

**JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND REVIEW COMMISSION
OF THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**The Feasibility
of Converting
Camp Pendleton
to a State Park**

House Document No. 11

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Philip A. Leone

Preface

Item 16G of the 1998 Appropriation Act directed JLARC to study the feasibility of converting the State Military Reservation (Camp Pendleton) to a State park. Specifically, JLARC was required to address: (1) the need for additional oceanfront access and State park recreation areas in southeastern Virginia, (2) the impact on tenants of Camp Pendleton, (3) the costs and benefits of relocating all remaining Virginia National Guard training functions to Fort Pickett, and (4) environmental remediation issues.

JLARC's review found that it is not feasible at this time to convert Camp Pendleton, in its entirety, to a State Park. While it may be possible to convert portions of the base to a State park, such an action would require long-term planning, agreements with the federal government, and environmental remediation of selected areas of the camp.

Camp Pendleton's location and beachfront property makes it highly valuable and raises questions whether a military facility is the highest and best use of the property. However, Camp Pendleton lacks enough acreage to meaningfully address the demand for beachfront access in the Virginia Beach area.

The role of Camp Pendleton as the State's primary military training facility is declining, primarily due to the availability of the much larger Virginia National Guard facility at Fort Pickett. As a result, Camp Pendleton is being utilized as a multi-service training facility with a growing federal orientation. The National Guard has adopted a policy of establishing revenue generating leases with non-National Guard organizations to achieve a goal of having Camp Pendleton financially self-sufficient by the year 2002. However, continued implementation of this policy may encumber the base's property to the extent that alternative uses in the future may not be feasible. As a result, the General Assembly may wish to make a long-term policy decision regarding the future use of Camp Pendleton.

Finally, population growth and residential development adjacent to Camp Pendleton have affected the ability of the National Guard to ensure the safe operation of the facility's rifle range. As a result, consideration should be given to closing the Camp Pendleton range and utilizing the ranges at Fort Pickett or nearby federal military installations.

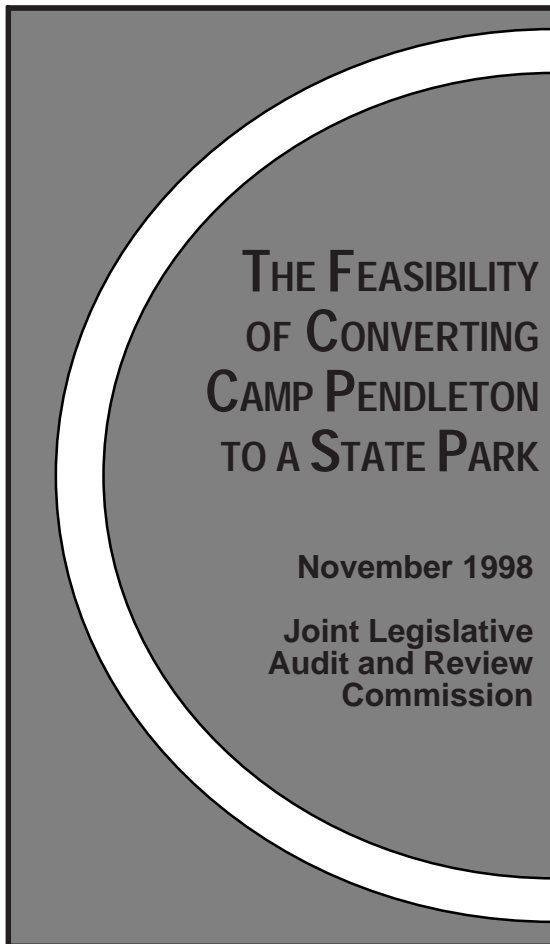
On behalf of JLARC staff, I would like to thank the Department of Military Affairs, the Department of Environmental Quality, and the City of Virginia Beach for their cooperation in the conduct of this study.



Philip A. Leone
Director

November 22, 1998

JLARC Report Summary



The State Military Reservation, which is also called Camp Pendleton, is a State-owned military installation in the City of Virginia Beach. The State has traditionally allocated the property primarily for the use of the Virginia National Guard, with exceptions during World War I and World War II, when it was leased to the federal armed services. Camp Pendleton was originally created in 1912 in a relatively remote, sparsely populated area. Since then, the City of Virginia Beach has grown and developed around the facility. The encroachment of development — public, residential, and commercial — has led to repeated requests by the City of Virginia Beach to convert Camp Pendleton to

other uses, including conversion to a State park.

Item 16G of the 1998 Appropriation Act directed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to study the feasibility of converting Camp Pendleton to a State park. JLARC is also directed to address: (i) the need for additional oceanfront access and State park recreation areas in southeastern Virginia; (ii) the impact on tenants at the facility; (iii) cost and benefits to the Virginia National Guard in relocating all remaining training functions to Fort Pickett; and (iv) environmental remediation issues.

The primary findings of this study can be summarized by four points:

- It is not currently feasible to convert Camp Pendleton, in its entirety, to a State park. It may be possible to convert portions of the camp to public park uses, but even a partial conversion of the property would require long-term planning, agreements with the federal government, environmental remediation of various sites, and costs that cannot be accurately estimated at this time.
- For a variety of reasons, the usage of Camp Pendleton is changing. Although the Virginia National Guard still benefits from using Camp Pendleton, its dependence on the facility is declining, as National Guard training shifts to the much larger Fort Pickett. Consequently, the site is essentially being brokered into a multi-service training facility with a federal orientation. As a result, the focus of Camp Pendleton as the State's primary military reservation is lessening.

