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IRP Information Update***

Naval Submarine Base New London

INFORMATION UPDATE

INSTALLATION RESTORATION PROGRAM

Naval Submarine Base New London
Groton, Connecticut

U.S. Department of the Navy
Naval Submarine Base
New London
Office of Public Affairs

October 1992

Navy Completes Phase I of Remedial Investigation

The U.S. Navy has completed Phase I of the remedial investigation to determine the kind and extent of hazardous waste contamination at the Submarine Base in New London. This Information Update provides an overview of that investigation. It includes recommendations for additional study, and introduces some of the terms and concepts that will be used repeatedly during future investigations and cleanup activities. Words in *bold italics* are defined in the glossary at the end of this Update.

Site History. For almost 100 years, the Navy's Submarine Base in New London (NSB-NLON) has served as a major support center for the U.S. Atlantic fleet. Of necessity the Subase has used, handled, stored, and disposed of hazardous materials, some of which have contaminated soil and/or ground or surface water in areas of the Subase. Some of the contamination is the result of accidental spills and leaks that happened many years ago; others are the result of past disposal practices that we now know are inadequate.

The Cleanup Program. In 1975, the Department of Defense (DOD) developed a program to investigate and clean up problem areas involving hazardous waste at federal facilities such as NSB-NLON. That program is known as the Installation Restoration Program (IRP). The chart on page 9 shows the phases of this investigation and cleanup.

The IRP at the Subase is being conducted in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental

Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), commonly referred to as the *Superfund* law. Through this law, Congress established a fund (Superfund) to pay for the cleanup of hazardous waste sites when parties responsible for the contamination could not be found or were unwilling to pay. In 1986 Congress passed the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) which contains provisions for federal facilities.

COMPLETED FIELD ACTIVITIES

Eleven sites at NSB-NLON have been investigated to determine if any contamination exists, and if so, what the nature and extent of the contamination is. Health and ecological risks from the contamination have also been assessed. Based on this information, a recommendation has been made for each of the sites:

- 1) to take no further action. A recommendation to take no further action means that no significant

Public Meeting

The Navy will hold a public meeting to discuss the results of the investigation and answer questions from the public.

when: November 2, 1992

time: 7:00 p.m.

where: Shepherd of the Sea Chapel
Gungywamp Road, Groton

contamination or threat to health or the environment exists;

- 2) to perform supplemental Step I investigations (Site Inspection). This means that further study is needed before making a decision to proceed from Step I to Step II or take no further action;
- 3) to proceed From Step I to Step II (Remedial Investigation). This recommendation means that further study is needed to measure the extent of contamination or to identify its source, or that identified contamination and health and ecological risks are of concern;
- 4) proceed from Step II Remedial Investigation to the Feasibility Study. The Feasibility Study (FS) is a detailed evaluation of the remedial (cleanup) alternatives (including no further action) available for each site. This step also involves performing supplemental Step II investigations before completing the FS.

WHAT THE INVESTIGATION FOUND

The map on page 3 shows the location of the eleven sites. Air, water, soil, and sediments were tested to identify the kind and amount of contamination present. (See "Contamination—what, how, who" on page 5.) For a detailed analysis of the results of the Phase I investigation, as well as the risks associated with the contamination, refer to the Phase I Remedial Investigation Report available at the public libraries in Groton and Ledyard, and the Naval Submarine Base New London Library. A general description of the type of contaminants found is given below, followed by a brief summary of each of the sites.

Air. No air contamination was detected at the Subase during Phase I of the remedial investigation. Some additional testing for air quality has been recommended for the Goss Cove area.

Water. Many of the groundwater samples from the study sites at NSB-NLON show the presence of metals, *Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)*, and *Semi-Volatile Organics (SVOs)*. Some radiation was found in two groundwater samples. Detailed analysis of subsequent samples has shown that the radiation is attributable to naturally occurring *radioisotopes*. Surface water samples were also taken from streams, wetland areas, and the Thames River and analyzed for

contamination. In most cases, surface water samples showed low levels of chemical contamination.

A residential well sampling and analysis program was also conducted to assess groundwater quality in off-site areas near Area A. This involved three sampling rounds of wells. Although results showed no connection to contaminants present in Area A, a further round of sampling is planned to confirm the findings, particularly with regard to boron.

