

N40003.AR.002578  
PUERTO RICO NS  
5090.3a

PUBLIC NOTICE REGARDING U S EPA SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON CLEANUP OF  
FORMER NAVAL STATION ROOSEVELT ROADS BASE NAVAL ACTIVITY PUERTO RICO  
9/21/2006  
U S EPA REGION II

# Press Release

Region 2 - New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands

---



## **EPA Seeks Public Comment on Cleanup of Former Naval Station Roosevelt Roads Base**

Contact: Rich Cahill (212) 637-3666 or Cahill.Richard@EPA.GOV

(New York, N.Y. release date) --- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is reaching out to the public for input on its proposed agreement with the Navy that will govern all current and future environmental cleanup work at the former Naval Station Roosevelt Roads base, which closed in March 2004. EPA will provide an opportunity for members of the public to provide input at a meeting on September 27 from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Ceiba Multiple Use Center in Ceiba. The Agency will provide simultaneous Spanish translation at this meeting.

“This base has historically been vitally important to Puerto Rico’s economy, and we want to takes steps to ensure that it can again be an asset to Puerto Rico,” said EPA Regional Administrator Alan J. Steinberg. “We’re here to make sure that the job gets done right and in a way that protects the valuable environment of Puerto Rico as well as the health of its people.”

The Navy intends to sell certain portions of the property to willing buyers. If portions of the property are sold, then those buyers would be responsible for any necessary cleanup and they could be required to enter into separate legal agreements with EPA. In addition, the Navy has said that it will turn over the 2900 acres of wetlands at the facility to the Commonwealth or a non-profit conservation trust. Several limited portions of the property will be transferred to other federal agencies. The Commonwealth has created a local authority to develop a master land use plan to control reuse and development of the entire facility.

The 8,600 acre former military facility is about 33 miles southeast of San Juan and is bordered on all sides except the west by the Caribbean Sea. It includes a port facility, a major airfield complex and two uninhabited offshore islands that were used for military training.

Contamination at the facility is primarily from the operation and maintenance of aircraft, water craft and vehicles at the site since 1941. It contains small arms ranges and other weapons training areas, but no bombing ranges, Areas of potential environmental concern at the site include:

- An active 85-acre landfill, which will be capped and monitored on a long-term basis
- Storage areas for petroleum, which have contaminated ground water
- Electrical transformer and pesticide storage areas, from which contaminated soils will be removed and disposed of at licensed off-site facilities
- Two offshore islands where preliminary investigations into munitions- related contamination are underway
- A closed power plant at which outdoor structures have been decontaminated, contaminated soils have been removed and properly disposed of, and investigations have confirmed that the interior of the building is contaminated
- A group of large and small, long-abandoned landfills, which are in various stages of evaluation

The public can review and comment on the proposed agreement from today until (date). The proposal and related documents will be available for public inspection at the following locations in Santurce, Rio Piedras and Ceiba: (1) USEPA, Caribbean Environmental Protection Division, Centra Europa Building, Suite 417, 1492 Ponce de Leon Avenue; (2) Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board, 1308 Ponce de Leon Avenue, Room 533, Carr Estatal 8838, Sector El Cinco and, (3) Ceiba Public Library and Ceiba Mayor's Office at Lauro Pinero Avenue, Plaza de Recreo. The documents are also available at EPA's New York City office. The proposed agreement can also be reviewed at the following internet Web page addresses: <http://nsrr-ir.org> or [http://www.epa/region02/public\\_notices/index.http](http://www.epa/region02/public_notices/index.http)