

**Final Record of Decision for  
Building 117 Source Removal  
Area of Concern  
(ST-10) at the  
Former Griffiss Air Force Base  
Rome, New York**

**April 2002**

**AIR FORCE BASE CONVERSION AGENCY**

# Table of Contents

Section	Page
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms .....	iv
<b>1 Declaration.....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
1.1 Site Name and Location.....	1-1
1.2 Statement of Basis and Purpose.....	1-1
1.3 Description of Selected Remedy.....	1-1
1.4 Statutory Determinations .....	1-2
1.5 Authorizing Signatures .....	1-2
<b>2 Decision Summary .....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
2.1 Site Name, Location, and Brief Description.....	2-1
2.2 Site History and Enforcement Activities .....	2-1
2.3 Community Participation.....	2-3
2.4 Scope and Role of Site Response Action .....	2-4
2.5 Site Characteristics .....	2-4
2.6 Current and Potential Future Site Use .....	2-6
2.7 Comparison of Analytical Results and Regulatory Standards.....	2-7
2.8 Documentation of Significant Changes .....	2-8
<b>3 Responsiveness Summary .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
<b>4 References .....</b>	<b>4-1</b>

# List of Figures



<b>Figure</b>		<b>Page</b>
1	Location of Building 117 Source Removal AOC .....	2-9
2	Building 117 Source Removal AOC Site Map .....	2-10

# List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFB	Air Force Base
AFBCA	Air Force Base Conversion Agency
AOC	Area of Concern
ARAR	Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirement
ATSDR	Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
BGS	below ground surface
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
DFAS	Defense Finance and Accounting Services
DoD	Department of Defense
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
FFA	Federal Facility Agreement
IRP	Installation Restoration Program
µg/L	micrograms per liter
NCP	National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan
NEADS	Northeast Air Defense Sector
NPL	National Priorities List
NYANG	New York Air National Guard
NYS	New York State
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
NYSDOH	New York State Department of Health
PAH	polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons
PDI	Predesign Investigation
ROD	Record of Decision
SAC	Strategic Air Command
SARA	Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act
SVOC	semivolatile organic compound
STARS	Spill Technology and Remediation Series
TCLP	toxicity characteristic leaching procedure
UST	underground storage tank
VOC	volatile organic compound

### **1.1 Site Name and Location**

The Building 117 Source Removal Area of Concern (AOC) (site identification designation ST-10) is located at the former Griffiss Air Force Base (AFB) in Rome, Oneida County, New York.

### **1.2 Statement of Basis and Purpose**

This Record of Decision (ROD) presents no further action for soil and groundwater as the selected remedy for the Building 117 Source Removal AOC at the former Griffiss AFB. This alternative has been chosen in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980, as amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP). The remedy has been selected by the United States Air Force (Air Force) in conjunction with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and with the concurrence of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) pursuant to the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA) among the parties under Section 120 of CERCLA. This decision is based on the administrative record file for this site.

### **1.3 Description of Selected Remedy**

The selected remedy for the Building 117 Source Removal AOC is no further action for soil and groundwater. Residual levels of contaminants in the soil do not exceed

the NYSDEC Spill Technology and Remediation Series (STARS) soil cleanup values, with the exception of naphthalene, which slightly exceeded the STARS value in one sample. Therefore, since residual levels of contaminants in the soil are limited in extent and do not pose a risk for continued groundwater contamination, the soil is not considered to represent a current or potential threat to public health or the environment.

Several semivolatile organic compounds (SVOCs) exceeded the New York State (NYS) Class GA groundwater standards and guidance values, but a risk screening analysis indicated no unacceptable risk to potential future residents from ingestion of groundwater at this site. In addition, none of these constituents were detected in the soil leachate, indicating that there is no existing source of groundwater contamination at the site. Under the 1993 Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC), this site is located on property that is being retained by the Department of Defense (DoD) and is being utilized by the Air Force Research Laboratory as a research and development facility.

#### **1.4 Statutory Determinations**

It has been determined that no remedial action is necessary at the Building 117 Source Removal AOC. The Air Force Base Conversion Agency (AFBCA) and EPA, with concurrence from NYSDEC, have determined that no further action is warranted for this site. Notwithstanding this determination, future landowners will be notified in the property deed that the groundwater at the site contained contaminants that exceeded the NYS groundwater standards and guidance values

#### **1.5 Authorizing Signatures**

On the basis of the previous removal action and subsequent investigations performed at the Building 117 Source Removal AOC, there is no evidence that residual contamination at this site poses a current or future potential threat to human health or the environment. Future landowners will be notified in the property deed that the groundwater at the site contained contaminants that exceeded the NYS groundwater standards and guidance values. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has concurred with the selected remedy presented in this Record of Decision.