Soil and Sediments. VOCs, SVOs, PCBs, metals, and pesticides were found in soil samples. Pesticides were found in sediment samples.

STEP I SITES

1. CBU Drum Storage Area

The CBU Drum Storage Area is located in the northern section of NSB-NLON, adjacent to the deployed parking lot and within the Area A Landfill. Twenty-six 55-gallon drums of waste oil, lube oil, and paint materials found at this site have been removed. Soil samples taken at the site revealed low concentrations of lead, VOCs, SVOs, and pesticides.

Recommendation: Supplemental Step I investigations are needed to confirm that the low concentrations of chemicals detected at the site present no risk to human health or the environment, and to determine if Step II investigations are necessary.

2. Rubble Fill at Bunker A-86

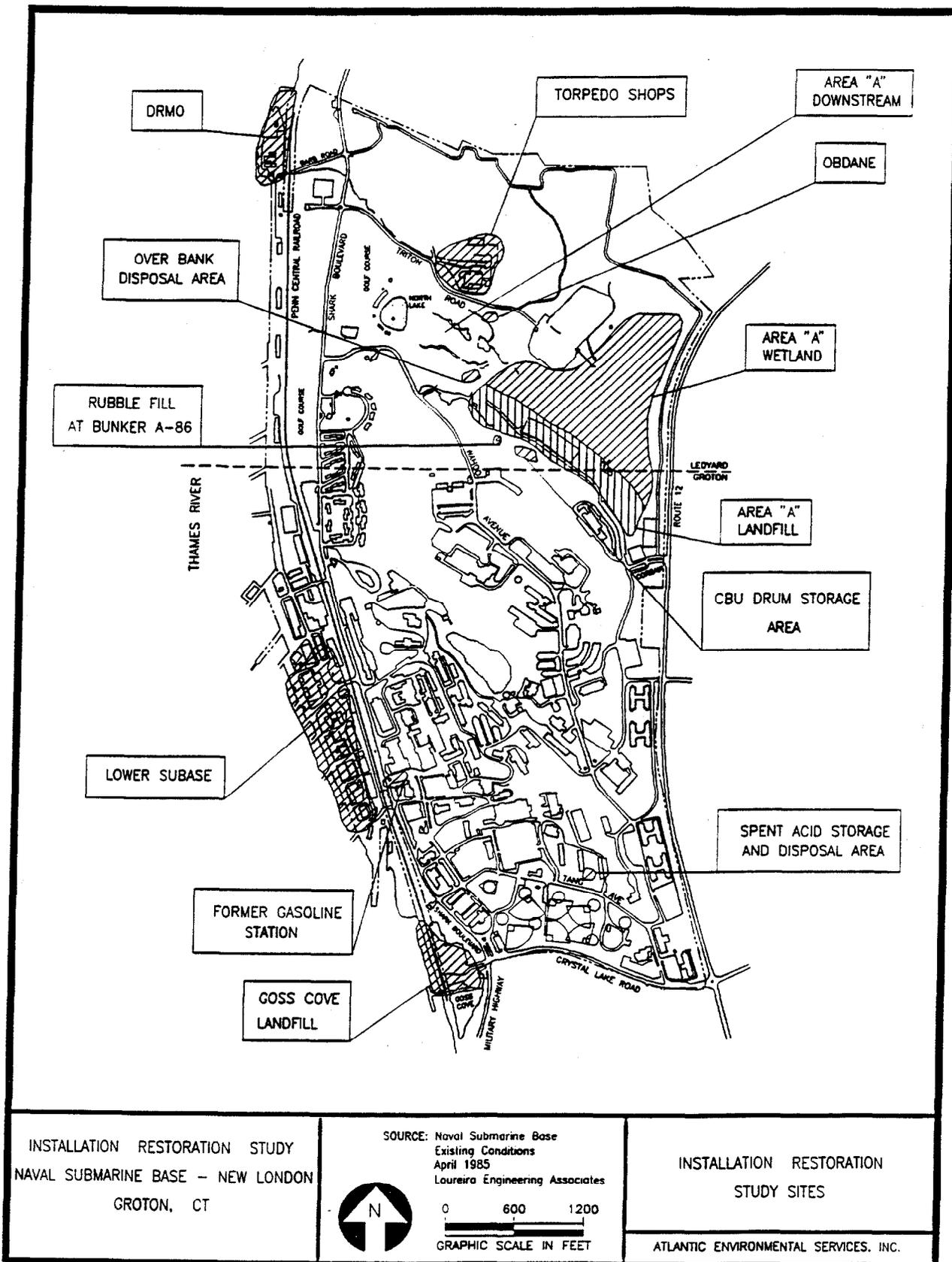
The Rubble Fill at Bunker A-86 is located on a dirt road off of Wahoo Avenue in the north central section of NSB-NLON, adjacent to the Area A Landfill and the hazardous waste storage facility. Discarded construction materials present at this site included concrete, asphalt, an electric motor, wood, and gravel. Chemical containers found at this site included an empty 5-gallon container for a corrosive product, an empty 5-gallon container for a patching compound, and a 55-gallon drum for lube oil that was about 10 percent full. All containers have been removed from the site. Soil samples revealed low concentrations of VOCs, SVOs, pesticides, and a high concentration of arsenic. **Recommendation:** Proceed to Step II for additional soil and groundwater sampling.

