



FACT SHEET

March, 2007

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DAVIDS ISLAND

SITE No. E360077

New Rochelle, NY

Remedial Bureau C

Division of Environmental Remediation

Site Investigation has begun at Davids Island

The City of New Rochelle has begun a detailed environmental study of Davids Island. The investigation is being conducted under the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (NYSDEC) Environmental Restoration Program. The 1996 Clean Water / Clean Air Bond Act will provide up to 90 percent of the funding for this project.

Site Location and Description: Davids Island is an approximately 80-acre island in the Long Island Sound and is located less than a mile east of the mainland off the southern portion of New Rochelle, Westchester County, New York. The site is the former location of a military base known as Fort Slocum. A site location map is provided as Figure 1. The island has remained vacant since the military left the facility in the 1960s. Abandoned buildings and related infrastructure still exist on the island, but are severely deteriorated due to vandalism, neglect, and arson. In addition, dense vegetation covers much of the island including the former Parade Ground and roadways.

Site History: Native American use of Davids Island has been documented from previous archeological work performed on the island. Prior to development, the island served as pasture land and farmland, and was partially used for recreation with a dance pavilion and picnic grounds. During the Civil War, the island contained a hospital (DeCamp General Hospital) that treated over 5,000 soldiers and held more than 2,500 Confederate prisoners of war. Davids Island was officially bought by the Government in 1867, and the island became a major recruiting base by 1878. A cemetery was established on the island in 1878, but was subsequently removed in 1887 to make way for construction of military barracks. In 1890, Davids Island became part of the New York Harbor Defense System, with pits and tunnels dug into the ledge rock to house a series of cannons. The island was officially named Fort Slocum in 1896 in honor of Major General Henry Warner Slocum, a Civil War hero.

During World War I, Fort Slocum was the recruit examination station for the northeastern United States. Between 1917 and 1919, over 140,000 recruits passed through the island. Between the years of 1945 and 1967, Fort Slocum served a variety of functions. These functions included an Air Force Base, a rehabilitation center, a Chaplain's School, and an Information School (among other uses). Between 1955 and 1961, the island contained the Fort Slocum Nike Battery, which consisted of a fire control facility for the missiles installed at nearby Hart Island.

In 1967, the island was purchased by the City of New Rochelle and was considered for redevelopment. The following year the island was sold to Consolidated Edison Company (Con Ed) for the construction of a generating facility. The plans for the facility were abandoned in 1973, and the island was sold back to the City of New Rochelle. In 1977, the island was designated as an Urban Renewal Area. Various proposals for redevelopment of Davids Island were considered from 1981 through 1994; however, no plans were implemented.

Previous investigations conducted on the island determined that soil contamination is present in certain portions of the island. Contaminants in the soil, which can be attributed to a number of past uses, include the burning of coal to heat the buildings on the island, electrical transformers, an incinerator, empty/rusted drums, landfill activities, and a partially destroyed ventilator/extractor. Contaminants present in the soils include polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), certain metals (arsenic, chromium, lead, and nickel) and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Asbestos containing material (ACM) has been found on the island related to historic use for the buildings. Also underground storage tanks (USTs) are suspected to exist in portions of the island.

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The United States Army Corps. of Engineers (USACE) has performed asbestos abatement and are currently demolishing deteriorated buildings on the island.

Site Investigation: Davids Island will be the subject of a Site Investigation and a Remedial Alternatives Analysis. The site investigation will determine the nature and extent of the contamination at the site, as well as potential threats to public health and the environment. The investigation will consist of surface soil sampling, installation of soil borings to collect both soil and groundwater samples and test pitting to evaluate subsurface conditions. The surface soil samples will be used to evaluate the horizontal extent of soil contamination and the subsurface soil samples will be used to evaluate the vertical extent of soil contamination. Groundwater samples will be collected to determine if soil contamination has affected the limited groundwater on the island. Test pitting will be performed to evaluate the nature of the fill on the island. Soil and groundwater samples collected during the investigation will be sent off-site for laboratory analysis.

Following the investigation, a report will be developed with the Site Investigation (SI) results and a Remedial Alternatives Report (RAR) will be developed to evaluate potential remedies based on the results of the SI/RAR. The NYSDEC, in consultation with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), will develop a Proposed Remedial Action Plan (PRAP) which will be made available for review by the public. During a 45-day comment period, a public meeting will be held in the community to present the PRAP in detail, and to receive comments. Following consideration of public comments on the PRAP, the NYSDEC will issue a Record of Decision (ROD), which formally selects a remedy for the site.

Copies of the work plan, which describes planned investigation activities, are available for your review at the document repositories listed below. As additional documents are created, they will be placed in the site's repositories.

Document Repositories: The Site Investigation Work Plan and the Citizen Participation Plan are available for public review at the following locations:

Department of Public Works City Hall 515 North Avenue New Rochelle, NY 10801 Attn: Jeffery Coleman P.E. Phone: (914) 654-2136 Hours: M-F, 9-5	The New Rochelle Public Library 1 Library Plaza New Rochelle, NY 10801 Attn: Barbara Davis Phone: (914) 632-7878 Hours: M-T 9-8, W 10-6, Th 9-8, F-Sa 9-5, Su 1-5	NYSDEC Region 3 Office 21 South Putt Corners Road New Paltz, New York 12561 Attn: Mr. Michael Knipfing Phone: (845) 256-3154 Hours: M-F, 9-4 By Appointment
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The NYSDEC encourages your participation in the project. Your understanding and involvement can help ensure a cleanup program that effectively protects public health and the environment.

For More Information:

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