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Albert F. Lowas, Jr.  
Director  
Air Force Base Conversion Agency

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Date

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Jane M. Kenny  
Regional Administrator  
United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2

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Date

## **2.1 Site Name, Location, and Brief Description**

The Building 117 Source Removal AOC (site identification designation ST-10) is located at the former Griffiss AFB in Rome, Oneida County, New York. Pursuant to Section 105 of CERCLA, Griffiss AFB was included on the National Priorities List (NPL) on July 15, 1987. On August 21, 1990, the EPA, NYSDEC, and the Air Force entered into an FFA under Section 120 of CERCLA.

The Building 117 Source Removal AOC consists of a parking lot and the former location of a large steam-generating plant that operated from the 1940s through 1986. The steam plant, which was located in the west-central portion of the base (see Figure 1), was demolished in 1988 and the parking lot was constructed. Two 25,000-gallon No. 6 fuel oil underground storage tanks (USTs), which were installed in 1964 (see Figure 2), were also removed in 1988.

## **2.2 Site History and Enforcement Activities**

### **2.2.1 The Former Griffiss AFB Operational History**

The mission of the former Griffiss AFB varied over the years. The base was activated on February 1, 1942, as Rome Air Depot, with the mission of storage, maintenance, and shipment of material for the U.S. Army Air Corps. Upon creation of the Air Force in 1947, the depot was renamed Griffiss AFB. The base became an electronics center in 1950, with the transfer of Watson Laboratory Complex (later Rome Air Development Center [1951], Rome Laboratory, and then the Information Directorate at Rome Research

Site, established with the mission of accomplishing applied research, development, and testing of electronic air-ground systems). The 49th Fighter Interceptor Squadron was also added. The Headquarters of the Ground Electronics Engineering Installations Agency was established in June 1958 to engineer and install ground communications equipment throughout the world. On July 1, 1970, the 416th Bombardment Wing of the Strategic Air Command (SAC) was activated with the mission of maintenance and implementation of both effective air refueling operations and long-range bombardment capability. Griffiss AFB was designated for realignment under the BRAC in 1993 and 1995, resulting in deactivation of the 416th Bombardment Wing in September 1995. Rome Laboratory and the Northeast Air Defense Sector (NEADS) will continue to operate at their current locations; the New York Air National Guard (NYANG) operated the runway for the 10th Mountain Division deployments until October 1998, when they were relocated to Fort Drum; and the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) has established an operating location at the former Griffiss AFB.

## **2.2.2 Environmental Background**

As a result of the various national defense missions carried out at the former Griffiss AFB since 1942, hazardous and toxic substances were used and hazardous wastes were generated, stored, or disposed at various sites on the installation. The defense missions involved, among others, procurement, storage, maintenance, and shipping of war materiel; research and development; and aircraft operations and maintenance.

Numerous studies and investigations under the DoD Installation Restoration Program (IRP) have been carried out to locate, assess, and quantify the past toxic and hazardous waste storage, disposal, and spill sites. These investigations included a records search in 1981 (Engineering Science 1981), interviews with base personnel, a field inspection, compilation of an inventory of wastes, evaluation of disposal practices, and an assessment to determine the nature and extent of site contamination; Problem Confirmation and Quantification studies (similar to what is now designated a Site Investigation) in 1982 (Weston 1982) and 1985 (Weston 1985); soil and groundwater analyses in 1986; a basewide health assessment in 1988 by the U.S. Public Health Service, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) (ATSDR 1988); base-specific hydrology investigations in 1989 and 1990 (Geotech 1991); a groundwater investigation in 1991; and

site-specific investigations between 1989 and 1993. ATSDR issued a Public Health Assessment for Griffiss AFB, dated October 23, 1995 (ATSDR 1995), and an addendum, dated September 9, 1996.

In March 1992, the agencies modified the FFA in resolving a dispute concerning the Draft Final Primary Document “Identification of AOCs.” Article II of the “Resolution of Disputes” identified nine sites (including the Building 117 site) to be designated as Source AOCs for the purposes of coordinating and implementing source removal actions. Pursuant to Section 300.5 of the NCP and Section 101 of CERCLA, the Air Force was required to conduct a source removal action at each of the nine sites.

An investigation known as a Predesign Investigation (PDI) was conducted in 1993 and 1994. Results from this investigation covering the Building 117 Source Removal AOC were issued to the EPA and NYSDEC in February 1995 (Law 1995) and can be found in the document entitled, “Final Technical Memorandum/PDI Report.”