3. Torpedo Shops

Located in the northern portion of NSB-NLON on

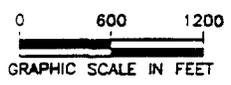
Investigated Sites

Naval Submarine Base New London



INSTALLATION RESTORATION STUDY
 NAVAL SUBMARINE BASE - NEW LONDON
 GROTON, CT

SOURCE: Naval Submarine Base
 Existing Conditions
 April 1985
 Laureira Engineering Associates



INSTALLATION RESTORATION
 STUDY SITES

ATLANTIC ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC.

the north side of Triton Avenue, these two buildings are torpedo overhaul/assembly facilities. Until 1983, they were connected to an on-site septic system. They are now connected to municipal sewers. A variety of fuels, solvents, and petroleum products are used in these buildings. Although in the past these wastes were not routinely discharged into the septic system, occasional, accidental chemical discharges may have occurred.

Low concentrations of VOCs and SVOs were detected in the systems. Antimony and silver were also present. PCB was detected in soil samples from the north septic system, a pesticide in soil samples from the south septic system. No pesticides/PCBs or SVOs were detected in the ground water.

Recommendation: Proceed to Step II for further soil and groundwater investigation to find the source, nature, and extent of the VOC contamination, and to address antimony contamination at the site.

4. Goss Cove Landfill

The Goss Cove landfill is located off Military Highway in the southwestern portion of NSB-NLON, adjacent to the Thames River. The landfill operated from 1946 to 1957 and filled in the northern portion of Goss Cove. The southern portion of the Cove remains open water. The Nautilus Museum (a submarine museum open to the public) and a paved parking lot are constructed directly over the former landfill.

Borings taken from the landfill indicate that the fill contains primarily sand and gravel with small quantities of brick, glass, incinerator ash, wood, and metal. Some petroleum disposal/spills probably also took place at the site.

Surveys of surface conditions indicate no radiation above *background levels*. VOCs, SVOs, PCBs and pesticides were found at all sample locations. Arsenic, cadmium, chromium, lead, barium, and mercury were also found. Some radiation was found in two groundwater monitoring wells. Detailed analysis of subsequent samples has shown that the radiation is attributable to naturally occurring radioisotopes. Overall concentrations of SVOs and VOCs in ground water were relatively low and no drinking water wells are within the affected area. **Recommendation:** Proceed to Step II for additional testing, including a health and environmental risk assessment for the potential impact of this site on the Thames River. Uti-

lize worker health/safety provisions for all future construction projects at the site.

5. Over Bank Disposal Area Northeast

The Over Bank Disposal Area Northeast (OBDANE) is located in a heavily wooded area on the edge of a ravine northwest of the Area A Landfill and south of the Torpedo shops. Empty drums were found in this area, but no evidence of recent dumping has been found. One VOC was detected at very low concentrations in surface soil samples collected at this site. No SVOs, PCBs, or pesticides were found.

Recommendation: Supplemental Step I investigations should be made to determine if Step II investigations are necessary.

6. Spent Acid Storage and Disposal Area

This site is located in the southeastern section of NSB-NLON, between the southern sides of Buildings 409 and 410. Around the time of World War II, waste battery acid was stored in a rubber-coated underground tank approximately 12 ft. x 4 ft. x 4 ft. Soil samples revealed high levels of lead.