- The current goal of the National Guard is to make Camp Pendleton a financially self-supporting facility, principally through leases and use agreements with long- and short-term facility users. The General Assembly may wish to assess whether such a strategy is in the best interests of the Commonwealth. The General Assembly may also wish to consider alternative uses for Camp Pendleton, before long-term encumbrances to the property eliminate the feasibility of such uses in the future.
- A safety issue regarding the firing range at Camp Pendleton also needs to be addressed. When Camp Pendleton was originally founded in 1912 as the State Rifle Range, it was located in a then-remote area of the State. Since that time, population growth and residential encroachment have created safety issues which will be difficult and expensive to address. The National Guard should stop using the firing range until these safety issues can be fully addressed. As an alternative, the General Assembly may wish to direct the National Guard to close the range permanently.

Background on Camp Pendleton

Currently, the State Military Reservation consists of 325 acres (see figure, next page), on which over one hundred buildings are situated. The operation and maintenance of the installation is funded primarily by the federal government through the National Guard Bureau.

According to the Department of Military Affairs, the primary purpose of the State Military Reservation now is the on-site training of personnel and organizations of the Virginia National Guard. National Guard units from other states also train at the site, as do components of the U.S. Armed

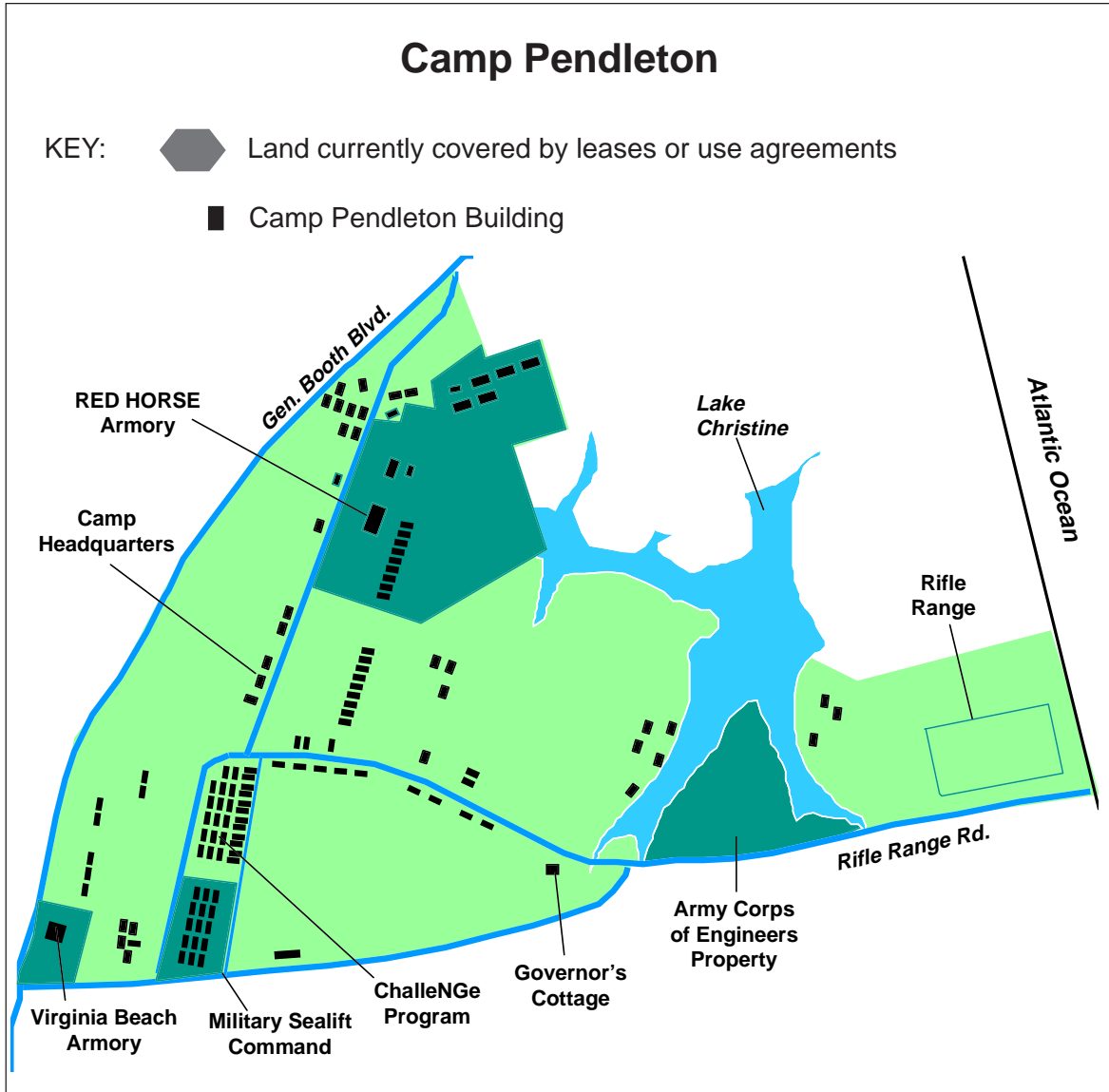
Forces. State and local civilian agencies sometimes conduct training at the site when facilities are not otherwise in use by military organizations. Facilities currently include the small arms range, the helicopter landing strip, classrooms, barracks, dining halls, maintenance garages, training fields, and the chapel.

Other uses involve tenants on the facility. The State and the federal government have entered into some commitments regarding specific parcels that are on or adjacent to Camp Pendleton property. The State leases to the federal government two properties: the 203rd RED HORSE Air National Guard Armory; and the Military Sealift Command buildings. Further, the State has a use agreement with the federal government regarding the Virginia Beach Army National Guard Armory. In addition to property it leases out, the National Guard licenses from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers a connecting piece of land between the main base and the rifle range on the beachfront.