## **2.3 Community Participation**

A proposed plan for the Building 117 Source Removal AOC (AFBCA 2002), indicating no further action, was released to the public on Wednesday, January 23, 2002. The document was made available to the public in both the administrative record file located at 153 Brooks Road in the Griffiss Business and Technology Park and in the Information Repository maintained at the Jervis Public Library. The notice announcing the availability of this document was published in the *Rome Sentinel* on Monday, January 21, 2002. A public comment period lasting from January 23, 2002 to February 21, 2002, was set up to encourage public participation in the alternative selection process. In addition, a public meeting was held on Thursday, February 7, 2002. The AFBCA, the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), and NYSDEC were present at the meeting and the AFBCA answered questions about issues at the AOC and the proposal under consideration. A response to the comments received during this period is included in the Responsiveness Summary, which is part of this ROD (see Section 3).

## **2.4 Scope and Role of Site Response Action**

The decision for no further action encompasses both soil and groundwater at the Building 117 Source Removal AOC. The site does not pose an unacceptable risk to human health and the environment.

## **2.5 Site Characteristics**

The former Griffiss AFB covered approximately 3,552 contiguous acres in the lowlands of the Mohawk River Valley in Rome, Oneida County, New York. Topography within the valley is relatively flat, with elevations on the former Griffiss AFB ranging from 435 to 595 feet above mean sea level. Three Mile Creek, Six Mile Creek (both of which drain into the New York State (NYS) Barge Canal, located to the south of the base), and several state-designated wetlands are located on the former Griffiss AFB, which is bordered by the Mohawk River on the west. Due to its high average precipitation and predominantly silty sands, the former Griffiss AFB is considered a groundwater recharge zone.

The Building 117 Source Removal AOC is located in the west-central portion of the base (see Figure 1). Groundwater in this area flows in a south and southwest direction, and the depth to groundwater ranges from 11.5 feet below ground surface (BGS) to 15 feet BGS. The soils are generally silty sand with some clay, cobbles, and gravel.

This AOC consists of a parking lot and the former location of a large steam-generating plant that operated from the 1940s through 1986. Two 25,000-gallon No. 6 fuel oil USTs were installed in 1964 northeast of the steam plant (see Figure 2). These steel tanks were 10 feet in diameter, 44 feet long, and 6 feet BGS. The steam plant was demolished in 1988 and the parking lot was constructed. Both tanks were removed during the steam plant demolition. According to interviews with base personnel, any contaminated soil found during excavation of the tanks was removed. There is no NYSDEC open spill associated with this site.

### **2.5.1 Predesign Investigation**

A PDI was conducted at this AOC in November and December 1993 to evaluate whether petroleum-contaminated soil was removed during the 1988 excavation of the two 25,000-gallon USTs. Five soil borings (117MB-1 and 117SB-2 through 117SB-5) were

drilled near the former location of the USTs. The soil borings were advanced to depths of 14 to 23 feet BGS to evaluate the conditions of subsurface soils and to collect samples for chemical and geotechnical analyses. Soil boring 117MB-1 was advanced to a depth of 23 feet BGS and was subsequently converted to monitoring well 117MW-1. Borings 117SB-2 and 117SB-5 were used as temporary groundwater observation wells to identify the presence of free product in the surficial aquifer at the site.

Samples were collected at 2-foot depth intervals in each soil boring. Based on the results of soil headspace screening, two soil samples from each borehole were then selected for chemical analysis; the sample with the highest headspace reading from the vadose zone and the sample from the groundwater interface. If organic compounds were not detected during the headspace screening, the interval from 0 to 2 feet and the groundwater interface were sampled and analyzed.

#### **2.5.1.1 Soil Leachate Results**

Soil samples collected during the PDI were analyzed for volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and SVOCs using the toxicity characteristic leaching procedure (TCLP) extraction process. A comparison of the analytical results to regulatory standards and guidance values is provided in Section 2.7. Twelve VOCs (1,2,4-trimethylbenzene, 1,3,5-trimethylbenzene, hexachloro-butadiene, trichloroethylene, m-xylene, naphthalene, o-xylene, p-xylene, toluene, n-butylbenzene, t-butylbenzene, and tetrachloroethylene) were detected in TCLP leachate from subsurface soil samples collected in November 1993 from borings 117MB-1, 117SB-2, and 117SB-3. Concentrations of these compounds ranged from 0.26 micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ ) for toluene to 15  $\mu\text{g/L}$  for naphthalene. The majority of VOCs were detected in soil boring 117MB-1 from samples collected at 8 to 10 feet and 12 to 14 feet BGS. In addition, the VOC analytical results for a majority of the soil samples collected indicated the presence of carbon tetrachloride and chloroform at low levels. An investigation of these results determined that laboratory-introduced contamination was the source for these two compounds. A confirmatory sample collected in May 1994 provided further evidence that carbon tetrachloride and chloroform were not present in the soil. No SVOCs were detected in the 1993 soil samples.

