

FORT BABCOCK FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES PUBLIC MEETING

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District
15 JAN 2025

Beth Astley, Project Manager

Aaron Shewman, Engineer

Erik Dahl, Brice Engineering, USACE Contractor



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of Engineers®





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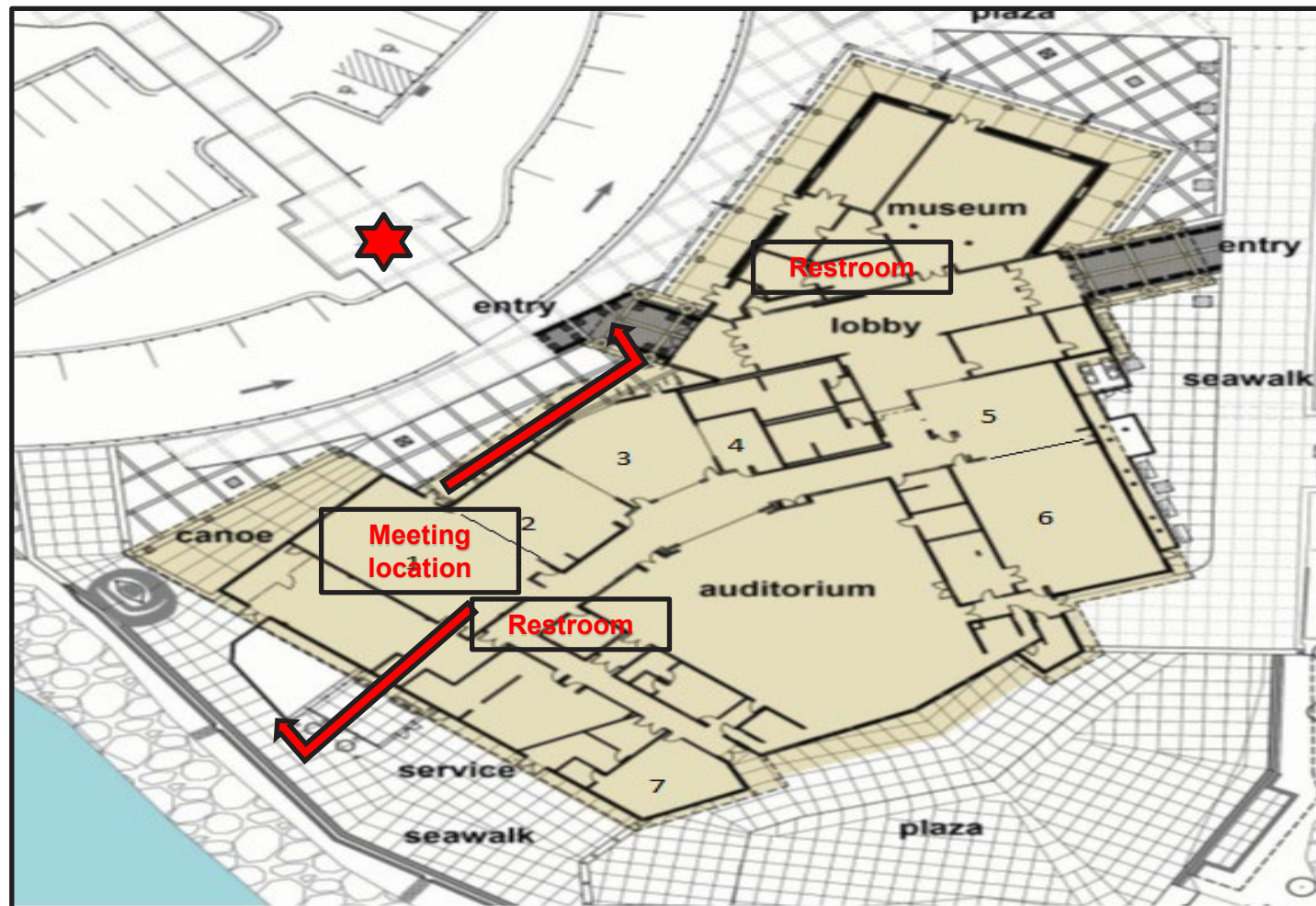
SAFETY MOMENT

Emergency Exit: Exit to hallway and out main entrance or exit through Conference Room 1 back door near service area

Muster Area: Parking lot walkway directly out from front entrance

Note:

Bathroom Locations: Across the hall from Conference Room 1 or in lobby





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MEETING AGENDA



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1. Introduction

- Safety Moment
- Key Roles and Purpose

2. FUDS Overview and CERCLA Process

3. Site Background

4. Remedial Investigation

5. Remedial Action/Cleanup Objectives

6. Remedial Decision Summary

7. Future Project Closeout

8. Remedial Action Activities

- Eagle Nest Surveys
- Clearing and Grubbing
- Soil Excavation and Offsite Disposal
- Site Restoration

9. Community Involvement

10. Information Repositories

11. USACE Contact Information





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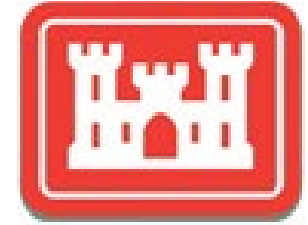
INTRODUCTION - KEY ROLES AND PURPOSE

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KEY ROLES

- ❑ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) - Alaska District
- ❑ U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service
- ❑ Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
- ❑ Brice Engineering



PURPOSE

- ❑ Present the plan for the remedial action at the Fort Babcock FUDS
- ❑ Opportunity for community engagement

FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS) **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

- ☐ Delegated to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by Dept. of Defense
- ☐ Eligible properties were transferred out of DoD control prior to 17 October 1986
- ☐ Cleanups completed according to the Comprehensive Environmental Restoration Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and other applicable federal and state laws.
- ☐ State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation provides regulatory oversight



FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS) PROGRAM OVERVIEW

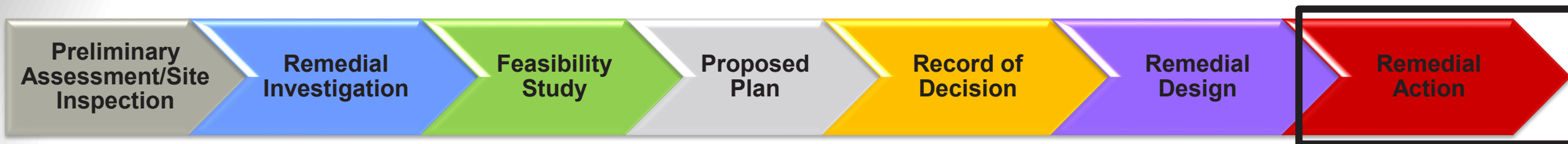
- ❑ 553 Eligible FUDS Properties identified in Alaska
- ❑ No hazards were found on ~405 properties
- ❑ 148 properties found to require additional investigation
- ❑ 314 projects have reached response complete
- ❑ FUDS Program is currently working on 118 projects at 56 FUDS properties across Alaska



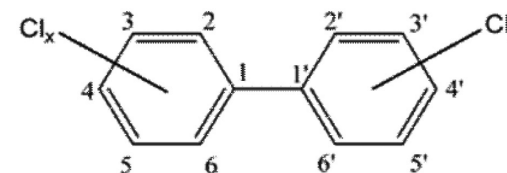


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CERCLA PROCESS AND AUTHORITIES



- ☐ **The Comprehensive Environmental Restoration Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)** was enacted by Congress on December 11, 1980.
- ☐ USACE is the lead federal agency at Fort Babcock under CERCLA
- ☐ **Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)** – Federal law that regulates polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
- ☐ PCBs are considered a hazardous substance under CERCLA
- ☐ Petroleum is excluded from CERCLA. The **Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP)** provides authority for USACE to clean up petroleum (aka petroleum, oils, and lubricants or POL)





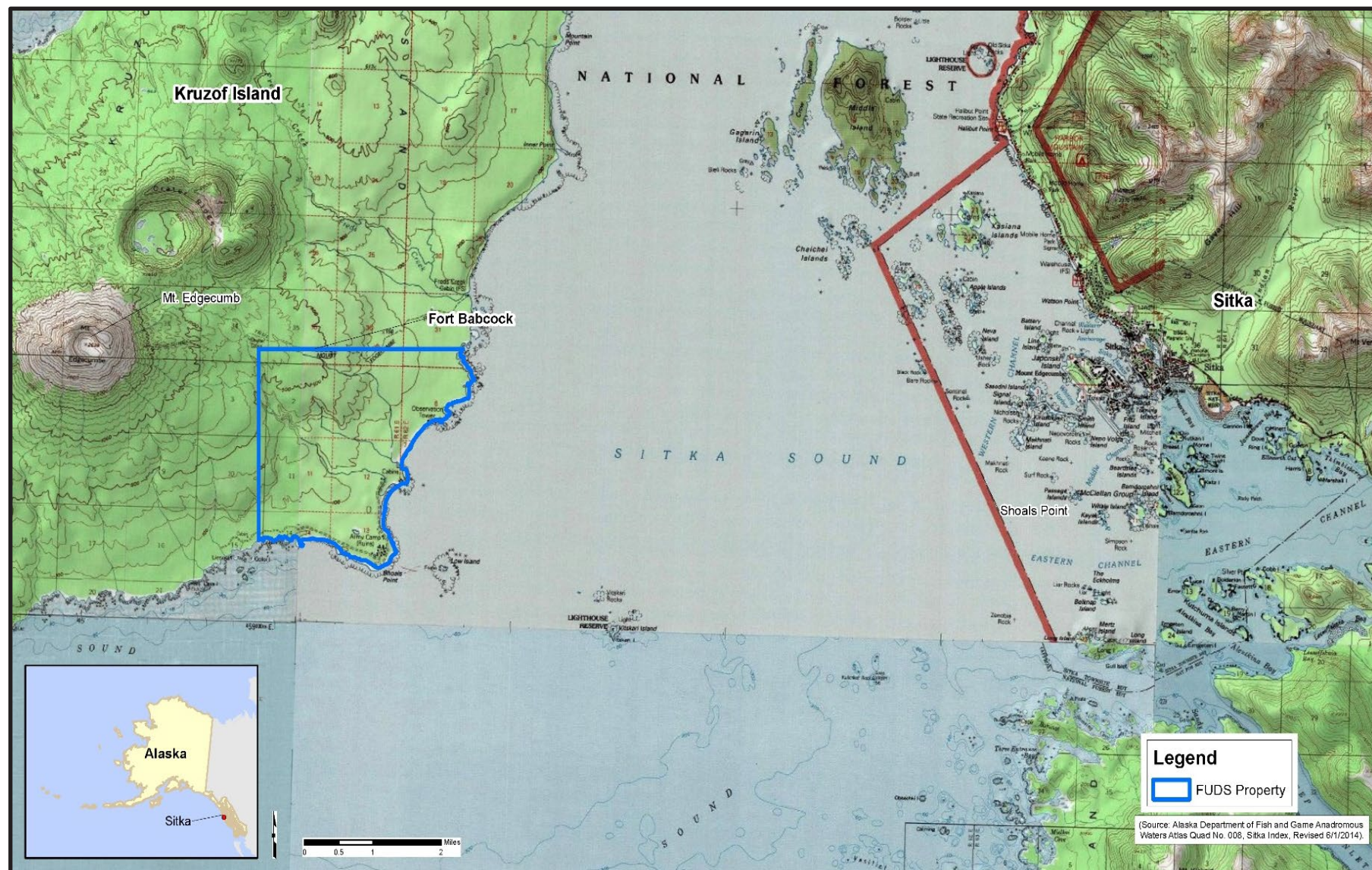
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SITE BACKGROUND – SITE LOCATION

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The Fort Babcock FUDS Property is located approximately 11 miles west of Sitka at Shoals Point on the southeast corner of Kruzof Island