Alternative Views on Best Use of Camp Pendleton Property

There are two competing conceptions concerning how Camp Pendleton property could be best utilized. One, the “military perspective,” is that Camp Pendleton has been and will continue to be essential for Virginia National Guard training and the overall military preparedness in southeastern Virginia. The other conception, the “public recreation perspective,” is that conditions have substantially changed since Camp Pendleton was created in 1912 and that the property’s best use would be as a public recreation area.

The Military Perspective. The military establishment — including nearby federal installations — is united in its opposition to converting Camp Pendleton to a State park. The Virginia National Guard views Camp Pendleton as being vital to its training, readiness, and morale. Active duty in-



stallations near Camp Pendleton see the facility as an important buffer between their own activities and civilian development in the area. In addition, many active duty units use Camp Pendleton's facilities for training purposes, particularly its temporary housing and classrooms. The military as a whole speaks of the "synergy" created between the various military establishments in the Hampton Roads area. According to this view, the close proximity of varied military properties, including Camp Pendleton, enhances the overall value of the area as a military loca-

tion. This synergy has been a valuable element in the State's efforts to attract military units from other states which have been forced to relocate as a result of the federal Base Realignment and Closure process.

The Public Recreation Perspective.

According to this view, Virginia Beach has become Virginia's primary beachfront destination as well as its most populous city. As Virginia Beach strives to improve its desirability as a tourist destination, the property on which Camp Pendleton sits is now a highly valuable and scarce resource which

merits greater public access. According to this view, since the Commonwealth has in essence acquired Fort Pickett, a large military facility in Southside Virginia, Camp Pendleton is now unnecessary and should be converted to public uses, such as a State park. The public recreation perspective is first examined in greater detail, then the military perspective.

THE PUBLIC RECREATION PERSPECTIVE

A major assumption behind the “public recreation perspective” regarding the best use of Camp Pendleton property is that there are strong public needs for additional beachfront access and recreational facilities in Virginia Beach. When examining the need for recreational space in Virginia Beach, the current ownership status of beachfront property in Virginia Beach is a primary issue.

Ownership of Beachfront Property

The biggest recreational draw of Virginia Beach as a resort city is the beaches. According to the *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan*, Virginia Beach has the majority of public beachfront in the State. Statewide, there are 33.3 miles of public beaches (as defined under the Public Beach Conservation and Development Act); 16.9 of those miles of public beach are in the City of Virginia Beach. At the same time, the majority of beachfront property in Virginia Beach is inaccessible to the public. Almost all of the beachfront in Virginia Beach is owned by the federal, State, and City governments (see figure, next page), with a small percentage that is privately owned. Except for the City-owned beaches, most of this property has restricted access and limited use.

Federal Ownership of Beachfront.

Over 13.7 miles of beach, approximately one-third of the City’s total, is owned by various federal agencies. Access to and use of

this land is restricted to various military and conservation purposes. Back Bay Wildlife Refuge and three military installations constitute the federal beachfront holdings in the City. The three military installations are:

- Little Creek Amphibious Base, with properties on the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean south of Camp Pendleton;
- Fort Story at Cape Henry; and
- Dam Neck Naval Base on the Atlantic Ocean south of Little Creek Amphibious Base annex.

State-Owned Beachfront. The State owns three large tracts of property with approximately seven miles of beachfront in Virginia Beach: Camp Pendleton, Seashore State Park, and False Cape State Park. Much of the beachfront, however, is inaccessible or has limited use.