### **2.5.1.2 Groundwater Results**

Thirteen VOCs (1,2,3-trimethylbenzene, 1,3,5-trimethylbenzene, benzene, chloroform, ethylbenzene, naphthalene, p-cymene, sec-butylbenzene, carbon tetrachloride, toluene, trichloroethylene, xylene, and n-propylbenzene) were detected at low concentrations in groundwater samples collected during the PDI from monitoring well 117MW-1 (see Section 2.7). Naphthalene was detected at the highest concentration of 4 µg/L. The SVOC data was rejected due to the high turbidity of the groundwater samples and an error in the laboratory SVOC extraction method. The well was redeveloped and sampled again in April 1994 for SVOC analysis. Fourteen SVOCs were detected in the groundwater collected during this resampling effort. Free product was not detected in either of the temporary observation wells.

### **2.5.2 Further Investigation and Results**

Based on the results of the PDI, additional field activities were conducted in March and April 1995 at the Building 117 Source Removal AOC to further characterize surface and subsurface soils. Four additional borings (117SB-6, 117SB-7, 117SB-8, and 117SB-9) were installed at the former tank locations. Soil samples were collected at 2-foot intervals from borings 117SB-8 and 117SB-9 and subjected to soil headspace screening for VOCs. Based on the screening results, soil samples were then collected from borings 117SB-6 and 117SB-7 at the depth intervals with the highest headspace reading in the vadose zone. Soil samples also were collected from borings 117SB-6 and 117SB-7 at the groundwater interface. All four soil samples were submitted for TCLP VOC and SVOC analyses. Naphthalene was the only organic detected in the leachate from samples collected during the 1995 field effort; it was detected at a concentration of 6 µg/L in one sample (soil sample 117SB-7, 10 to 12 feet BGS).

## **2.6 Current and Potential Future Site Use**

The current and future land use designations for the Building 117 Source Removal AOC are commercial/administrative. This building is part of an Air Force research and development complex at the former Griffiss AFB.

## **2.7 Comparison of Analytical Results and Regulatory Standards**

### **2.7.1 Soil Leachate Comparison**

Soil analytical results were compared to cleanup values published in the NYSDEC STARS Memo No. 1. This document, which sets forth the criteria for addressing these types of constituents, states that constituent concentrations in soil should not exceed levels where soil leachate might exceed groundwater standards. For fuel- or gasoline-contaminated soil, the policy further states that if the concentrations of volatile hydrocarbons or semi-volatile hydrocarbons in the leachate do not exceed the NYS groundwater standards or guidance values, the soil is not considered to impact groundwater quality.

Only one VOC, naphthalene, was detected (15 µg/L) in the soil leachate during the PDI (sample 117MB-1F, 8 to 10 feet BGS) at a concentration above the STARS Memo No. 1 guidance value of 10 µg/L. No SVOCs were detected in the leachate from the Building 117 Source Removal AOC soil at concentrations exceeding the guidance values.

### **2.7.2 Groundwater Comparison**

The NYS Class GA Groundwater Standards were used to assess groundwater quality. Class GA waters are defined as fresh groundwater found in the saturated zone of unconsolidated deposits, consolidated rock, and bedrock. The best use of Class GA waters is as a source of potable water. Therefore, comparison of the groundwater sample analytical results for the Building 117 AOC to Class GA standards is a conservative approach because it is unlikely that groundwater at the former base will be used as a source of potable water. Another Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirement (ARAR) would be the NYS Drinking Water Standards.

None of the VOC concentrations detected in the 117MW-1 groundwater sample exceeded NYS groundwater standards or guidance values. In particular, naphthalene, which had been detected in the soil leachate, was not detected in the groundwater at concentrations exceeding the NYS groundwater standard, indicating that it does not represent a potential threat to the groundwater. Five SVOCs (benzo[a]anthracene, benzo[b]fluoranthene, benzo[k] fluoranthene, chrysene, and indeno[1,2,3-cd]pyrene), with con-