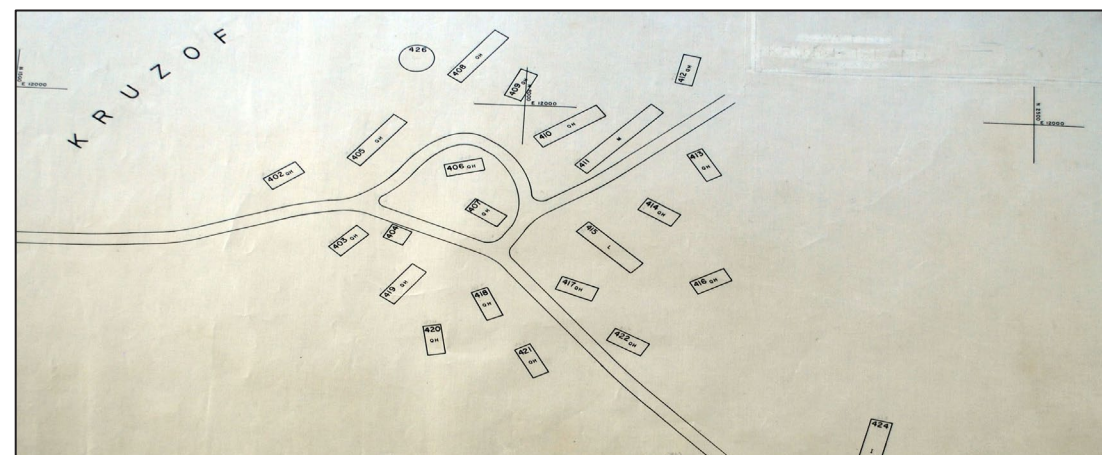
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SITE BACKGROUND- HISTORY OF MILITARY USE AND CURRENT STATUS

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- ❑ **1941** – Via Executive Order, the U.S. War Department acquired 4,070 acres for Fort Babcock, approximately 11 miles west of Sitka, Alaska, at Shoals Point on the southeast corner of Kruzof Island.
- ❑ **1942** – A Harbor Defense Plan to support the Sitka Naval Operating Base called for one of three 6-inch gun batteries to be constructed on Kruzof Island (Battery 290).
- ❑ **1944** – Construction of the 6-inch gun battery and additional support facilities was ended before completion when Sitka Naval Operating Base was decommissioned and the war effort shifted to the Aleutian Islands.
- ❑ **Facilities constructed from 1942-1944 included:**
a 7,500 square-foot concrete bunker; observation tower; water tank; diesel fuel storage tanks; Quonset huts; a power plant; maintenance shops; wood-frame buildings; and a 220-foot by 40-foot dock.
- ❑ **Current Status** – The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) currently manages the site as part of the Tongass National Forest.

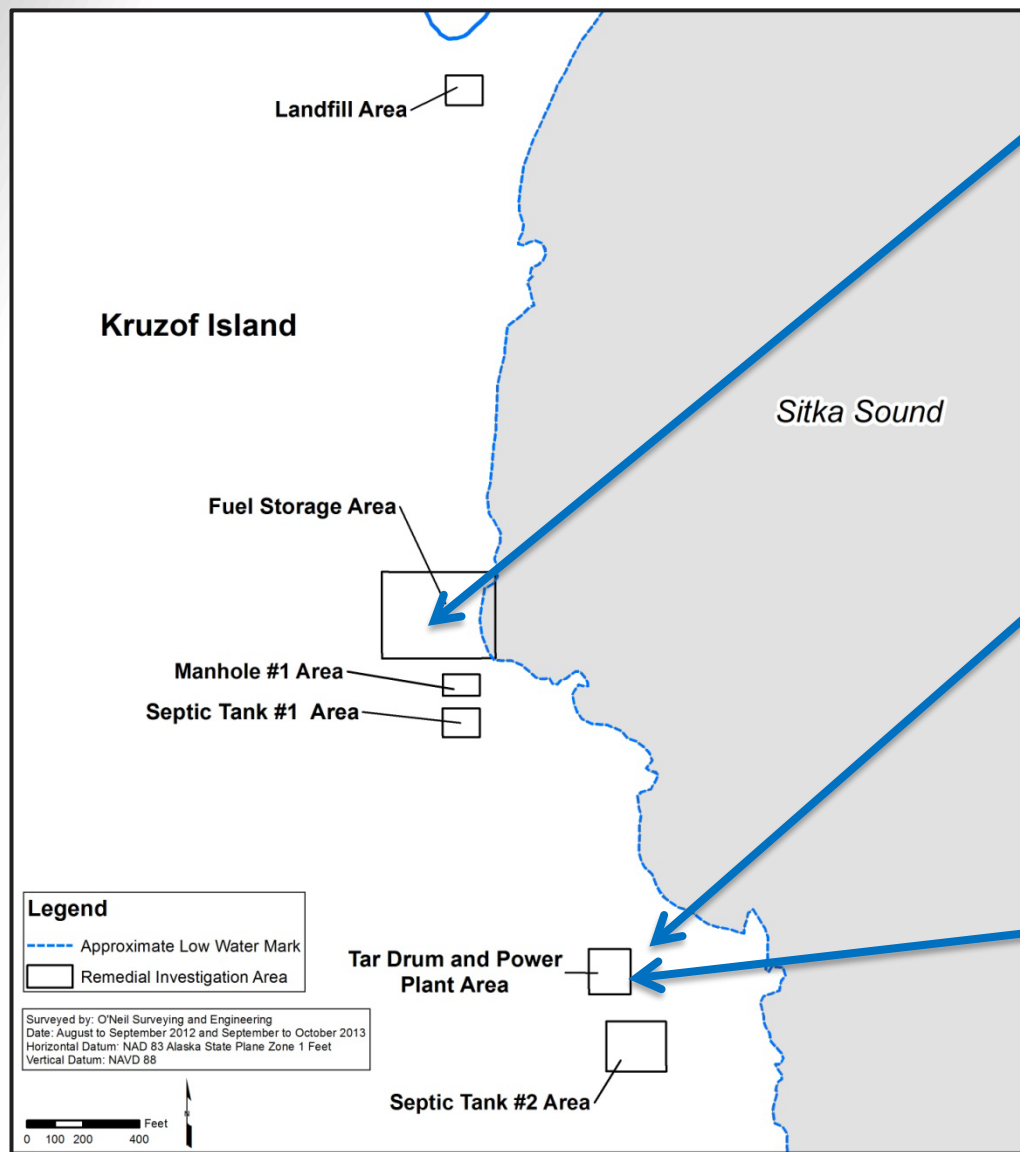




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REMEDIAL INVESTIGATION AREAS OF CONCERN

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Fuel Storage Area:
diesel fuel contamination in soil
and groundwater from the
railroad car tank

Tar Drum Area:
diesel fuel contamination in soil
from a discarded roofing tar
drum

Power Plant Area:
PCB contamination in soil from
spilled transformer oil





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REMEDIAL ACTION AND CLEANUP OBJECTIVES

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Remedial Action Objective (RAO) for PCBs:

- *Prevent human exposure to total PCBs from direct contact, outdoor inhalation, or ingestion contributing to exposure point concentrations of PCBs in surface and subsurface soil above the cleanup level of 1.0 mg/kg.*

Cleanup Objectives for Petroleum:

- *Diesel fuel as Diesel Range Organics (DRO) cleanup level is 12,500 mg/kg, which is the maximum allowable concentration (MAC) according to ADEC's 18 AAC 75.340(j)(3)*
- *Diesel fuel as Residual Range Organics (RRO) cleanup level is 22,000 mg/kg, which is the MAC according to ADEC's 18 AAC 75.340(j)(3)*





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REMEDIAL DECISION SUMMARY

☐ Remedy – Soil Excavation with Offsite Disposal

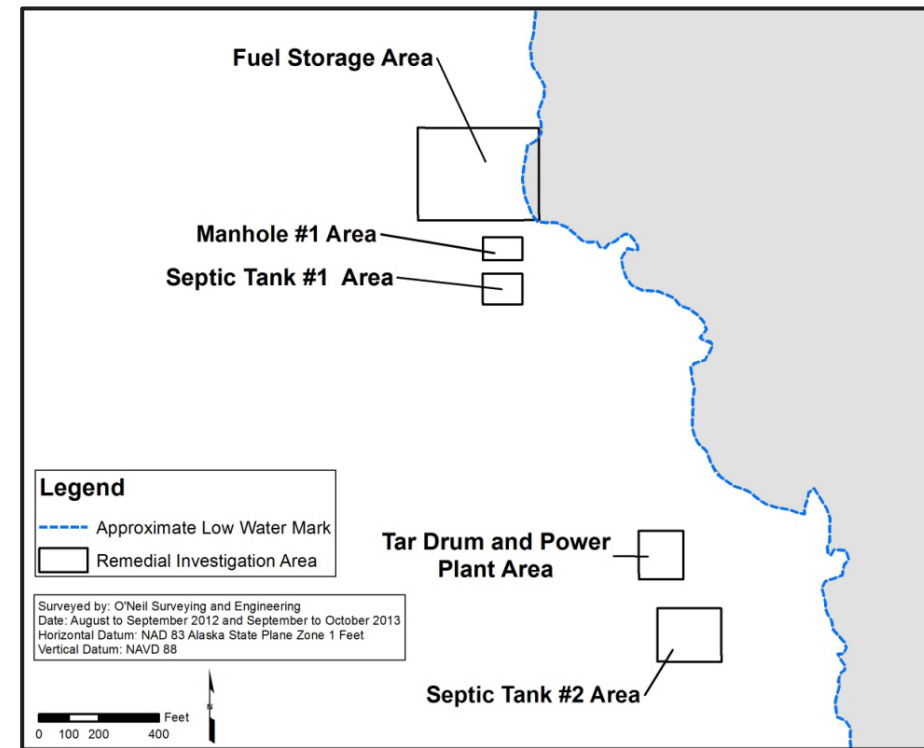
- CERCLA
 - Power Plant Area: Estimated 559 cubic yards of PCB-contaminated soil
- POL
 - Fuel Storage Area: Estimated 82 cubic yards
 - Tar Drum Area: Estimated 15 cubic yards

☐ Remedy Components:

- Excavation of contaminated soil;
- Transportation of contaminated soil to an offsite disposal facility
- Recontouring or backfilling excavations
- Revegetation of the site

☐ **Contracted Cost:** \$4.8 million

☐ **Contractor:** Brice Engineering





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FUTURE PROJECT CLOSEOUT

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☐ CERCLA Contamination

- Unlimited Use/Unrestricted Exposure (UU/UE) will be achieved for PCBs in soil

☐ POL Contamination

- Diesel fuel levels in soil will not pose a risk to recreational users
- The USFS will track any residual diesel-contaminated soil in their land management records