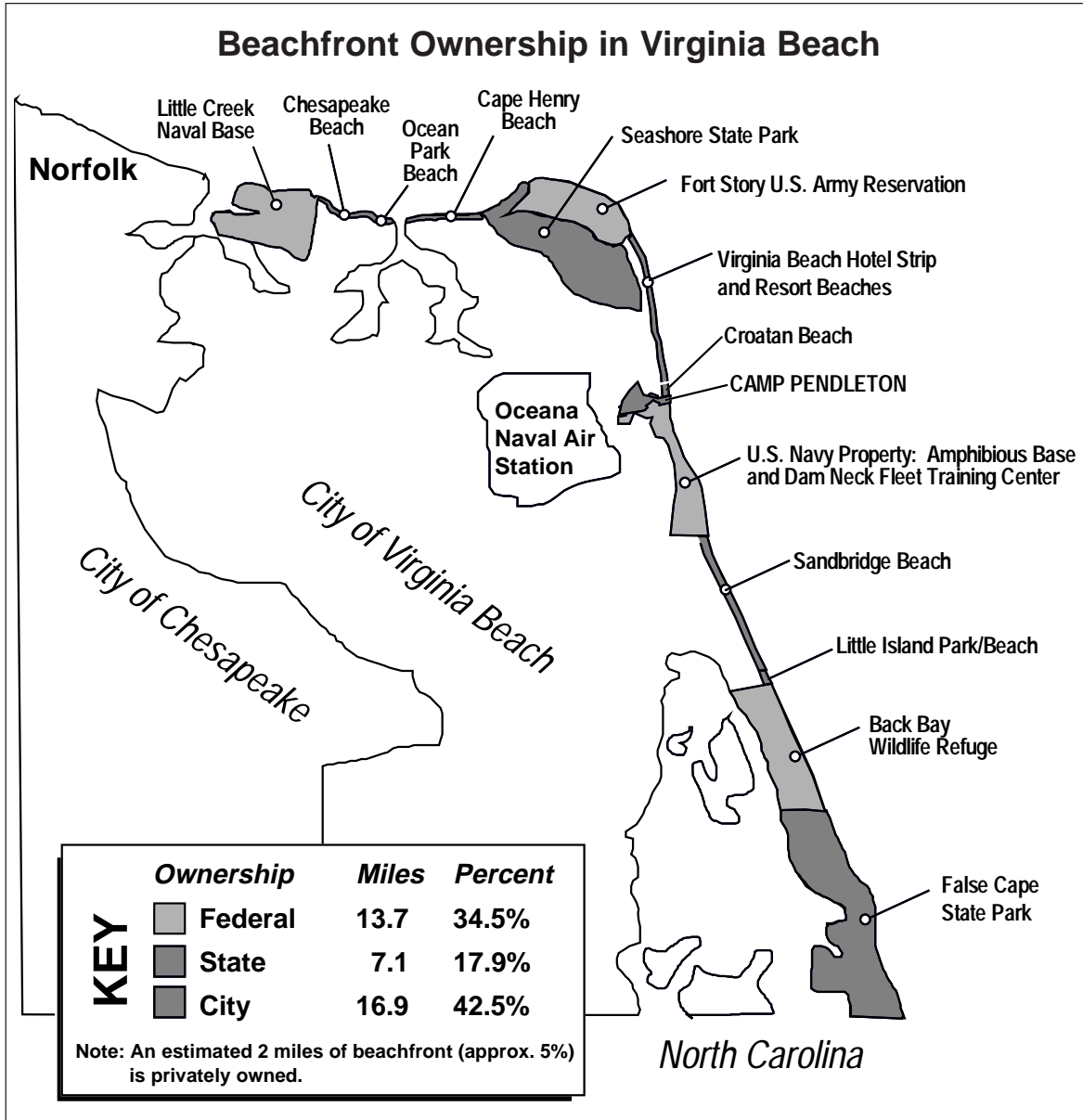
City-Owned Beachfront. The City of Virginia Beach currently owns approximately 16.9 miles of beachfront, which comprises the majority of the public-access beaches in the City. This situation contrasts with the fact that the City owned only 6.3 miles of beachfront in 1979. The eight beaches currently owned by the City of Virginia Beach are: Chesapeake Beach, Ocean Park Beach, Cape Henry Beach, Resort Beach North End, Resort Beach, Croatan Beach, Sandbridge Beach, and Little Island City Park.

Camp Pendleton: Not Much Acreage, But a Prime Oceanfront Location

In light of reviewing the needs for recreational beach space, several conclusions emerged in this analysis, including:

- Camp Pendleton is geographically situated less than one-half mile from the southern end of Virginia Beach’s

Beachfront Ownership in Virginia Beach



resort area, which is now the largest resort area in the State. As a result, Camp Pendleton is situated near frequently-visited tourist attractions (for example, Virginia Marine Science Museum) and recreational facilities, that serve many of the permanent residents as well as the 2.5 million overnight visitors who come to Virginia Beach each year. The City has been considering alternative uses of Camp Pendleton which would en-

hance the recreational value of this area.

In addition to exploring alternative uses of Camp Pendleton, the review identified two other means of addressing the need for additional beachfront in the Virginia Beach area.

- The Department of Conservation and Recreation could explore with the City of Virginia Beach ways to improve

public access to the 5,000 feet of beachfront at Seashore State Park.

- The City could improve public access to its 4.6 miles of Chesapeake Bay beachfront.

Overall, Camp Pendleton may not have much acreage to meet the statewide or regional demand for beachfront, but its proximity to the Virginia Beach resort area makes its oceanfront property highly valuable. The location of this property is a major factor when questioning whether military use is the best use of this property.

Recommendation (1). *The Department of Conservation and Recreation should explore with the City of Virginia Beach ways to improve public access to the beach at Seashore State Park.*

THE MILITARY PERSPECTIVE

The overall military perspective is that Camp Pendleton is essential to the activities of both the Virginia National Guard and adjacent federal military installations. However, the nature of Camp Pendleton's actual use has three aspects warranting more detailed examination.

- Utilization of Camp Pendleton has become much more varied, compared to the days when it was known as the State Rifle Range. Consequently, the focus of Camp Pendleton as the State's primary military facility for the Virginia National Guard is lessening, as Camp Pendleton is supporting more the activities of federal military units and civilian organizations.
- The National Guard has long-term leases and use agreements with tenants, and it plans to continue and expand this practice as it seeks to make Camp Pendleton financially

self-sufficient in the near future. Such a practice may eliminate alternative uses of the property in the future.

- The rifle range at Camp Pendleton now has safety issues that affect the feasibility of its continued operation.

Current Utilization of Camp Pendleton

Usage of the rifle range has declined over the years, while military and civilian organizations have made extensive use of Camp Pendleton for other purposes. Over 110,000 "usage days" were accounted for at Camp Pendleton during federal fiscal year 1997. Most of the usage days were by military units which use the post for its classroom and housing resources. A small military unit is able to use Camp Pendleton's classrooms, housing, administrative areas, and mess halls for a fairly complete non-tactical training experience. The fact that this training experience takes place in a leading resort area is a morale builder for the units able to use Camp Pendleton.

Although Camp Pendleton is operated by the VANG and used for military training activities, utilization by civilian organizations has increased and in federal fiscal year 1997 accounted for almost as many usage days as the military (see table). The usage days do not include regular activities of permanent party military assigned to the post, military tenants such as the Military Sealift Command, or regular non-military tenants such as the ChalleNGe program.