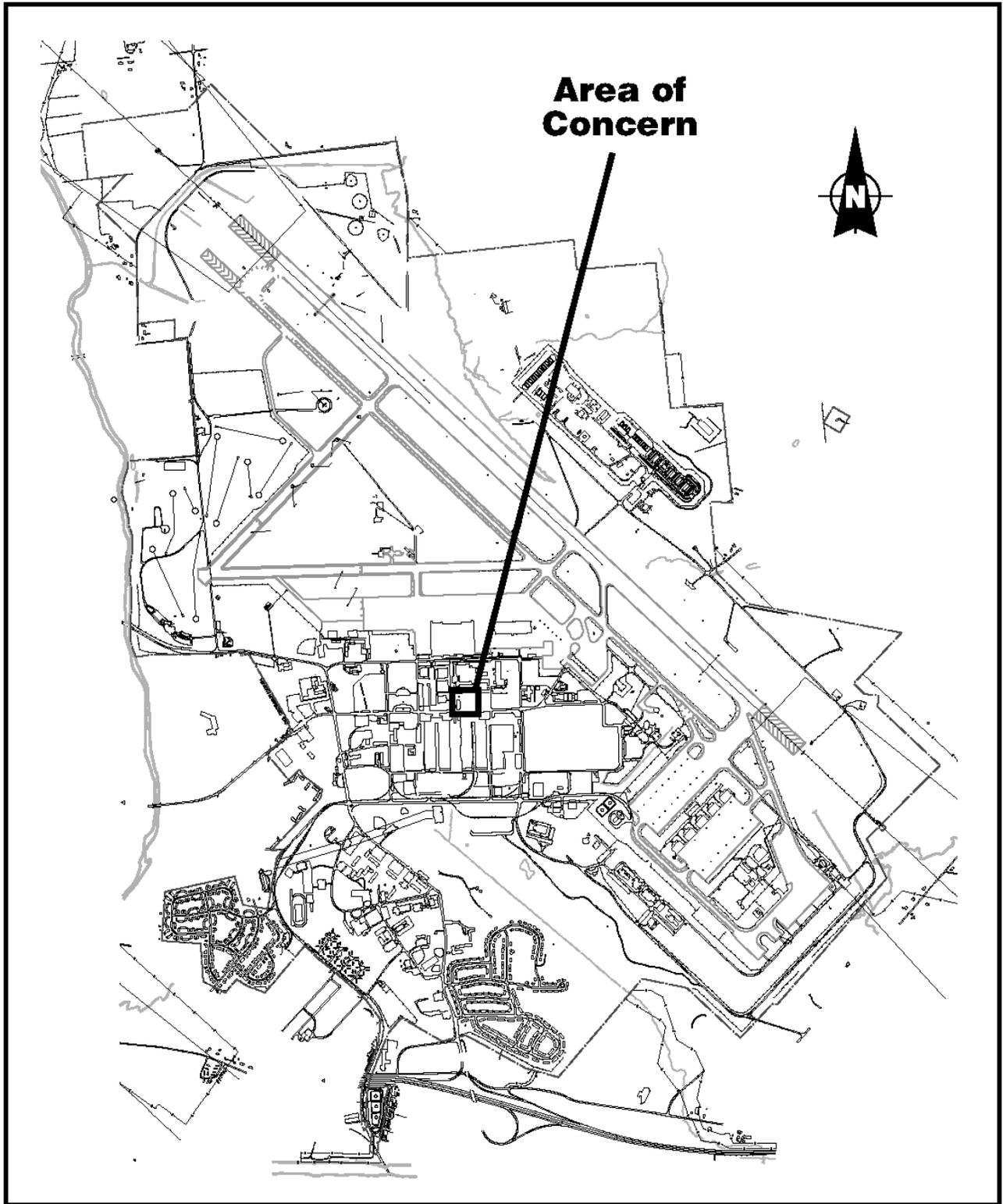
centrations ranging from 0.016 to 0.21 µg/L, exceeded the NYS groundwater guidance value of 0.002 µg/L. The NYS Drinking Water Standard for the five SVOCs is 50 µg/L. The concentration of benzo(a)pyrene, (0.086 µg/L) exceeded the NYS groundwater standard of nondetect, but was below the NYS Drinking Water Standard of 0.2 µg/L. None of these SVOCs were detected in the TCLP soil leachate at concentrations exceeding the STARS Memo No. 1 guidance values.

Although this site is designated for commercial/administrative use and it is unlikely that groundwater will be used as a source of potable water, a simple risk screening was performed for the SVOCs listed above to estimate the carcinogenic risk to any potential future residents from ingestion of the groundwater. A noncarcinogenic risk screening was not performed because there are no toxicity values for these SVOCs.

