

# Wetland cleared of hazardous waste

## Project is second of 37 cleanup sites targeted by military

By Fritz

Workers wearing chemical-resistant suits and oxygen masks are cleaning hazardous waste from a wetland at Pensacola Naval Air Station before it hurts the plants and animals there.

The project, expected to last about another week, is the second of 37 cleanups at the base under the military's version of the federal Superfund program.

**CONTAMINATED SOIL** and water will be sealed in drums and moved to a temporary waste-storage facility on base until it is permanently disposed of at an undetermined hazardous waste landfill, base spokeswoman Michele Harrison

### ENVIRONMENT

The cleanup is the second of three with a combined price tag of \$750,000 that has been approved. The cost of restoring all 37 sites, which could take another 15 years, is \$110 million, said Ron Joyner, an environmental engineer at the base.

**WORKERS ON** Tuesday removed from the swampy area a 650-gallon steel tank contaminated with heavy metals, Harrison said.

It could have been a water-oil separator or a waste-receiving tank from metal plating facilities that operated from the

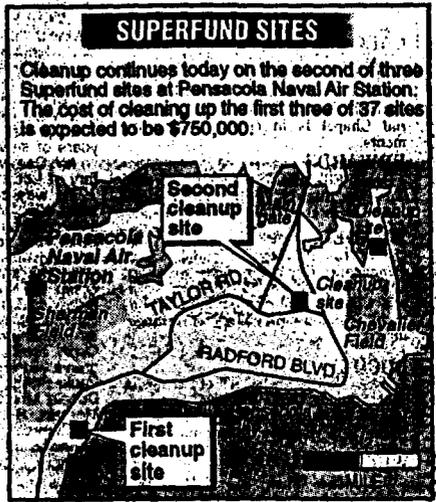
1940s through the 1970s, she said. "Right now things seem to be fine," Harrison said, noting the site does not threaten human health. "But we want to go in and remove that and prevent any damage to the plant and animal life."

**THE WETLAND**, inhabited by snakes and beavers, is at the head of a small creek that flows southeast under Murray Road.

It intersects a drainage ditch west of Chevalier Field before discharging into Yacht Basin, part of Pensacola Bay.

Tests determined sediment settled in the tank was contaminated with heavy metals such as chrome and cadmium,

See CLEANUP, 2C



Ron Stalcup/News Journal

## Cleanup of hazardous waste sites continues

**FROM 1C** officials said.

The same hazardous waste was found in the sediment around the tank and in the water, although at relatively low concentrations, according to a description of the site.

When workers removed the tank, they discovered an unidentified brick and tin structure, possibly a secondary containment area, beneath it that also will be removed, Harrison said.

The tank and other materials will be steamed clean enough to sell for scrap or to be disposed of at a non-hazardous waste landfill, Harrison said.

The site was first discovered in July 1992 — more than two years

after the base hit the National Priorities List — during an EPA field investigation.

Placement on the NPL, generally referred to as Superfund, guarantees federal funding for cleanups.

Crews with the base Public Works Center earlier dug out petroleum-contaminated soil from an abandoned dump site near the Oak Grove campground on Pensacola Bay. That material, considered non-hazardous, was dumped at the Perdido Landfill, Harrison said.

The last of the three scheduled cleanups — an abandoned wastewater treatment plant that processed industrial waste — will begin after work at the wetland site is completed.

32501.030

13.08.30.0003

N00204.AR.000760

NAS PENSACOLA

5090.3a