Virginia National Guard's Plans for Future Use of Pendleton

The variety of uses Camp Pendleton experiences is a result both of the need of the National Guard for the facility and the marketing of Camp Pendleton to other military and non-military users. It is the intent of the Virginia National Guard to make Camp Pendleton financially self-sufficient by the

Usage of Camp Pendleton (Units in Usage Days)

	FY 1994 ¹	FY 1995	FY 1996	FY 1997
National Guard ²	32,162	38,353	31,721	28,411
Other Military ³	34,937	33,311	31,154	31,008
Civilian	17,980	21,415	17,855	51,211
Total	85,079	93,079	80,730	110,630

¹FY denotes Federal Fiscal Year, from October 1 to September 30. Thus FY 1994 represents the period October 1, 1993 through September 30, 1994.

²National Guard includes the Air National Guard and the Army National Guard.

³Other Military includes all other Department of Defense (DOD) users, including Active Army, Army Reserve, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and DOD civilians.

year 2002. Thus the trend of diversifying the uses of Camp Pendleton can be expected to continue. While this strategy may make sense from the perspective of the Virginia National Guard, long-term leases and use agreements encumber the property and will make it difficult to use the property for alternative purposes, should the State want to do so.

Camp Pendleton's Rifle Range

On the rifle range, which is located on the property nearest the Atlantic Ocean, soldiers fire east towards the ocean at targets from firing points spread across the western boundary of the range. Earthen berms have been built to border the northern and southern edges of the range. A wooden fence approximately eight feet in height runs along the top of the range's northern berm (see figure, next page).

While the National Guard has taken a number of steps to ensure the safe operation of the range, the close proximity of civilian housing and beach activity raise serious safety issues. A June 1998 study on Camp Pendleton acknowledges the Guard's own concern with this issue. The National Guard has proactively built a wooden fence

to divide the range from the Croatan housing development in an attempt to avoid an unsafe situation, but is unable to completely eliminate safety concerns due to the close proximity of the homes which are literally a few feet from the fence.

To illustrate the basis for these concerns, the maximum range of an M-16 rifle (the weapon most frequently fired at Camp Pendleton) is about 3,100 meters. In contrast, much of the residential housing in the nearby Croatan neighborhood is within approximately 300 to 400 meters of the range's firing points. A misdirected round could easily hit and penetrate nearby housing. No such accident has ever been reported, but the risk exists and the liability for such an accident might well rest with the State.

Moreover, the necessity for the continued operation of the range seems questionable, given the existence of a more secluded range on Navy property a little more than a mile South of Camp Pendleton. Safer ranges, under the scheduling authority of the Virginia National Guard, also exist at Fort Pickett. In addition, an analysis of range usage at Camp Pendleton indicates that the primary users of the range are U.S. Navy units, not the National Guard. Given the

Rifle Range Northern Boundary Berm and Fence Viewed from Safety Observer Tower



Note: Refer to Figure 5, page 40, for camera angle.

safety issues involved and the nature of the range's use, serious consideration should be given to closing the Camp Pendleton rifle range. Should this action be taken, it will be necessary to initiate environmental remediation of the property under the provisions of federal environmental laws.

Recommendation (2). *The General Assembly may wish to consider amending §44-19 of the Code of Virginia to require gubernatorial or legislative approval of all long-term encumbrances of property at Camp Pendleton.*

Recommendation (3). *Due to the residential development that has occurred adjacent to Camp Pendleton, the General As-*

sembly may wish to consider directing the Department of Military Affairs to permanently close the rifle range at the facility.

Recommendation (4). *If a long-term decision is made not to permanently close the range, the General Assembly may wish to direct the Secretary of Public Safety to bring in independent safety experts to fully assess the range at Camp Pendleton and, if possible, make recommendations on steps needed to ensure the range is safe to operate with residential housing and tourist beaches in close proximity. Use of the range should be suspended until the conclusion of the safety review and completion of necessary improvements.*

Recommendation (5). *The Virginia National Guard should begin the process of developing use agreements with the U.S. Navy for Virginia Army and Air National Guard use of the ranges at the Dam Neck Fleet Training Center.*

Recommendation (6). *If the range at Camp Pendleton is permanently closed, the General Assembly may also wish to consider directing the Department of Environmental Quality to conduct a full environmental assessment of steps necessary to remediate the property for other uses. This assessment should also include the issue of unexploded ordnance.*

THE FEASIBILITY OF CONVERTING CAMP PENDLETON TO A STATE PARK

It is not feasible to convert Camp Pendleton, in its entirety, to a State park because of usage, long-term leases, environmental issues, the cost of replacing facilities, and other factors. However, there is a need for public recreation property in the Virginia Beach area, and portions of the Camp Pendleton property lend themselves to public use to enhance tourism.