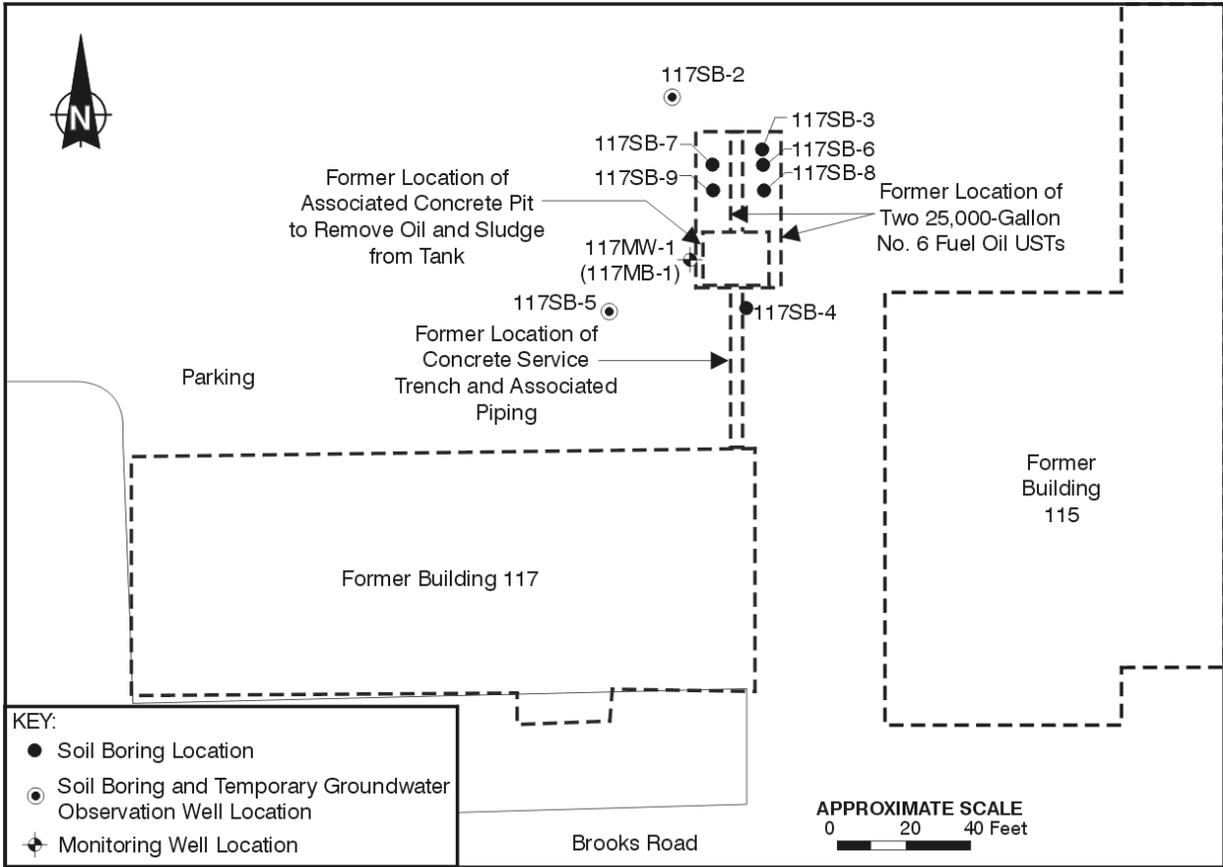
EPA's range of acceptable risk is generally considered to be 1 in 10,000 ( $1 \times 10^{-4}$ ) to 1 in 1,000,000 ( $1 \times 10^{-6}$ ) of an individual developing cancer over a 70-year lifetime from exposure to contaminants sometime during their lifetime (cancer toxicity values were derived assuming a lifetime of 70 years). Standard exposure assumptions are generally used for specific scenarios. For this risk screening, the standard exposure assumptions for residential use of groundwater were used, which included an ingestion rate of 2 liters of water per day for a 30-year exposure duration (the high end residence time in an owner-occupied home). Using the approach documented in EPA's Risk Assessment Guidance for Superfund, Human Health Evaluation Manual Part B, December 1991, the total risk associated with ingesting groundwater containing the five SVOCs listed above was calculated as 1 in 100,000 ( $1 \times 10^{-5}$ ), which is within EPA's acceptable risk range, and therefore no further action is necessary.

## **2.8 Documentation of Significant Changes**

No significant changes have been made to the selected remedy from the time the proposed plan was released for public comment.



**Figure 1 Location of Building 117 Source Removal AOC**



**Building 2 Building 117 Source Removal AOC**

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## 3

# Responsiveness Summary

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On Wednesday, January 23, 2002, AFBCA, following consultation with and concurrence of the EPA and NYSDEC, released for public comment the proposed plan for no further action with land use restrictions at the Building 117 AOC at the former Griffiss AFB. The release of the proposed plan initiated the public comment period, which concluded on February 21, 2002.

During the public comment period, a public meeting was held on Thursday, February 7, 2002, at 5:00 p.m. at the Floyd Town Hall located at 8299 Old Floyd Road, Rome, New York. A court reporter recorded the proceedings of the public meeting. A copy of the transcript and attendance list is included in the Administrative Record. The public comment period and the public meeting were intended to elicit public comment on the proposal for remedial action at the site.