Recommendation: Proceed to Step II. If the site is scheduled for construction of a new building, worker health and safety procedures should be developed.

7. Former Gasoline Station

The gasoline station was located in the asphalt roadway and parking area just south of Building 164 (Dealey Center). It operated from 1940 to the early 1960's, and included several underground gasoline tanks and a waste oil tank. Only one underground tank appears to remain on this site. No significant levels of VOCs or metals were found in soil samples. **Recommendation:** Do not proceed to Step II. In accordance with current federal underground storage tank regulations, remove the underground tank and take additional soil samples around the area of the tank itself.

8. Area A

Area A includes three separate sites: 8a) Area A Landfill; 8b) Area A Wetland; 8c) Area A Downstream Watercourse. Because of its proximity to Area A, samples for the Over Bank Disposal Area (OBDA) were analyzed with those of Area A. (See map of Area A and OBDA on page 7.)

CONTAMINATION—WHAT, HOW, WHO

In the investigation and cleanup process, fundamental questions must be answered before cleanup decisions are made:

WHAT types of hazardous materials are present and in what amounts?

Three media—water, soil, and air—are tested to find out the kind and amount of contaminants present at each site.

Water is sampled both from the surface (streams, rivers, wetlands) and from underground sources known as *aquifers*. Some aquifers are restricted to shallow soil, while others are located in deep *bedrock* beneath the site. Both layers may contain contaminants. Water samples are taken from monitoring wells drilled to varying depths to allow sampling from both aquifers.

Soil and sediment samples are taken to identify surface contamination. Borings are drilled to allow soil samples to be taken beneath the surface of the earth.

Air samples are taken in places where there is reason to believe air quality is of concern.

HOW did the contamination get there?

A review of Subase records and interviews with Subase personnel provide important information on past operations or disposal practices. For example, if a site is known to have been a disposal area for spent batteries, investigators can predict that certain contaminants such as lead will be present. In the case of contamination that is carried in moving ground water, *monitoring wells* help determine the direction of the groundwater flow, allowing investigators to trace the contamination back to its source.

HOW BAD is the contamination? What are the health risks to people or the environment?

Samples are analyzed for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), Semi-Volatile Organics (SVOs), Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), metals, and pesticides. When found, the concentration level of the contaminant is compared to various federal and state standards to see if the level could have any significant negative effects on human health or the environment. Some contaminants are known or suspected *carcinogens*, that is, they can cause cancer. Others can have adverse effects on the lungs, kidney, or nervous system. The level of contamination is also compared to what is known as the *background level*. This is the level of that particular contaminant that would be present in the area if the site being studied did not exist. Although the goal is to eliminate contamination completely, it is sometimes possible only to reduce it to acceptable risk levels.

WHO can be affected, and HOW could the contaminants get to them?

All of the ways in which people or the environment may be exposed to contaminants from a site are considered. These routes of exposure are known as *exposure pathways* and include swimming, drinking water, or digging or playing in dirt. When identifying exposure pathways, all future land uses of the site and the surrounding area are taken into account.

8a. The Area A Landfill

This site is located in the northeastern and north central section of NSB-NLON. Approximately seven acres in size, it is a relatively flat area, bordered by a steep, wooded hillside that rises to the south, a steep wooded ravine to the west, and the Area A Wetland (8b) to the north. The landfill appears to extend east along the wetland to the present position of the tennis courts. Runoff from the landfill drains into the Area A Wetland, which discharges to the Area A Downstream Watercourses (8c), and into the Thames River.

The Area A landfill opened sometime before 1957. From 1963-1973, following the closing of the base incinerator, all non-salvageable materials generated by submarines and base operations were disposed of here. After the landfill closed in 1973, a concrete pad was built in the southwest portion of the landfill for above ground storage of industrial wastes, including steel drums, wood and metal scrap, concrete, tires, transformers (mineral and PCB) and electric switches, and some petroleum compounds.

8b. Area A Wetland

The Area A Wetland is approximately 30 acres and abuts the north side of the landfill. Until 1957, this area was undeveloped, wooded land. In 1957, spoils from the dredging of the Thames River were pumped here and contained within an earthen dike that extends from the Area A Landfill to the south side of the Weapons Storage Area. In the past, pesticide bricks were placed in the wetlands for mosquito control.