QUESTIONS





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BREAK

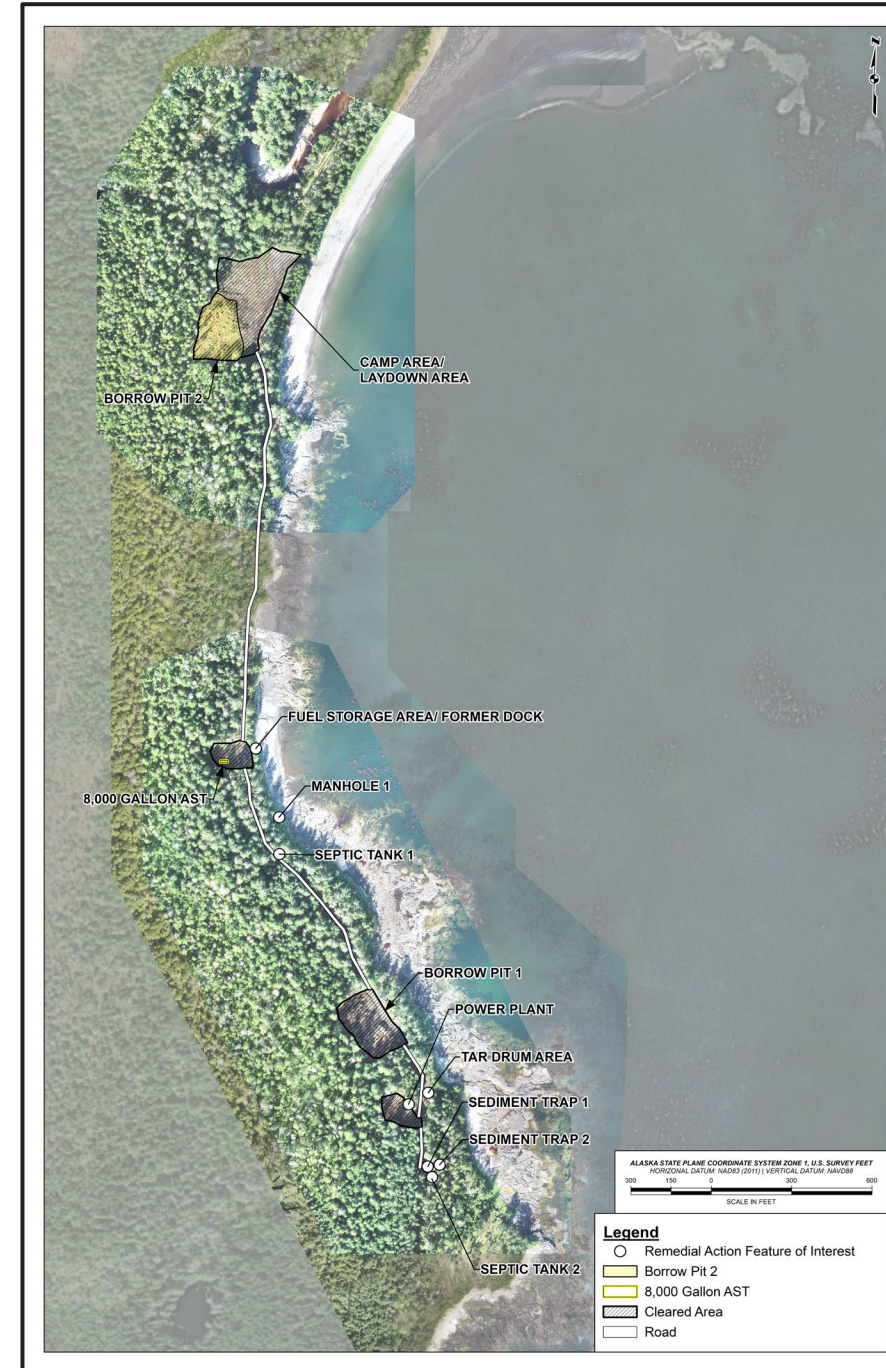




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REMEDIAL ACTION: WORK CONDUCTED TO DATE

- ❑ In 2022, USACE awarded a contract to Brice Engineering to implement the remedy from the Decision Document. The following actions have been completed since contract award:
 - Two eagle nest surveys and RA planning documents (2022-2024)
 - Preparing the site for remediation, including:
 - Creating an access point from the beach to a Camp/Laydown Area
 - Clearing the Camp/Laydown Area and the two soil backfill borrow areas
 - Clearing the former military road

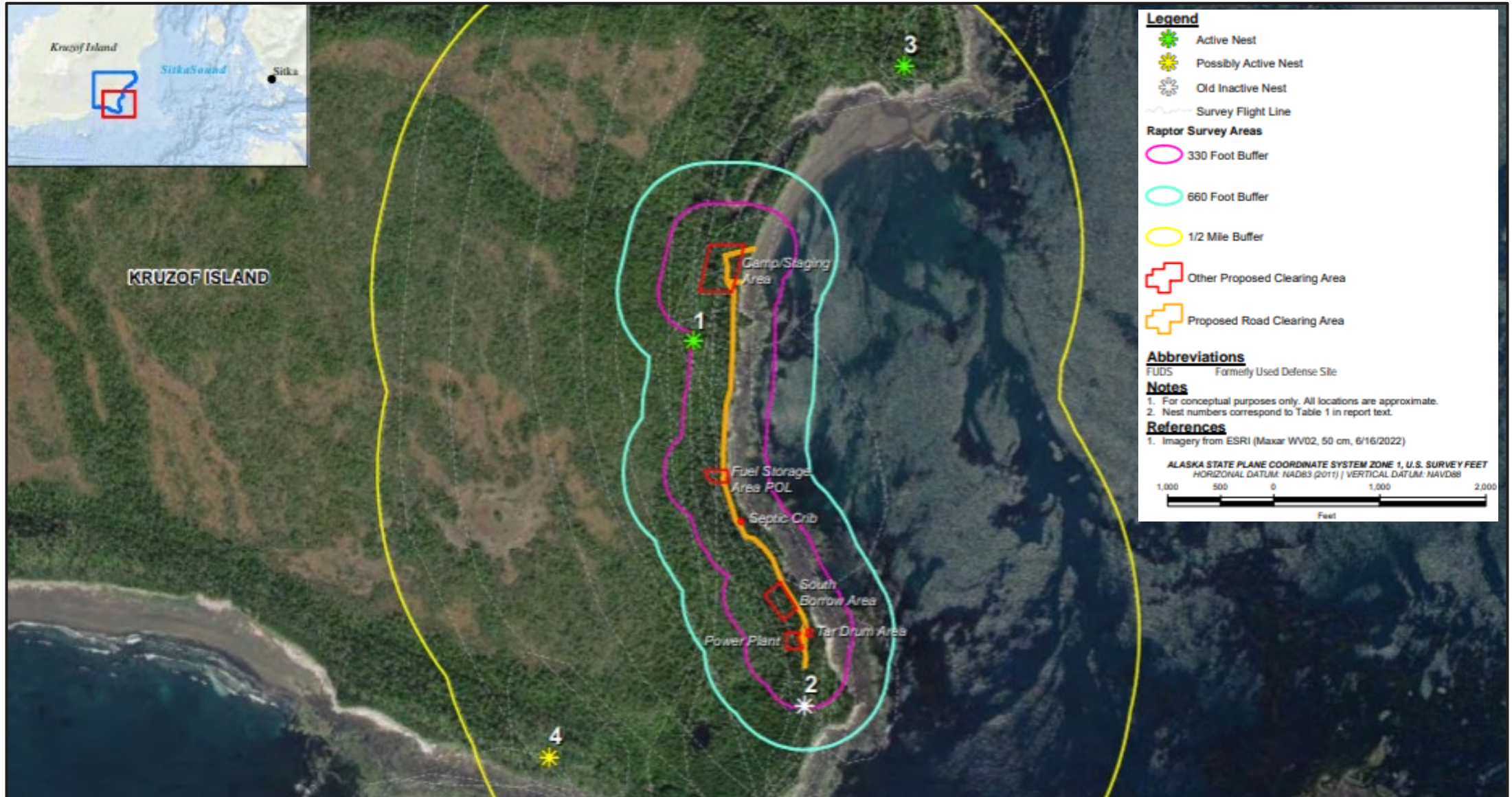




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EAGLE NEST SURVEY 1 – 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

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EAGLE NEST SURVEY 2 – 18 JULY 2024

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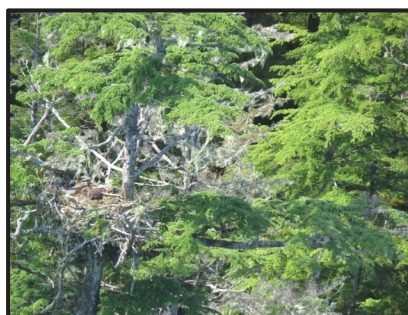


❑ Eagle nest disturbance mitigation methods:

- Conduct clearing between 31 August - 1 March, outside typical nesting period.
- Retain the maximum number of trees practicable within 660 feet of the nest.
- Preserve trees that serve as visual and auditory buffers to the nests.
- Position camp activities and vehicle routes as far away from the nests as possible.
- Minimize noise within 330 feet of active eagle nests.
- Observe eagle activity and stop work if eagles appear agitated and coordinate with USFWS
- Perform remedial action from May 15 to June 15 during the less sensitive nesting period per USFWS guidance.