This document summarizes and provides responses to the verbal comments received at the public meeting and the written comments received during the public comment period. Several of the oral and written comments do not pertain to the six proposed plans that were issued for public comment but do relate to the base closure in general. Responses to such general comments, however, are also provided in this Responsiveness Summary.

## ORAL COMMENTS

### Comment #1 (Mark Reynolds)

Mr. Reynolds asked what the source of fuel was at the Building 117 site before 1964 and where it was stored.

### Response #1

Coal was the fuel source for the Building 117 steam plant from the 1940s through the 1960s. There are several former coal storage areas on the base. All were sampled during the Area of Interest program.

### Comment #2 (Freda Melkun)

- a) Mrs. Melkun asked a general question regarding potential movement of contamination off base and asked if any off-base investigations will take place.
- b) She stated that Three Mile Creek and Six Mile Creek are contaminated, so their groundwater wells should be contaminated, and asked what the chemical effects are when you start mixing everything together.
- c) She stated that ethylene glycols were found in some of the off-base wells and her well was supposed to be tested and it never was.
- d) She stated that children are still swimming in the creeks.

### Response #2

- a) Several off-base investigations have been completed and it has been determined that there is no contamination at levels of health concern affecting off-base property, with the possible exception of Three Mile and Six Mile Creeks. Twenty-seven monitoring wells were sampled as part of the Off-Base Groundwater Contamination Area of Concern. Also, more than 300 domestic wells were sampled.

Reference report: Volume 32 of the Draft-final Remedial Investigations Report dated December 1996.

- b) There has been contamination found in both Six Mile and Three Mile Creeks. As part of our assessment of the creeks, we have evaluated the effects of individual and combined chemicals on various receptors. However, such chemical effects, whether dealing with one or several chemicals, are unique and must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For the off-base portion of Six Mile Creek, the contaminants include low-level concentrations of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and polychlorinated bi-phenyls (PCBs) in the surface water and sediments. For the off-base portion of Three Mile Creek, the contaminants include moderate level concentrations of VOCs, SVOCs, metals, PAHs and PCBs in the surface water and sediments. Remedies are being evaluated for these sites and

proposed plans will be issued within the next year. Several of the off-base monitoring wells and private wells that were sampled were adjacent to the creeks. The results showed that contamination has not traveled from the creeks to the wells. Furthermore, during the investigations, it was found that groundwater in the area south and southeast of the base flows into Six Mile Creek and not from the creek into the surrounding groundwater, therefore, it is extremely unlikely that contaminants in the creek would be transferred to adjacent homeowner wells.

Reference reports: Volumes 6 and 11 of the Draft-final Remedial Investigations Report dated December 1996, Draft Feasibility Study Report for Three Mile Creek AOC and Six Mile Creek AOC dated January 1999, Six Mile Creek Summary Report dated March 2000.

- c) The off-base investigations that sampled monitoring wells and private wells concluded that there is no evidence that people were exposed to ethylene glycol in drinking water at levels of health concern in the Griffiss area. The results of the investigations were well publicized. Several fact sheets were issued and several public meetings were held. Although NYSDOH acknowledges that Mrs. Melkun's well was not tested, it was not a deliberate oversight. Results of the sampling in the early 1980s in the vicinity of Mrs. Melkun's home did not indicate any pattern of groundwater contamination, nor were results above drinking water standards and, therefore, the sampling effort was discontinued. As a result, further testing of wells, including Mrs. Melkun's well, was not performed.

Reference reports: Volume 32 of the Draft-final Remedial Investigations Report dated December 1996; Public Health Assessment Addendum for Griffiss AFB, dated September 9, 1996 (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry)

- d) The water and the sediments of Six Mile and Three Mile Creeks were thoroughly tested. The results analyzed under the CERCLA program showed that there is no significant risk to adults or children when playing or fishing in the creeks. However, NYSDOH does include state-wide fish advisories for all stream, creeks and water bodies. These restrictions known as the NYSDOH Fish Consumption Advisories provide general warnings or restrictions for recreational fishers who may eat the fish. The NYSDOH Fish Consumption Advisories are provided to all individuals who seek a NYS fishing license and a copy can be obtained by contacting the NYSDOH. The NYSDOH Fish Consumption Advisories are issued independent of the CERCLA process.

Reference reports: Volumes 6 and 11 of the Draft-final Remedial Investigations Report dated December 1996, Draft Feasibility Study Report for Three Mile Creek AOC and Six Mile Creek AOC dated January 1999, Six Mile Creek Summary Report dated March 2000.

### **Comment #3 (Paul Landry)**

Mr. Landry asked for a summary of the overall status of base cleanup.