8c. Area A Downstream Watercourses

The Area A Downstream Watercourses drain the Area A Landfill and Wetland and ultimately flow into the Thames River. Watercourses include North Lake (a recreational swimming area for officers and their families) and several small streams which discharge from Area A and the Torpedo shop into the Thames. These streams are diverted through culverts to bypass North Lake.

9. Over Bank Disposal Area

The Over Bank Disposal Area (OBDA) is located on the slope of the dike below and adjacent to the Area A Landfill. Ground water discharges from the

Area A Wetland and Landfill to a small wetland at the base of the dike. This area was a disposal site after 1957, but apparently has not been used for many years. Materials found there include 30 partially covered fuel tanks, creosote telephone poles, empty drums, rolls of wire, and scrap lumber.

Overall Sampling Results in Area A and the Over Bank Disposal Area

Soil: No radiation has been found above background levels. VOCs, SVOs, PCBs, pesticides, and metals have been found throughout the area.

Sediments: Samples show the presence of pesticides. No other significant contamination was detected.

Ground Water: Groundwater samples show the presence of VOCs, PCBs, and metals. All radiological results are within the acceptable range.

Surface Water. Samples taken in the wetlands, downstream areas, and the Thames River show the presence of metals, low levels of VOCs, and in one case, a pesticide. No SVOs or PCBs were detected. All radiological results are within the acceptable range.

Recommendation: The three sites of Area A and the OBDA should proceed to the Feasibility Study stage to determine the best means of cleaning up the sites. Additional sampling will be done to further assess the health and ecological risks posed by each.

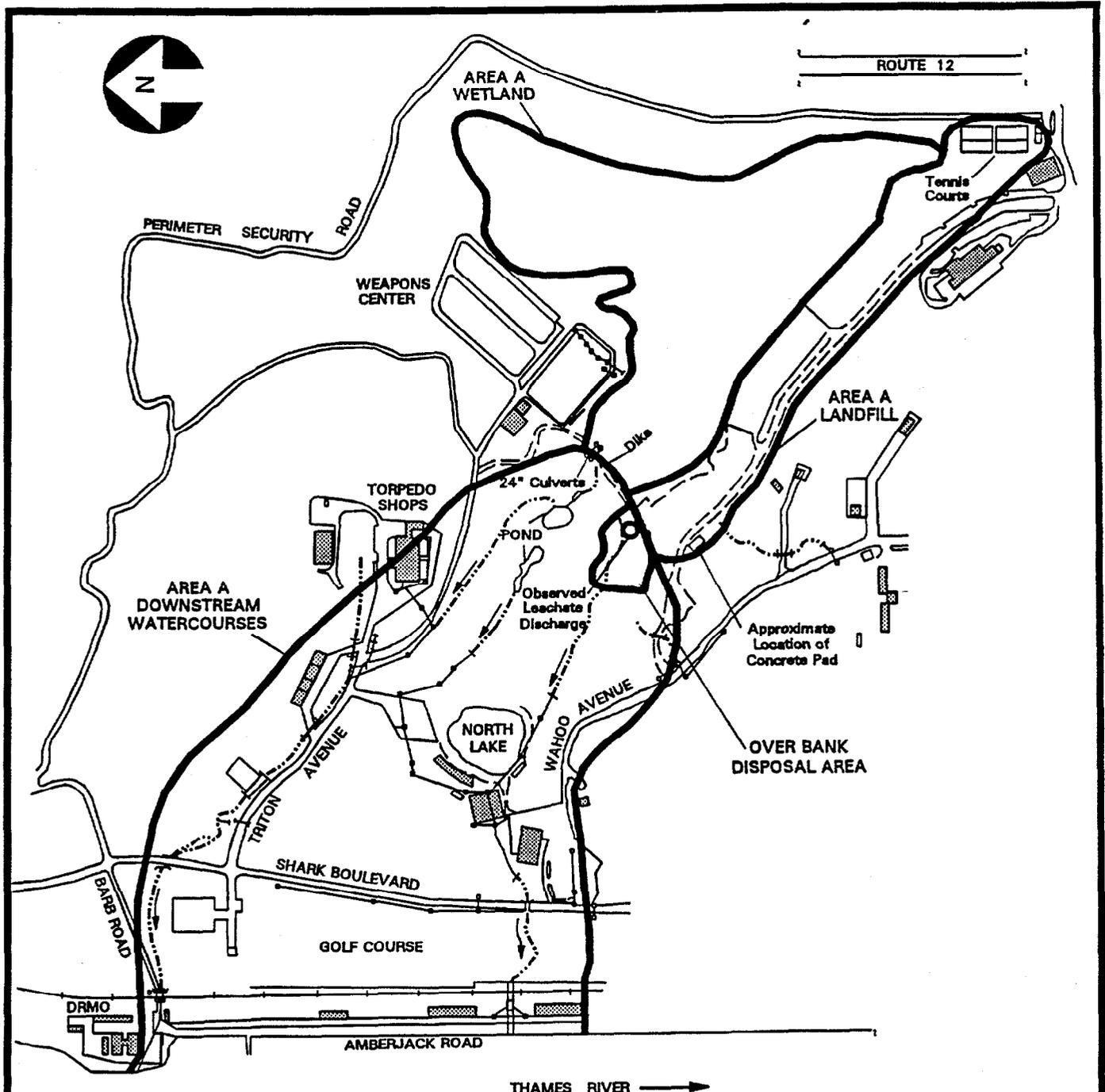
10. The Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office

The Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office (DRMO) is located next to the Thames River in the northwest section of NSB-NLON. DRMO is the storage and collection facility for items to be sold at auction sales held periodically throughout the year. Scrap metal is also temporarily stored there prior to being transported off this site.

The DRMO was used as a major base landfill and burning ground from 1950 to 1969. Materials burned and landfilled included construction materials, combustible scrap, and other non-salvageable waste items. A battery acid handling facility was located there, as was an in-ground tank and associated pumping facilities for spent acid storage. DRMO operations at this site currently include storage of various items, including submarine batteries, white goods, and empty drums.

Relatively low concentrations of VOCs, SVOs,

Area A and the Over Bank Disposal Area



NOTE:

- Underground utility locations are approximate.
- Base map and utility information from maps of NSB-NLON prepared by Loureiro Engineering Associates, Dec 1980. Elevations are based on NSB-NLON datum which is 1.41 feet below NGVD.

<p>INSTALLATION RESTORATION STUDY NAVAL SUBMARINE BASE - NEW LONDON GROTON, CT</p>	<p>LEGEND</p>		<p>SITE PLAN AREA A</p>
	<p>— Storm Culvert</p> <p>- - - Watercourse</p>	<p>▒ - Building</p> <p>Approximate Scale 0 200 400'</p>	

PCBs, pesticides, and metals were found in soil samples at this site. VOCs were detected in groundwater samples. No SVOs, pesticides, or PCBs were found in either ground water or surface water. **Recommendation:** Supplemental Step II sampling should be performed, and the site should proceed to the Feasibility Study stage. In the interim, health and safety provisions should be developed for all future construction projects at the site.

11. Lower Subase

The Lower Subase is located along the western edge of NSB-NLON, adjacent to the Thames River. It is bounded by the Thames River to the west and the Penn Central Railroad to the east. It is the original Subase and dates back to 1867. Most of the construction took place in the early 1900's with major

expansion between 1935 and 1945. Extensive portions of this area have been filled.

The Lower Subase has always been used for operations and maintenance functions that typically generate industrial and hazardous wastes such as petroleum oils and cleaning solvents. The area contains 11 underground storage tanks, as well as an extensive underground fuel oil and diesel oil distribution system. A program to replace the underground tanks and fuel distribution system is almost complete.

