



Environmental Cleanup Program FACT SHEET 3

Fort McClellan, Alabama

January 2000



Public participation program

Opportunities to participate in the environmental program at Fort McClellan are available throughout the cleanup and closure process. As actions are planned, they will be announced in local newspapers and other media. Public meetings about scheduled activities will be held. Restoration Advisory Board meetings are held the third Monday of every month and are always open to the public. Newsletters and fact sheets like this one will be produced three times a year and also are available for review on the Internet web site: www.mcclellan.army.mil/doe. If you are not currently on a mailing list to receive information like this fact sheet, contact:

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Fact sheets are published as needed to inform community members about the cleanup and closure of Fort McClellan, Alabama. Cleanup of sites throughout the post are being conducted under the regulatory process called the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (also known as Superfund). In September 1999 the current mission of Fort McClellan ended with the post being closed under Public Law 101-510, Base Realignment and Closure Act.

National wildlife refuge proposed as use for some undeveloped property

Following the announcement in 1995 that Fort McClellan would become a closed facility, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service asked for several thousand acres to be turned into a national wildlife refuge. The Army supported the approval of the request by the Joint Powers Authority (JPA), the local redevelopment agency responsible for deciding how the closed post will be used in the future.

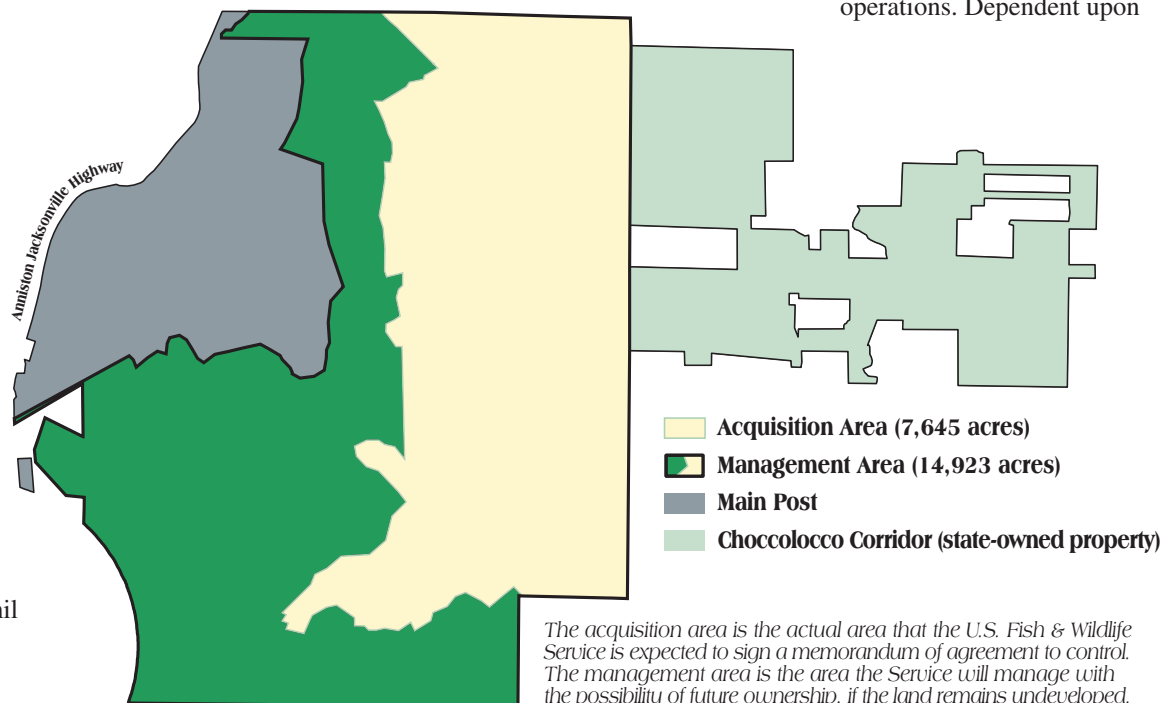
The map below shows the location of the more than 7,000 acres of the post that have been approved by the

JPA for use as a wildlife refuge. The property to be transferred will still be in federal hands and managed by the Service.

Before the refuge can be formally established, the Army and Department of the Interior (of which the Service is a part) are developing a memorandum of agreement to manage undeveloped land on the former post. This agreement will allow the Service to manage natural resources on undeveloped Fort McClellan property, including the property designated for the refuge,

while the Army continues an investigation of the environmental conditions there and develops a plan for cleanup. The Army will maintain control of the undeveloped land until final transfer is made to the Service.

The Army currently is investigating the proposed refuge site to determine if training and operations conducted 1898 until closure in 1999 may have affected the environment. Of particular concern is the search for unexploded ordnance that may remain from past training operations. Dependent upon



what is found on the property, cleanup may take several years, and access to certain areas may be restricted for another three or four years.

Until the refuge can be established, the Service will be responsible for managing some unique longleaf pine forest habitat on the property. According to Bill Garland, biologist with the Service, the wildlife refuge presents an opportunity to protect a portion of only three million remaining acres of longleaf pine forest in the U.S., which once was home to more than 90 million acres of longleaf pine.

“A draft report by Auburn University on the longleaf forests of Fort McClellan calculates 101 acres of old-growth on Fort McClellan,” Garland said. “It identifies 12 old-growth stands on the installation, which represent all the known old-growth montane longleaf in existence. The report goes on to say that these results strengthen the previous contentions that Fort McClellan contains the finest living montane longleaf pine forest in existence.”

Additionally, Garland noted that the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker is known to nest in longleaf pine habitats and has a nesting colony in the national forest adjacent to the proposed wildlife refuge. It is hoped that the proposed refuge can become another home to this endangered bird along with some neotropical migratory birds that already visit here annually.

The habitat also contains many plants and animals that are state and federal species of concern. These include the three-flowered hawthorn, Fraser’s loosestrife and white fringeless orchid as well as the Appalachian cottontail. *For more information about the longleaf pine forests, see the April 1999 newsletter.*

For more information about the property designated for use as a wildlife refuge, contact Ron Levy, Fort McClellan environmental coordinator, (256) 848-3758. 🌲

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