### **Response #3**

A brief summary was provided after the meeting. The status will be documented and passed out at the next Restoration Advisory Board meeting.

### **WRITTEN COMMENTS**

One letter was received during the public comment period. That letter was sent by Mrs. Freda Melkun and was dated February 14, 2002. The comments in the letter are summarized below. Many of the comments are general comments not related to a specific proposed plan. Two comments, however, are related to specific proposed plans that were presented at the February 7, 2002, public meeting.

**Comment 1:** Mrs. Melkun stated that her well was not tested, although she requested the Health Department to sample.

**Response 1:** The NYSDOH acknowledges that Mrs. Melkun's well was not tested. It was not a deliberate oversight. Results of the sampling in the early 1980s in the vicinity of Mrs. Melkun's home did not indicate any pattern of groundwater contamination, nor were results above drinking water standards and the sampling effort was discontinued.

**Comment 2:** Mrs. Melkun reported suspecting chemical contamination to be the source of an illness in 1980 and also reported green bath water, dead fish and animals.

**Response 2:** There are reports that occasionally the green dye used to mark the runways in winter appeared in Six Mile Creek. NYSDOH and the Air Force have no records of reports of dead fish and animals in the vicinity of the base. As stated above, the off-base investigations that sampled monitoring wells and private wells concluded that there is no evidence that people were exposed to ethylene glycol or other contaminants in drinking water at levels of health concern in the Griffiss area.

**Comment 3:** Mrs. Melkun witnessed run-off from spraying planes going into the ground along with trichloroethylene.

**Response 3:** A comprehensive environmental investigation has been completed at Griffiss Air Force Base and no records exist of trichloroethylene being sprayed on the planes. De-icing sprays comprised of glycols were used at various parts of the base. The status of the projects and maps of the contaminated areas are regularly reported at Restoration Advisory Board Meetings. The Apron areas where planes were parked do have petroleum and solvent contamination and these areas of contamination have been defined. However, please note that these areas are located well within the base boundary and are being addressed by the Air Force.

**Comment 4: Comment on Building 3 Drywell Proposed Plan:** Mrs. Melkun repeated her concern with contamination from the drywell moving to the air or groundwater.

**Response 4:** Groundwater samples were taken near the location of the former drywell. The results from sampling efforts in 1994 and 1997 are presented on page 6 of the proposed plan. The 1997 groundwater sampling indicated the presence of four VOCs and one SVOC, however, none of the concentrations exceeded the most stringent criterion. The risk assessment associated with the chemical concentrations found during the Remedial Investigations is presented on page 10 of the proposed plan. The results of the human health baseline risk assessment indicate that chemicals in the soil and groundwater should not present a risk under the current and future scenarios. The drywell and surrounding soils were totally removed in 1987. There is no contamination present to move from soil to air or soil to groundwater. The most recent groundwater sampling detected concentrations of TCE less than the most stringent drinking water standards. Contamination at levels equal to or less than the drinking water standards pose no threat to indoor air quality.

**Comment 5:** Mrs. Melkun stated her disappointment that no further sampling will be performed as contamination has shifted from Griffiss to her area.

**Response 5:** As stated above, extensive off-base investigations have been completed and it has been determined that there is no contamination at levels of health concern affecting off-base property, with the possible exception of Three Mile and Six Mile Creeks. Twenty-seven monitoring wells were sampled as part of the Off-Base Groundwater Contamination Area of Concern. Also, more than 300 domestic wells were sampled.

**Comment 6:** Mrs. Melkun repeated her concern for swimmers in Six Mile Creek and requested the posting of notices.

**Response 6:** The water and the sediments of Six Mile and Three Mile Creeks were thoroughly tested. The results were analyzed and showed that there is no significant risk to adults or children when playing or fishing in the creeks provided adherence to the NYSDOH Fish Consumption Advisories. Therefore, there are no additional restrictions or warnings beyond the fishing health advisory required for recreational use of the creeks.

**Comment 7:** Mrs. Melkun stated there should have been compensation for the health problems resulting from contaminated water.

**Response 7:** There is no documentation that contamination released by Griffiss AFB has caused health problems to off-base residents.

**Comment 8: Comment on Electrical Power Substation Proposed Plan:** Mrs. Melkun is concerned about the dioxins and furans and wants to know the cause.

**Response 8:** When transformer fluids get extremely hot, dioxins and furans are released. They are also associated with PCBs. Therefore, the dioxins and furans were associated with PCB transformer spills. Dioxin (2,3,7,8-TCDD) concentrations did not exceed the 40 nanograms per kilogram (ng/kg) soil guidance value in any sample. There were no high levels detected.

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