FACT SHEET

Forest Glen Annex Environmental Restoration Activities

Sites FTGL-06 - PCB Contamination North of Linden Lane

Fort Detrick

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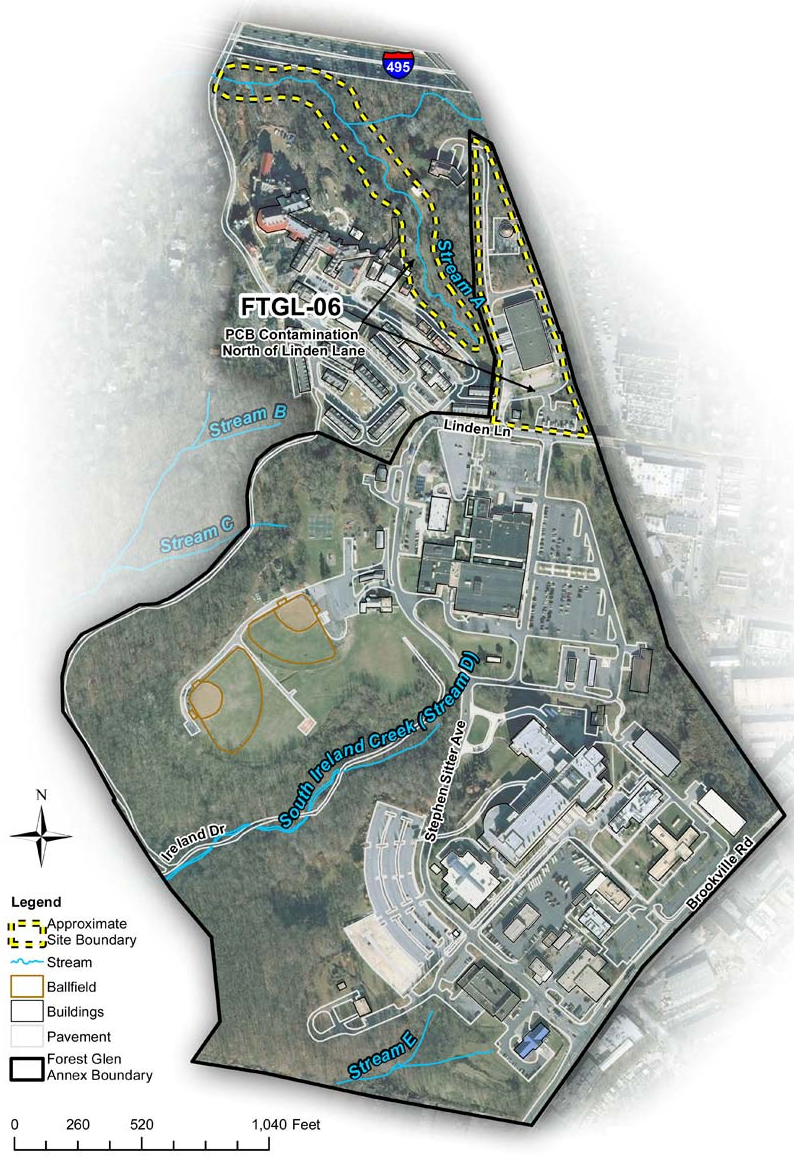
Site History



The FTGL-06 site is composed of Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) contamination areas on both active and former Army property north of Linden Lane and south of Interstate I-495 (Beltway). The former Army property, known as the National Park Seminary (NPS), was occupied by the Walter Reed Army Medical Annex from the 1940s until it was excessed to Montgomery County, MD in 2002. The property was then sold to a private developer who is currently redeveloping it for residential use.

In 2005/2006, Brownfield Site Assessment and Voluntary Clean Program investigations were conducted at the NPS property under the Maryland Department of the Environment. Sampling revealed the presence of PCB contamination in the soil at a building near the headwaters of Stream A.

Based on these results, an intensive sampling program was performed to delineate the extent of contamination. Soil, groundwater and stream sediments were sampled and the results were reported to the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). An Environmental Services Cooperative Agreement was signed in 2006 to remediate the area near the Stream A headwaters. Contaminated soils were removed and disposed off site during 2006 and 2007. Stream sediment samples revealed that the sediment contained elevated concentrations of PCBs and that the contamination potentially extended beyond the NPS property.

In 2009, PCB contamination was discovered on the active army property north of Linden Lane, near the salt dome. Reportedly, leaking transformers were the source of this contamination. These transformers have since been removed from the site. The extent of the contamination is not known at this time.

Planned Environmental Investigations

In partnership with the USEPA, the Army is currently planning a Site Investigation at the Forest Glen Annex FTGL-06 site. The Site Investigation work will be performed as part of the Army's Installation Restoration Program and in accordance with the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) PCB regulations at 40 CFR 761.

The FTGL-06 site investigation is intended to identify, bound, and evaluate the risk associated with PCB contamination from past Army operations/practices and to use these results as the basis for future remedial actions, if necessary. Soil investigation and cleanup activities at the site will be conducted in accordance with 40 CFR 761.61(a), self-implementing cleanup requirements. Under these requirements, soil cleanup will be based on established self-implementing cleanup levels. Groundwater and stream (surface water and sediment) investigation and cleanup activities will be conducted in accordance with 40 CFR 761.61(c), risk-based cleanup requirements.

What are PCBs?

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are a group of 209 fat-soluble organic compounds with a biphenyl molecule (basically two benzene molecules attached together) with chlorine atoms attached at varying locations. PCBs are also known as arochlors and chlorodiphenyls.

PCBs are stable compounds that break down very slowly in the environment. PCBs can bioaccumulate in the fatty tissue of fish, birds, and mammals after entering through the lungs, skin, or gastrointestinal tract. They are suspected human carcinogens and have been shown to be teratogenic (i.e., capable of inducing mutations in the offspring of affected organisms).

At one time PCBs were common components of hydraulic fluids, lubricants, heat transfer fluids, and insecticides. PCBs were primarily manufactured as dielectric fluid for transformers and capacitors because of their ability to absorb heat, low flammability, low electrical conductivity, and favorable dielectric constant. Currently, heat transfer fluids residing in old transformers and capacitors used in power distribution systems are the main sources of PCBs.

There may also be PCB-contaminated soil in places where transformers and capacitors have been stored or serviced, transformer fires have occurred, or PCBs have been sprayed as insecticides.

The results of the Site Investigation will be used to develop and evaluate response action alternatives to address any unacceptable PCB levels or risks

Looking northwest from near the headwaters of Stream A

For more information on ongoing environmental investigations at the Forest Glen Annex, please contact the Fort Detrick Public Affairs Office (see contact information at the top of this fact sheet).