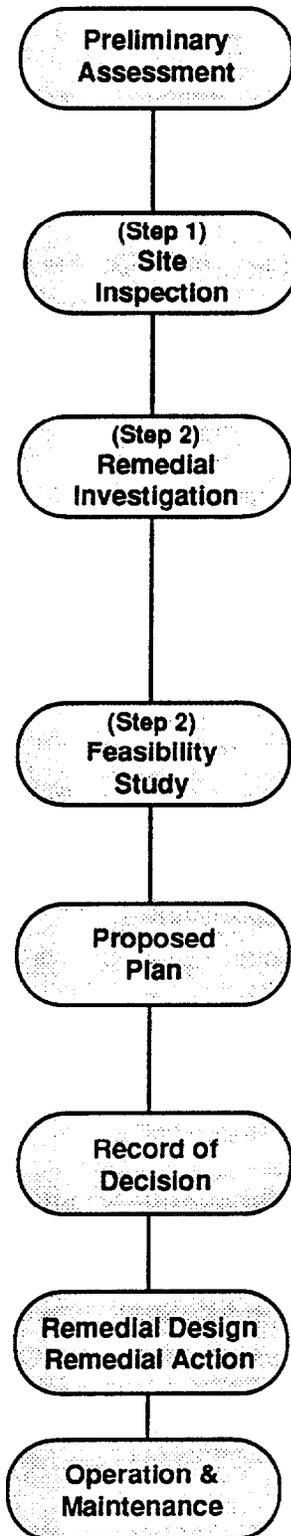
Low levels of petroleum products were found in both soils and ground water at this site. Some VOCs and metals were found in ground water, and soil samples showed elevated lead levels in several locations. **Recommendation:** Supplemental Step II sampling should be performed, and the site should proceed to the Feasibility Study stage.

Summary of Contaminants/Recommendations

Area	Contamination Found	Recommendation
CBU Drum Storage Area	VOCs, SVOs, lead, pesticides	supplemental Step I investigation
Rubble Fill at Bunker A-86	VOCs, arsenic, SVOs, pesticides.	proceed to Step II
Torpedo Shops	VOCs, SVOs, antimony, silver, pesticides, PCBs	proceed to Step II
Goss Cove Landfill	VOCs, SVOs, PCBs, pesticides, metals gross alpha and/or beta radiation due to naturally occurring constituents	proceed to Step II utilize worker health/safety provisions.
OBDANE	one VOC	supplemental Step I investigation
Spent Acid Storage/Disposal Area	lead	proceed to Step II
Former Gasoline Station	VOCs	do not proceed to Step II remove underground gasoline tank take supplemental soil samples
Area A and OBDA	VOCs, SVOs, pesticides, arsenic metals, PCBs	supplemental Step II investigation proceed to Feasibility Study stage
DRMO	VOCs, SVOs, PCBs, pesticides, metals	supplemental Step II investigation proceed to Feasibility Study stage utilize worker health/safety provisions
Lower Subase	VOCs, metals	supplemental Step II investigation proceed to Feasibility Study stage

THE INSTALLATION RESTORATION PROGRAM PROCESS

This chart illustrates the various stages of the IRP.



The Preliminary Assessment is the first stage in the process. During this stage the historical records of the facility are searched and interviews with personnel are conducted to identify potentially contaminated areas.

Site Inspection. During this stage, the facility is physically inspected. Samples of water, soil, sediments, and air are taken to confirm the presence or absence of suspected contaminants. Areas found to be contaminated are then scheduled for further investigation.

Remedial Investigation (RI). During the Remedial Investigation, the type and extent of contamination is determined and the potential risk to human health and the environment is assessed. The findings for NSB-NLON are discussed in the Phase I Remedial Investigation Report, which is available at the Libraries in Groton, Ledyard, and the Subase. A Phase II RI is planned for NSB-NLON to develop supplemental information regarding the extent of contamination and potential risks.

Feasibility Study (FS). The Feasibility Study is often conducted simultaneously with the Remedial Investigation. This phase evaluates the various cleanup alternatives for a site. All factors, including potential health effects for people and the environment, are considered when studying these alternatives.

Proposed Plan and the Record of Decision (ROD). Upon completion of the RI and FS reports, the Navy will issue a *Proposed Plan* that briefly summarizes the preferred site cleanup alternatives and the other alternatives considered. At that time, a public comment period will be conducted for a minimum of 30 days to allow interested individuals to give input on the preferred cleanup alternatives. At the end of this public comment period, the Navy will issue a *Record of Decision (ROD)* that details the selected cleanup options for each site. The ROD includes a *Responsiveness Summary* of all oral and written comments received during the public comment period.

Remedial Design/Remedial Action. The Remedial Design (RD) defines the precise methods and technical specifications for the selected cleanup actions. The Remedial Action (RA) is the actual cleanup of the site.

Operation and Maintenance (O&M). Operation and Maintenance activities are conducted after the site has been cleaned up. O & M ensures that the cleanup and/or containment systems continue to function correctly.