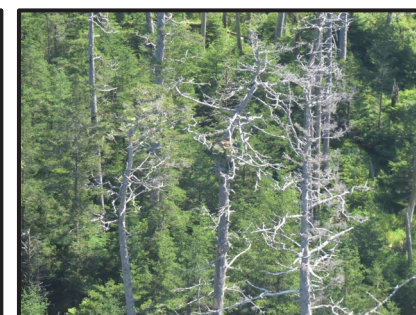
Pictured: An adult Bald Eagle perched on Nest 3



Nest 1



Nest 2



Nest 4



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SITE PREPARATION – CLEARING AND GRUBBING

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To prepare the site for remedial action, clearing and grubbing was conducted under the approved Fort Babcock FUDS Final Clearing and Grubbing Work Plan.

- Staff and equipment were mobilized to the site on 26 August 2024.
- Clearing and grubbing began on 29 August 2024
- Preparations for clearing:
 - A temporary camp was established
 - Areas to be cleared were surveyed
 - Temporary warning signs were posted
 - A trail was cleared from the beach to the Camp/Laydown Area above the beach





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CLEARING AND GRUBBING CONT'D

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- Approximately 4.5 acres of land was cleared.
 - This was 1.4 acres less than estimated in the Clearing and Grubbing Work Plan
- No incidents or impacts to marine environment or wildlife.
- Staff observed site activities and documented eagle activity; no eagle disturbance observed
- USACE archaeologist monitored project work for cultural resource impacts; no impacts recorded
- Sediment and erosion controls were implemented
- A final clearing and grubbing land survey was conducted, and demobilization of all equipment, camp, and materials occurred on 7 and 8 September 2024

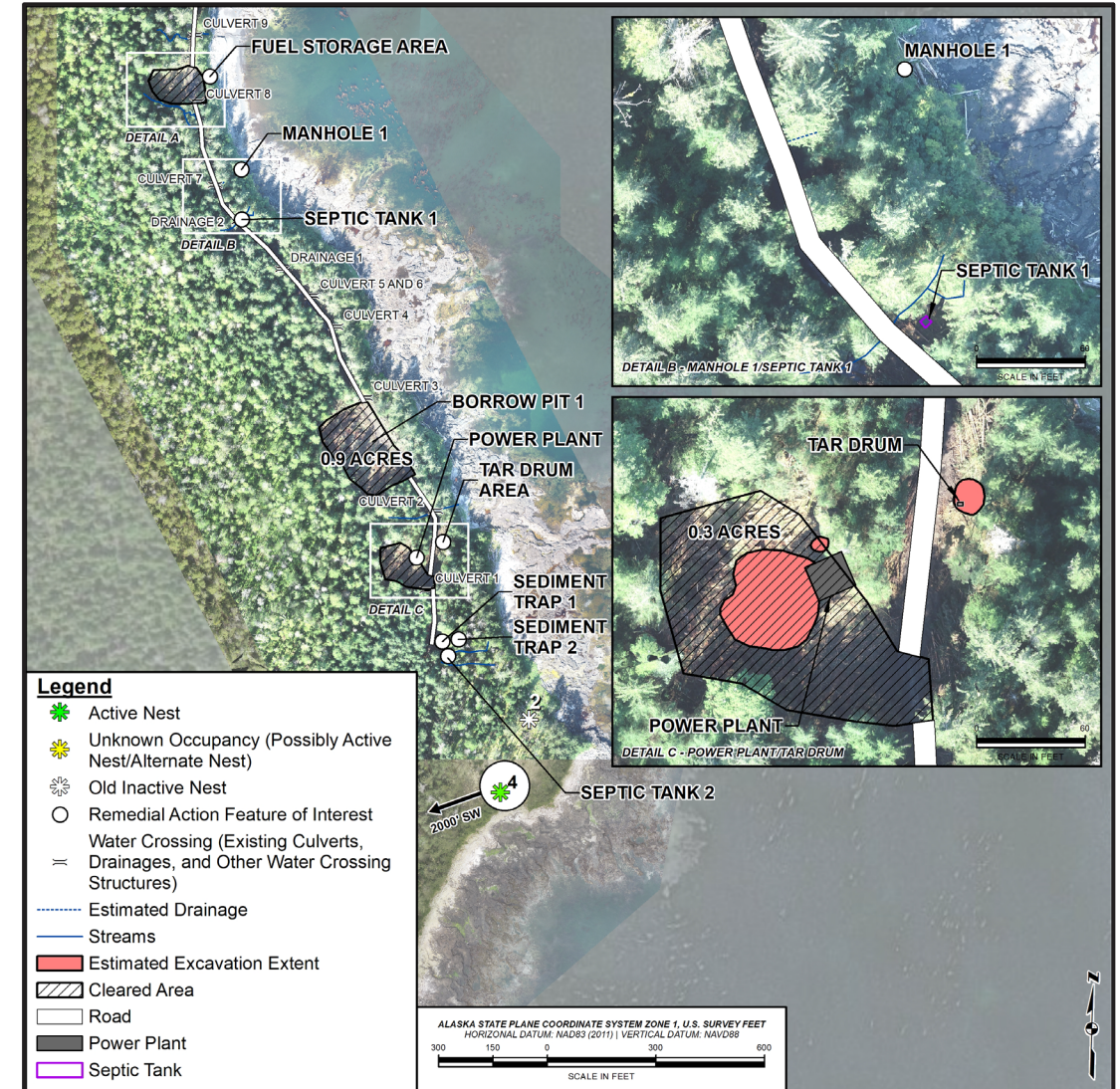
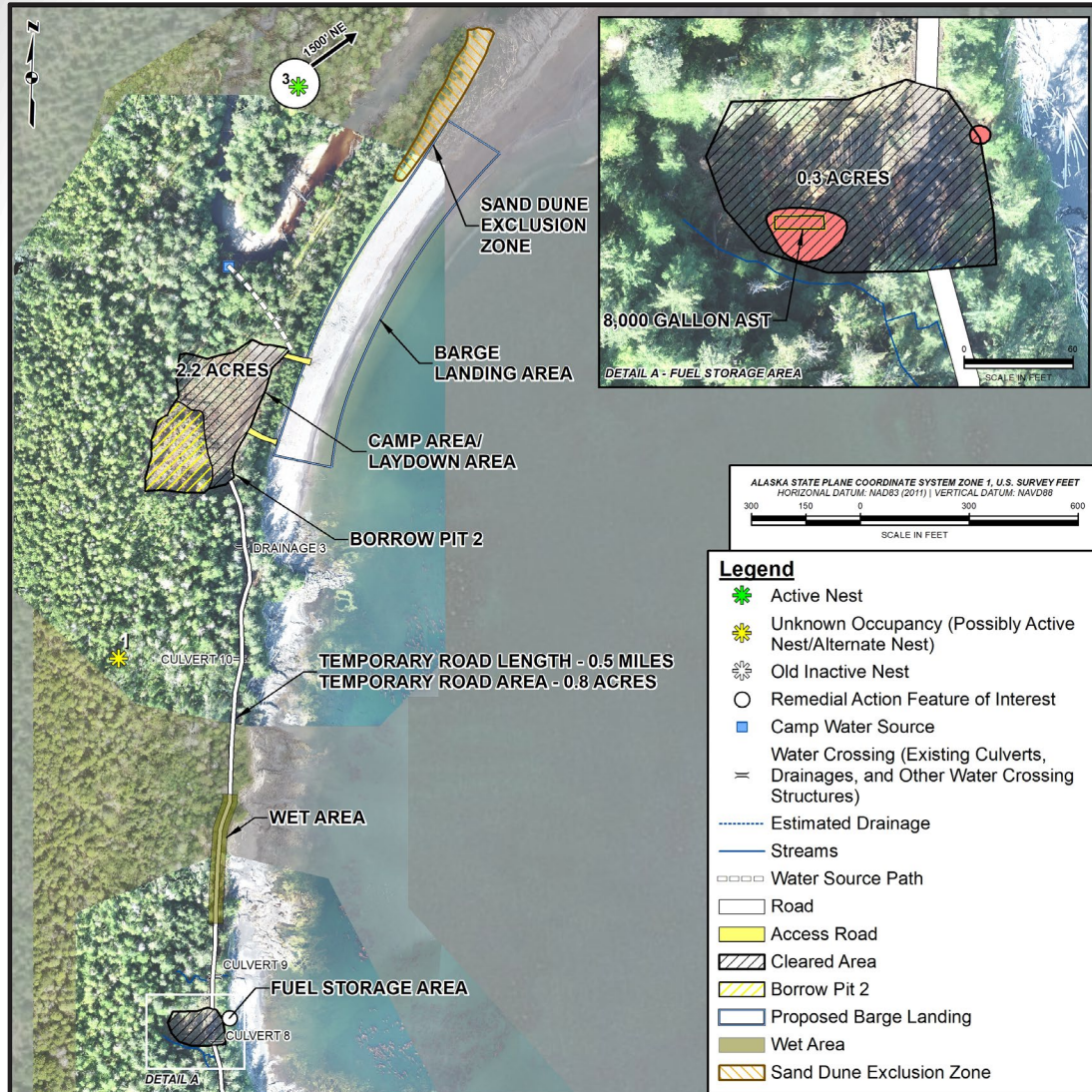




