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Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2005 11:59  
To: Barry.Benjamin@epamail.epa.gov  
Subject: Press Release - Vieques

## **NAVY ISSUES DRAFT FINAL WORK PLAN FOR BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION OF THE SOILS IN EAST VIEQUES**

The U.S. Navy has submitted for public review a draft final plan designed to determine background levels of certain chemicals found in the soil at the former Atlantic Fleet Weapon's Training Facility in East Vieques. This plan defines the process for identifying levels of components of the soil that occur naturally throughout the former facility. The public will have an opportunity to review and comment on the plan for 60 days. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is currently reviewing the plan, called the Draft Final Work Plan and Sampling and Analysis Plan for the Background Investigation.

The primary objective of the background investigation is to provide the information required to assess whether components in the soil can be attributed to contamination from the sites or are representative of background conditions. This information will then be used to help determine the appropriate cleanup actions that might be necessary. The draft final plan describes the criteria used to select the background locations, the techniques that will be used to collect the data, and how the data will be analyzed, evaluated, and reported.

Interested individuals can view the Draft Final Work Plan at the public information repository located at the Vieques public library (see addresses and hours of operation below). In addition, the plan is available for viewing at the following Web site:

<http://public.lantops-ir.org/sites/public/vieques/Public%20Files/library.aspx>

or at EPA's Web site:

<http://www.epa.gov/region2/vieques>

The Navy will also discuss the details of the plan with its Restoration Advisory Board at La Hielera de Jorge (Martineau neighborhood – Road 200 – across from the Windham Resort) on May 11, 2005 from 5:00 to 9:00 PM. The meeting will be open to the public and there will be an open period during which members of the public can ask questions.

The public review and comment period will extend from April 14 through June 15, 2005. To review these documents, individuals can visit any of the locations below. Comments should be sent to Daniel Rodriguez no later than June 11, 2005 at the address below:

Environmental Protection Agency  
Caribbean Environmental Protection Division  
Attention: Daniel Rodriguez  
PO Box 1537  
Vieques, PR 00765  
Telephone: (787) 741-5201  
Email: Rodriguez.Daniel@epa.gov

Environmental Protection Agency  
Caribbean Environmental Protection Division  
Attn: Brenda Reyes  
Centro Europa Building, Suite 417  
Ave. Ponce de León 1492, Parada 22

San Juan, Puerto Rico  
Telephone: (787) 977-5869  
Biblioteca Pública,  
Jose Gautier Benitez, Calle Baldorioty de Castro,  
Vieques Island, PR.  
Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.  
Telephone: 787-741-3706

Environmental Quality Board  
National Plaza Building, Office 225  
Attn: Yarissa Martinez  
Ponce de Leon #431  
Hato Rey, Puerto Rico 00917  
Telephone: (787) 767-8181, ext. 2954