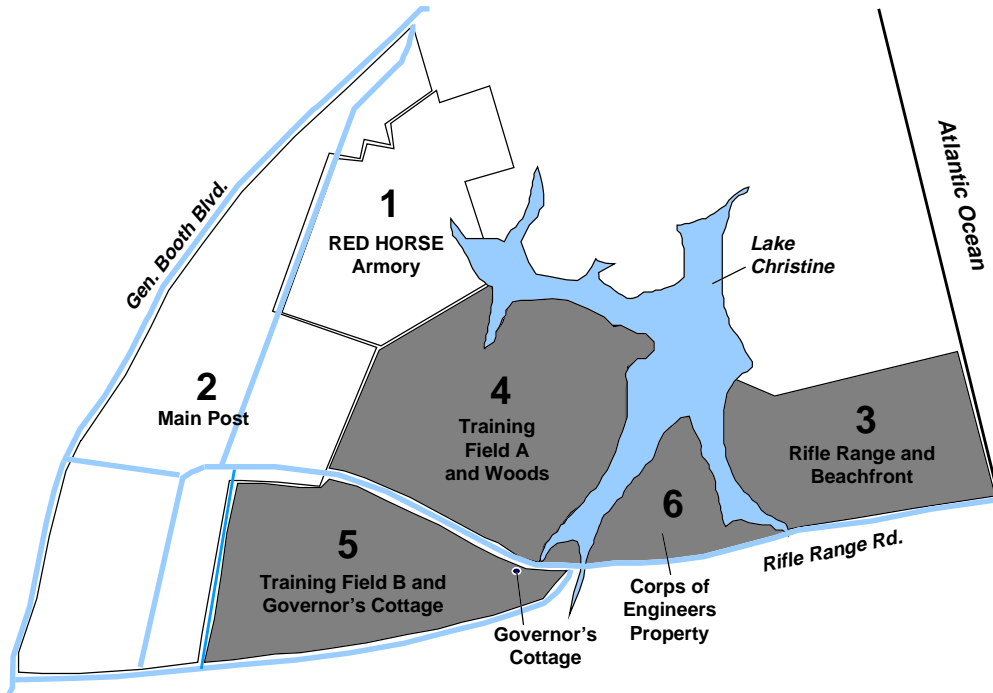
There are four principal factors which must be addressed in determining the potential conversion of Camp Pendleton to a State park. These factors are: (1) a balancing of the military need for the facility and the competing need of the public for recreational property in the area; (2) current, long-term leasing and use agreement practices which encumber the property; (3) the feasibility of environmentally remediating the Camp Pendleton properties; and (4) the overall benefits and costs to the Virginia National Guard of relocating training from Camp Pendleton to other facilities, such as Fort Pickett.

Analysis of the above factors leads to the conclusion that it is not feasible to convert Camp Pendleton in its entirety to a State

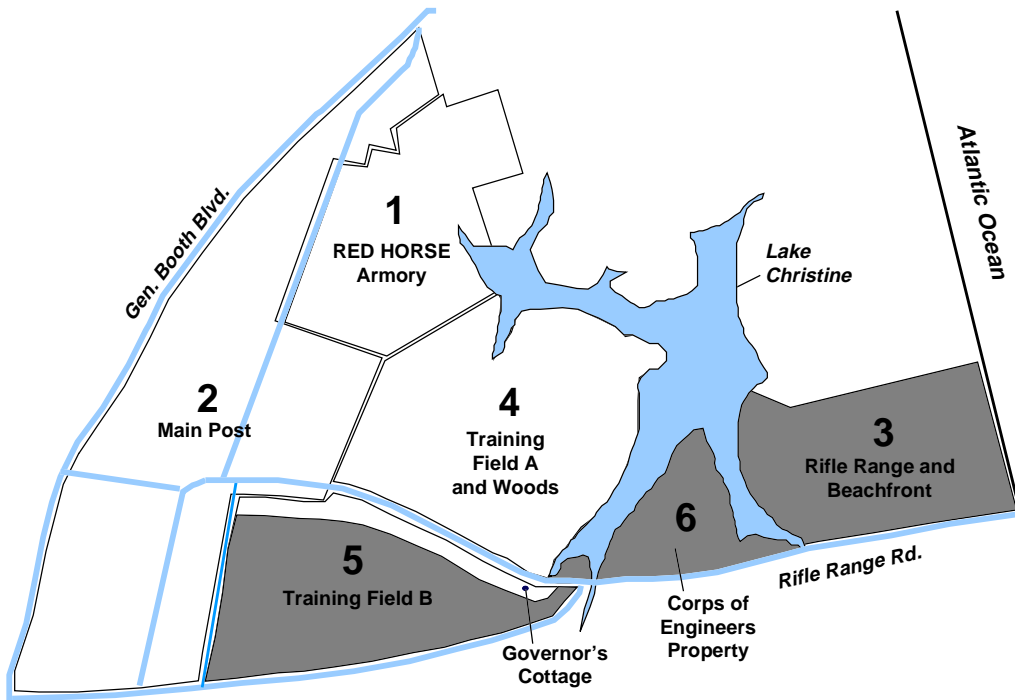
park. Despite these limitations, there are a variety of policy options open to the State regarding the site. Five options – ranging from no change to the designation of a small State park — are presented for legislative consideration:

1. Make no changes to Camp Pendleton or to the Department of Military Affairs' management of Camp Pendleton.
2. Preserve State flexibility for the future development of Camp Pendleton for alternative purposes by restricting future encumbrances on the property.
3. Direct the Secretary of Public Safety to provide for an independent safety review of the Camp Pendleton rifle range and, if possible, make appropriate changes to the range. Suspend use of the range until the conclusion of the safety review and the completion of needed modifications.
4. Direct the Department of Military Affairs to close its rifle range at Camp Pendleton, develop usage agreements with neighboring military facilities for range use, and begin the environmental remediation of the range.
5. Designate portions of Camp Pendleton for conversion to a State park; initiate planning for acquiring permanent access to the beachfront through Corps of Engineers property; and develop plans for the conversion of substantial portions of Camp Pendleton to a State park. Two alternate proposals for a small State park are shown in the figures on the next page.

Larger Park Option



Smaller Park Option



The advantages and disadvantages of each of these options is discussed in detail in Chapter IV of this report. Many conditions would have to be met to bring about any conversion of Camp Pendleton to a State park. For such a conversion to be feasible, the Commonwealth would need to make policy choices to change the use of the property (or portions of it) and develop a long-term plan in support of such a policy. Moreover, such an approach is not entirely under the State's control.

To have a workable, though small, park facility, the cooperation of the federal government would be essential. Access to Camp Pendleton's beachfront area in either of the feasible park options runs through Parcel 6 (see figure, previous page), which is owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Acquiring the use of this parcel for recreational purposes is a formidable concern, as active duty military units in the area and the Congressman representing the area are all adamantly opposed to the conversion of Camp Pendleton to a State park.