GLOSSARY

Aquifer	A layer of rock or soil below the ground surface that can supply significant quantities of ground water to wells and springs. An aquifer can be a source of drinking water.
Background Levels	The level of a contaminant that would be present if the site being studied did not exist.
Bedrock	Any layer of rock exposed at the surface or located beneath unconsolidated materials such as gravel, sand and clay. Bedrock can be either solid or fractured (cracked). Fractured bedrock can increase water yield from an aquifer.
Carcinogen	Any substance that causes cancer.
CERCLA	The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) is a federal law passed in 1980 and amended by Congress by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986. The law establishes a national trust fund (known as Superfund) to investigate and remediate abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites.
Contaminant	Any physical, chemical, biological, or radiological substance or matter that, at certain levels, has an adverse affect on human health or the environment.
Exposure Pathway	The route by which people, animals, or the environment could be exposed to contamination.
Feasibility Study	A description and analysis of the potential cleanup alternatives for a site. The Feasibility Study usually recommends a cost-effective alternative.
Ground Water	The water beneath the earth's surface that flows through soil and rock (aquifers) and often serves as a source of drinking water.
IRP	The Installation Restoration Program (IRP) is the program established by the Department of Defense to investigate, identify, and clean up hazardous waste contamination at federal facilities.
Monitoring Well	A well drilled to collect ground water samples and used to determine the direction of ground water flow or the presence or absence of contaminants.
National Priorities List	The EPA's list of the nation's top priority hazardous waste sites identified for possible long-term cleanup action. Abandoned or otherwise uncontrolled NPL sites are eligible for funding from the trust fund known as Superfund.
PAHs	Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) are compounds containing carbon that are not volatile or soluble and therefore tend to adsorb (stick to) soil and sediments. PAHs are the result of incomplete combustion of oil, wood, or rubber and include chemical constituents found in substances such as coal tar and asphalt. Many PAHs are known to cause cancer.
PCBs	Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) are a group of toxic chemicals used in electrical transformers and capacitors for insulating purposes.
Proposed Plan	A brief summary of the preferred cleanup method and other alternatives that have been considered for use at the site.

Radioisotope	A naturally occurring or an artificially created radioactive isotope of a chemical element.
Record of Decision	The ROD is a public document that explains the remedial alternatives selected by DOD or EPA after considering all information and technical analysis, as well as all public comments and concerns.
Remediation	The cleaning up or containment of hazardous materials.
Remedial Action	The actual construction or implementation phase of a designed cleanup.
Responsiveness Summary	A summary of public comments and questions received during a public comment period and the responses to them. The Responsiveness Summary ordinarily accompanies the Record of Decision (ROD).
Remedial Investigation	An in-depth study to gather data to determine the nature and extent of contamination at a site and establish criteria for site cleanup.
Risk Assessment	The calculation of the degree of risk posed to human health or the environment by specific contaminants in specific amounts at a particular location.
SARA	The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) was passed by Congress in 1986. Under this law, federal facilities on the NPL are subject to the provisions of CERCLA.
Sediments	Soil, sand and minerals washed from land that settle to the bottom of a stream, lake or wetland area.
Site Inspection	The collection of information to determine the potential existence and severity of hazards posed to human health or the environment.
Superfund	A program operated under the legislative authority of CERCLA and SARA that provides for the cleanup of abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. The trust fund commonly referred to as the "Superfund" contains the proceeds from a special tax on the chemical industry.
Surface Water	Bodies of water that are above ground such as rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, and reservoirs.
SVOs	Semi-Volatile Organic Compounds (SVOs) are compounds containing carbon that slowly evaporate from water or soil. Semi-volatile organics include substances contained in plastics and cleaning agents. Some SVOs are known to cause cancer.
VOCs	Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are compounds containing carbon that tend to evaporate or volatilize into air from water or soil. VOCs include substances contained in common solvents and cleaning fluids. Some VOCs are known to cause cancer.
Wetland	An area that is regularly saturated with surface or ground water and therefore contains vegetation that is adapted for life in wet soil conditions. Examples of wetlands include swamps, marshes, bogs, and estuaries. Wetlands are federally protected because they can purify water, prevent floods, feed and shelter fish and wildlife and offer recreational opportunities.