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CLEARING AND GRUBBING CONT'D

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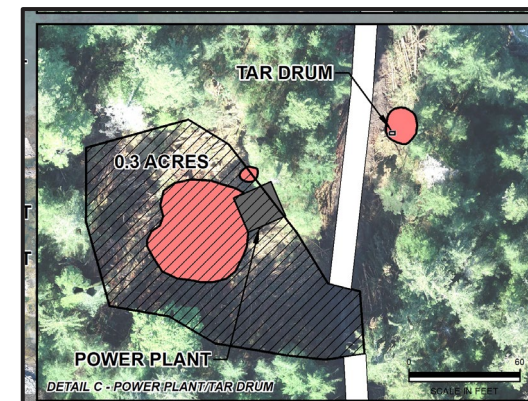
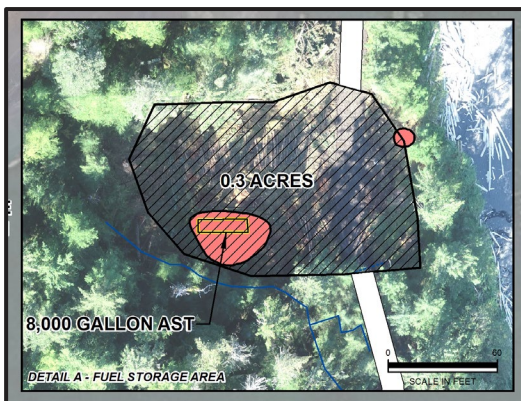


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OVERVIEW OF FUTURE REMEDIAL ACTION

- An additional eagle nest survey just ahead of the RA fieldwork to confirm results of past surveys
- Field supplies and equipment will be barged to the site and a temporary field camp set up.
- Temporary warning signs will be posted.
- Necessary repairs to the site access road will be performed and existing sediment and erosion controls will be maintained.
- RA Fieldwork Sequencing:
 1. Remove, screen, and sample soil trapped within tree root balls from the PCB and POL soil excavation areas.
 2. Perform the PCB-contaminated soil excavation at the Power Plant Area.
 3. Aboveground storage tank (AST) draining and cleanout at the Fuel Storage Area.
 4. POL-contaminated soil excavation at the Fuel Storage Area and Tar Drum Area.
 - Collect and dispose of scattered metal drums fragments as they are encountered.
 5. Remove accumulated material from Septic Tank 1, Manhole 1, and from the Septic Tank 2 area (including Sediment Traps 1 and 2).
 6. Restore site to as close to pre-disturbance conditions as practicable.