Were the Commonwealth to pursue a decision to change the use of Camp Pendleton, any feasible approach would need to address the following issues:

- developing agreements with the federal government for access to the

beachfront through property owned by the Corps of Engineers;

- restricting the ability of the National Guard to further encumber the property in the future;
- providing funding, if necessary, for the relocation of those activities and facilities displaced by the conversion, and
- determining and funding needed environmental remediation of converted property.

Without such a policy decision and a comprehensive plan to implement it, it is likely that the Camp Pendleton property will be further developed and leased. If that occurs, the Commonwealth could lose the opportunity to convert the property in any meaningful way for the foreseeable future.

Recommendation (7). *The General Assembly may wish to make a long-term policy decision regarding the future use of Camp Pendleton. Should the General Assembly adopt such a policy, the Department of Military Affairs should revise its strategic plan to reflect legislative intent.*

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I. Introduction

The State Military Reservation, which is also called Camp Pendleton, is a State military installation in Virginia Beach, on property that is owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia. The State has traditionally allocated the property primarily for the use of the Virginia National Guard, with exceptions during World War I and World War II, when it was leased to the federal armed services. Camp Pendleton was originally created in 1912 in what was then a relatively remote, sparsely populated area. Since then, the City of Virginia Beach has grown and developed around the facility. The encroachment of development — public, private, and commercial — has led to repeated requests by the City of Virginia Beach to convert Camp Pendleton to other uses.

Camp Pendleton itself has changed significantly in recent years, and there is interest in substantially more change in the future. While the land area of Camp Pendleton was approximately 900 acres in 1987, about 550 acres are currently being sold to the City of Virginia Beach. Further, the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) has been diversifying the use of the remaining facilities and land. This diversification has included long-term leases to tenant military units and opening facilities to greater civilian use. With the State's recent takeover of use of Fort Pickett, interest in the complete conversion of Camp Pendleton property from military use to public recreational use has heightened. That interest is one reason this study was requested by the General Assembly.

This chapter presents background information concerning Camp Pendleton and this study of the feasibility of converting it to a State park. First, the history of Camp Pendleton and its relationship with the City of Virginia Beach are discussed in greater detail. Then the study mandate and research activities are described. Finally, the organization of the rest of this report is summarized.

CAMP PENDLETON AND ITS RELATION TO THE CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

The history of Camp Pendleton and its relation to the City of Virginia Beach can be characterized in terms of three periods of time: (1) the creation and early years of the facility up to the end of World War II; (2) changes to the facility from the end of World War II up to the 1979 Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) study of Camp Pendleton; and (3) changes and developments since the 1979 JLARC study. This historical background provides a context for understanding the current status on Camp Pendleton property, and the alternative views on the best use of the property.

Creation and Early Years of Camp Pendleton

The choice of location for Camp Pendleton originated when the 1908 session of the General Assembly appropriated money for the purchase of a permanent rifle range and camp site for Virginia National Guard training. A proposal by Norfolk businessmen to donate 350 acres won acceptance by the Military Board, which was studying various proposals for alternative locations. The land was located about a mile south of the small resort community of Virginia Beach, then a village of under 2,000 inhabitants. On November 23, 1912, the new installation was completed, and was called the State Rifle Range.

In 1917, the United States entered World War I, leading to mobilization of the Virginia National Guard. According to a DMA history of the Virginia National Guard, Virginia had no need of the facility during the war and the Navy needed a place to train crewmen. Therefore, the State leased the installation to the Navy Department, beginning in August 1917. The installation became known as the United States Navy Rifle Range, Virginia Beach. Additional buildings were constructed and improvements were made to the rifle range itself.

The Navy returned the property to the State in June 1920. Rehabilitation work prepared the range for Virginia National Guard use once again. On June 15, 1928 the name of the installation was officially changed to the State Military Reservation. At first the Virginia National Guard rented neighboring tracts. But during the late 1930s, funds became available to purchase an additional 586 acres. Further, Depression-era funds and laborers from relief projects upgraded the facilities in general and began solving a perennial problem with mosquitoes.

In the summer of 1940, announcement of the impending mobilization of the Virginia National Guard led to a second period of federal utilization of the facility. In August 1940 the Adjutant General turned the entire installation over to the federal War Department. The War Department renamed the facility Camp Pendleton, after William Nelson Pendleton (the Confederate Army commander who was in charge of artillery for the Army of Northern Virginia until after the Battle of Gettysburg). The label has remained in common use ever since, although technically it ceased to apply in 1946, when the property reverted again to State control. The General Assembly has never officially changed the name of the State Military Reservation to Camp Pendleton.

Many of the buildings on the main base were constructed during World War II, to support military training needed at that time. During World War II, the population of the area now comprising Virginia Beach was less than 6,000.

