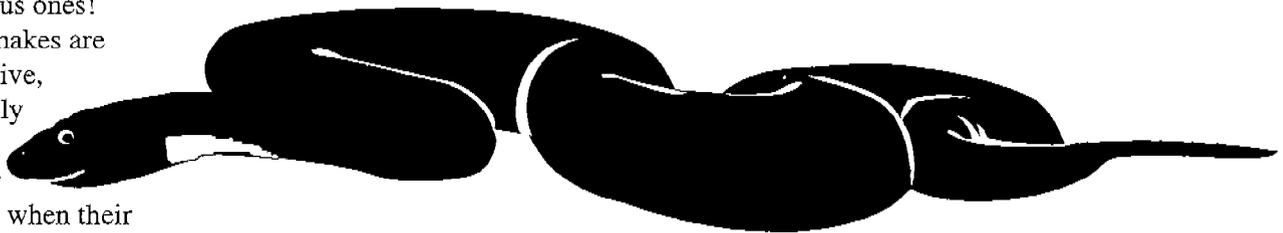
These snakes are very active, especially in the summer months, when their range will cover 125 to 250 acres. In May and June they lay large eggs, and hatchlings are 18-24 inches long.

At one time the eastern indigo snake was widely collected for the pet trade. But more damaging to the survival of the population was the practice of "snake gassing," a technique used for collecting rattlesnakes in gopher tortoise burrows. Although now illegal in

Florida, it probably continues due to demand for rattlesnake hides in the specialty leather and souvenir trade.

The eastern indigo snake population is also affected by habitat loss, particularly the loss of winter refuge in burrows and stumps. Because they are large and have a wide-ranging territory, it is not as easy for them to survive in smaller habitats. Therefore, habitat protection, which is also linked to the protection of the gopher tortoise, is focused on large tracts of land.

Naval Station Mayport will continue working to



keep undeveloped areas of the base a hospitable home for the threatened eastern indigo snake by protecting them from habitat loss and human disturbance. If any eastern indigo snakes are encountered at Naval Station Mayport, we will do all we can to ensure their survival and notify State, Federal, and Navy agencies of their presence. =

For More Information...

Questions & Answers

Naval Station Mayport - who to call:

For general questions or information about Naval Station Mayport and the environmental programs, contact:

**Public Affairs Officer
(904) 270-5226**

For more specific technical questions relating to the Installation Restoration program or cleanup activities, contact:

**Cheryl Mitchell
Environmental Engineer
(904) 270-6730**

An information repository containing documents related to the environmental cleanup activities at Naval Station Mayport is also available to the public. The information repository is located at:

**Beaches Branch Public Library
600 Third Street, Neptune Beach, FL
(904) 241-1141**

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