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FIELD CAMP AND LAYDOWN AREA OVERVIEW

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- ☐ The Camp Area/ Laydown Area/ Borrow Pit 2 will accommodate:
 - ☐ The field camp (up to 20 people)
 - ☐ Shipping containers with equipment and supplies
 - ☐ A mobile analytical laboratory
 - ☐ Staging area for containerized soil after excavation
 - ☐ Source of local backfill (Borrow Pit 2)



Small field camp during clearing and grubbing operations



Similar size camp at Chernofski Harbor (Aleutian Islands)



Camp Area/ Laydown Area/ Borrow Pit 2



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REMEDIAL ACTION APPROACH

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- ☐ Excavate at each area to pre-marked limits, and to the pre-determined depth:
 - ☐ Power Plant Area (PCBs): to 6 feet
 - ☐ Fuel Storage Area (POLs): to 2 feet
 - ☐ Tar Drum Area (POLs): to 2 feet
- ☐ After initial excavation, use mobile analytical laboratory results to guide excavation laterally and vertically until below the concentrations in the DD
- ☐ Confirm clean margins by sending samples to fixed analytical laboratory
- ☐ Remove accumulated material from Septic Tank 1, Manhole 1, and the Septic Tank 2 area (including Sediment Traps 1 and 2)





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SITE RESTORATION METHODS

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- ☐ Backfill excavations > 1-foot deep to match the surrounding grade and maintain natural drainage using on-site backfill.
- ☐ Remove all material and remaining culverts from drainage crossings and contour the drainages to match natural channel width and grade.
- ☐ Remove stormwater sediment and erosion controls.
- ☐ Contour borrow source areas to blend with surrounding topography.
- ☐ Seed and fertilize disturbed areas using the following seed mix:
 - Boreal red fescue
 - Annual ryegrass
 - Arctared fescue
- ☐ Scatter slash from felled trees for erosion control.
- ☐ Areas may be designated by USFS for recreational use and would not be covered with felled vegetation.





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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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- ❑ Attend future public meetings – Next date anticipated Winter 2025/2026
- ❑ Sign up on the meeting sign-in sheet to receive project information by email
- ❑ Participate in the upcoming Ft. Babcock restoration advisory board (RAB) survey
- ❑ Contact USACE Project Manager



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INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

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Administrative record locations:

- ☐ Sitka Public Library
- ☐ USACE Alaska District Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER)

Project Information Available Online:

<https://www.poa.usace.army.mil/Library/Reports-and-Studies/>

Click on +Environmental Cleanup

Scroll down list to “Sitka” for Fort Babcock information

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [poa.usace.army.mil/Library/Reports-and-Studies/](https://www.poa.usace.army.mil/Library/Reports-and-Studies/). The page header includes the USACE logo and navigation links: POA Intranet, CEFMS II, DoD SAFE, Request Base Acces..., Alaska: SDMS | BUR..., and FUDS. Below the header is a dark blue banner with the text "An official website of the United States government" and a "Here's how you know" link. The main navigation bar features the USACE logo and links: About, Business With Us, Missions, Locations, and C. The page content area has a breadcrumb trail: / Library / Reports and Studies. The section title "Reports and Studies" is followed by a welcome message: "Welcome to the repository of documents published by the Alaska District in support of the Alaska Native Villages, Native American Lands Environmental Mitigation Program, and support for environmental studies, environmental impact statements, and environmental assessments. Also". Below this is a section titled "Documents Available for Review" with a link "Collapse All Expand All". The list of documents includes: Civil Works, Environmental Cleanup, Planning Assistance to States, Work for Others, and Operations and Maintenance.



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RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD (RAB)

- A RAB provides the community with the opportunity to become involved in the environmental restoration process at properties formerly used for military purposes either as a RAB member or through attendance at RAB meetings.
- RABs offer members the opportunity to influence project decisions through discussion and to provide input to the decision makers.
- Members represent community and stakeholder interests in environmental cleanup of eligible sites
- Facilitate open and active communication among the USACE, state and federal regulatory agencies, other agencies, Native corporations, and other community members



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RAB MEMBERSHIP

10-20 members, representing a diverse range of stakeholders, including:

1. Community members
2. Local government representatives
3. Tribal representatives
4. Environmental organizations
5. Business and industry representatives
6. Technical experts
7. Federal or state agency representatives
8. Site owners or operators

Other stakeholders, such as:

- Academics or researchers
- Local residents with specialized knowledge

•The ideal size of a RAB team is 12-15 members, as this allows for a diverse range of perspectives and expertise while still being manageable and effective.



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RAB

- Consistent participation; 10-20 members
- Formal charter and operating procedures
- Members review and comment on project documents
- Members actively communicate information to the community and to USACE
- Provides opportunity for input to project decisions through formal process
- Meeting frequency voted on by RAB
- RAB dissolved if interest not sustained or if remedial action is completed

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PUBLIC MEETING

- Optional public participation
- No charter, various meeting formats
- Receive project information; document review optional
- Communication by participants to USACE or to the community is optional
- Provides opportunity for input to project decisions in multiple formats
- Meeting frequency is based on community input, project schedule, and phase
- Public meetings continue unless lack of community interest, or the remedial action is completed



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FORT BABCOCK RAB ASSESSMENT

- The assessment for a RAB occurs every two years
- The next RAB assessment for Fort Babcock is scheduled for 2025
- If the community does not demonstrate sustained interest to form a RAB then USACE will continue public meetings until the cleanup is complete
- The next public meeting for Fort Babcock is planned for Winter 2025-2026 to report on the results of the 2025 remedial action field work



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WE WELCOME YOUR INPUT

Selected location(s) would not be maintained as developed recreation sites. They may be left free of slash to allow dispersed recreation to continue as natural revegetation occurs.

Provide your input after this presentation using:

Comment cards

Mark up the map showing preferred campsite locations

Or by 31 January 2025:

Contact the U.S. Forest Service

Rebecca Peterman

Sitka RD Recreation Staff Officer - USFS

Rebecca.peterman@usda.gov

907-747-4209





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CONTACTS AND ACTION ITEMS

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USACE Contacts:

**Beth Astley, Fort Babcock FUDS
Project Manager**

USACE, Alaska District

(907) 753-5782

beth.n.astley@usace.army.mil

Public Affairs Office

USACE, Alaska District

(907) 753-2520

public.affairs3@usace.army.mil



U.S. Forest Service Contact:

Rebecca Peterman

Sitka RD Recreation Staff Officer - USFS

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