

**NAVAL RECREATION CENTER  
SOLOMONS (MD-058)  
Solomons, Maryland  
Calvert County  
(Federal Facility)**

**Site Location**

Naval Recreation Center (NAVRECCEN) Solomons, also known as Naval District Washington (NDW) Solomons Complex, is located near the confluence of the Patuxent River and the Chesapeake Bay, in the southern portion of Calvert County, Maryland, approximately sixty miles southeast of Washington D.C. NDW Solomons Complex is situated in a rural setting about a mile northwest of Solomons Island, Maryland. It is bounded by the Patuxent River on the west and south, Maryland Route 2/4 on the east, and private property to the north. The facility encompasses a total area of approximately 296 acres.

**Site History**

The Solomons Complex was first used by the Navy in early 1941. The Naval Ordnance Laboratory (NOL) was the first occupant at the complex, which was named Solomons Annex at the time. The NOL chose this location to establish a magnetic survey range due to its location near Washington D.C., and also because the area had sheltered, deep water that was relatively undisturbed by excessive tidal and merchant shipping.

At this time, the NOL established the Naval Mine Warfare Test Station (NMWTS) as part of the base operations. The NMWTS provided research, development, testing, and evaluation of the mine warfare and countermeasures program of the Navy.

In 1947, the U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory Test Facility (NOLTF) at NDW Solomons Complex was established. Project work conducted by NOLTF during the years 1947 to 1950 consisted of high and low altitude aircraft drops (primarily mines), torpedo shots in the river, and other explosive work with mines. From 1951 to 1958, torpedo work was phased out, with the torpedo shop converted to additional mine and missile assembly areas.

From 1948 to 1950, some buildings and open space were acquired by the Bureau of Yards and Docks for the creation of the Naval Civil Engineering Laboratory (NCEL) to conduct basic and applied research in engineering problems and the development of amphibious equipment.

Activities at the facility were subsequently curtailed and in 1967, the Navy determined that the facility would be changed to a recreational area. In 1971, the Naval Recreation Center (NRC) Solomons Complex was established under NDW.

The Navy has identified four locations at NDW Solomons Complex that required evaluation for potential environmental concerns:

Site 1, the Cove 1 Disposal Area, located on the Patuxent River, near the Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge. The site was originally used as the station dump from World War II until the mid-1980s. Projects carried out in the vicinity of this site ranged from sensors and land mine testing to static firing of high explosive charges and pyrotechnic charges buried at depth. All waste generated on the base was reportedly sent to Cove 1, including industrial waste such as paints, solvents, polychlorinated biphenyls and contaminated oils.

Site 2, the former Open Air Sandblast Area, is located in the southeastern portion of NDW Solomons Complex. From the late 1940s to the end of 1988, sandblasting equipment was used at Site 2 to remove rust and paint from station equipment. Approximately 110 tons of sand was used annually in blasting operations. The used grit composed of sand and paint chips was bulldozed into a wooded area where they remained until being disposed of in the Cove 1 Disposal Area.

Site 3, the Suspected Landfill site located along the Patuxent River was largely undefined. Little was known about the history of this site except that a visual inspection of the bluff and underlying beach coastline revealed various refuse and debris protruding from the bank. Subsequent field surveys concluded that there was no evidence of disposal at this site.

Site 4, the Cabin Disposal Area is located in the east central portion of the complex near the cabin rental units. Various waste was buried around the rental cabins from the mid 1940s to the early 1970s, which may have included mine and torpedo casings, batteries and paint cans beneath what is currently the rental cabin and playground areas.

### **Environmental Investigations and Actions.**

The Navy only recently involved the MDE in the process at this facility. Between 1990 and 2000 the Navy, without the oversight of the MDE, conducted a Preliminary Assessment (PA) and a Site Investigation (SI) at Sites 1, 2 and 3. This was subsequently followed by an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) at Site 2 and an Expanded Site Investigation (ESI) at Site 1. The ESI was converted to an EE/CA at Site 1. In addition to this, another ESI was conducted at the Cabin Disposal Area.

The Navy is currently planning to undergo a removal action at Site 1. A work plan for an ordnance and explosives removal action to be conducted at Site 1, Cove 1 Disposal Area has been reviewed by the MDE's Federal Facilities Section.

### **Future Activity**

An ordnance and explosives removal action is scheduled for the Site 1 area when Navy funding becomes available.

### **Facility Contacts**

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