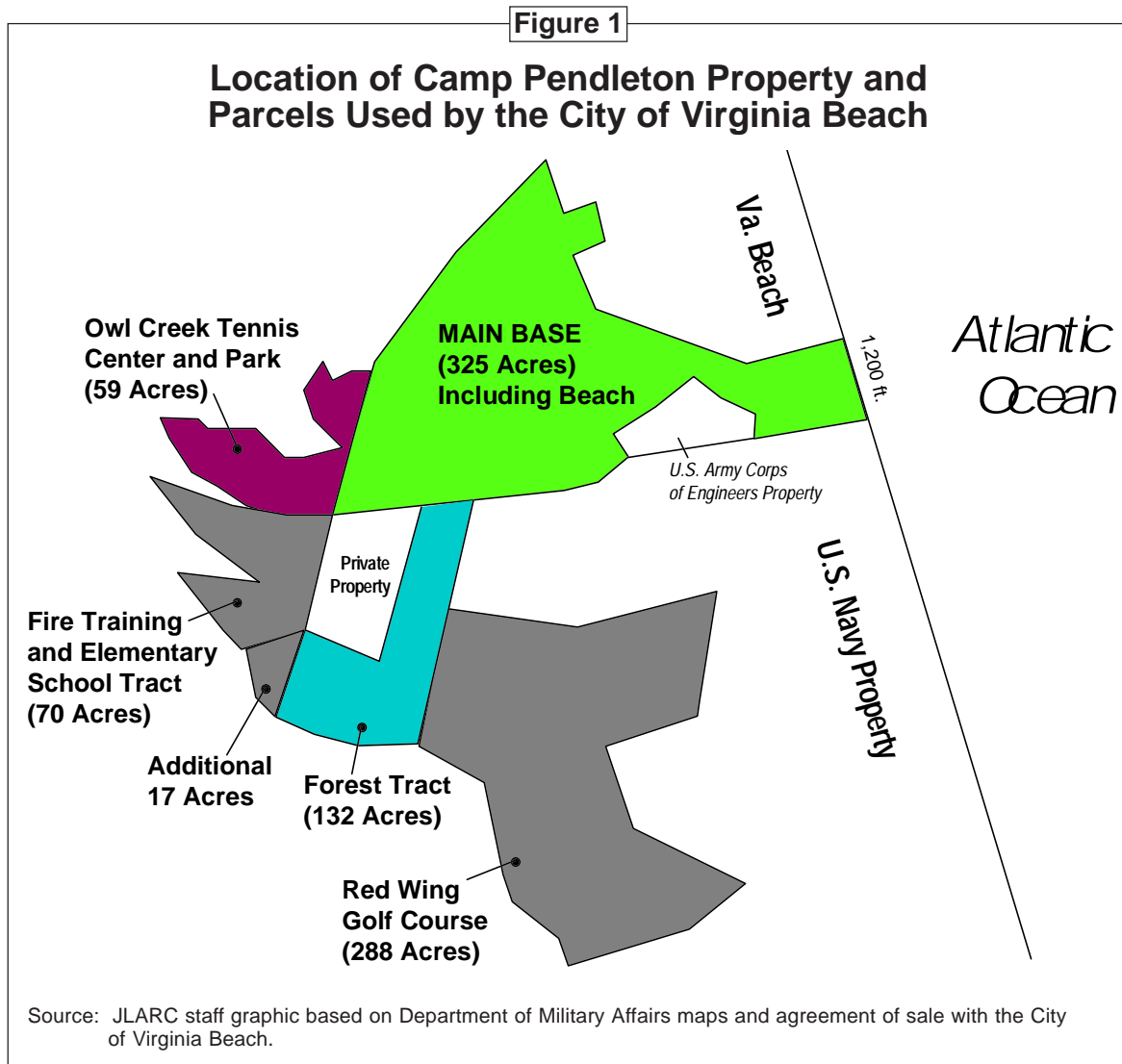
Changes from the End of World War II to the 1979 JLARC study

Virginia National Guard training at Camp Pendleton began to change during the postwar years. In 1951, the Army required that the much larger facilities at Forts Pickett and A.P. Hill be used for more realistic field training. Consequently, the pri-

mary function at Camp Pendleton gradually shifted to weekend training, special instruction, and classroom training.

During the same period, the population in the area that now comprises Virginia Beach rapidly increased. In 1950, the population was less than 6,000. By 1977, it was 238,000. Consequently, the area surrounding Camp Pendleton was dramatically changing, from sparsely populated rural wetlands to more densely populated suburbanizing residential neighborhoods and extensions of the tourist area along the beachfront.

Furthermore, by 1979 Camp Pendleton had been separated by road networks and usage into five distinct parcels. The five parcels are shown in Figure 1. DMA continued to control three parcels (the main base parcel, the forest tract, and an additional 17 acres) which totaled 474 acres. But the City of Virginia Beach had long-term leases on the remaining three parcels of Camp Pendleton property, which totaled 417



acres. Two of the three parcels leased by the City — Owl's Creek Tennis Center (59 acres) and the Red Wing Golf Course (288 acres) — were used for public recreation. The third parcel consisting of 70 acres was leased to the City for public facilities (a fire training center, a fire station and a public school).

In light of these changes over the years, the General Assembly in the 1978 session directed JLARC to study how Camp Pendleton property was utilized and what needs could be addressed. An advisory task force consisting of 12 additional appointees assisted the Commission in its study. In that study, JLARC staff evaluated:

- the use of the Camp Pendleton property;
- the needs of the Virginia National Guard for training space and facilities;
- the needs of communities contiguous to Camp Pendleton for land to be used for public purposes; and
- the degree to which and the conditions under which portions of Camp Pendleton could be used for public and private purposes.

The study acknowledged the value of Camp Pendleton to the Virginia National Guard and documented the uses made of the facility. The task force and Commission asked that options be developed for alternative uses of the facility. JLARC staff proposed ten “decision options and recommendations” ranging from “no change to the status of Camp Pendleton” to “disposal of all State Military Reservation properties.” A majority of the study committee members could be found to favor only three of the proposals:

- memorialization of Congress for the return of Fort Story property;
- no change to status of Camp Pendleton; and
- development of procedures and guidelines for use of Camp Pendleton.

Four minority opinions were submitted by legislators serving on the advisory task force. These minority opinions generally supported recreational use of the facility. At issue were essentially two conflicting points of view. One held that using the property as a military reservation was not the best use of a valuable and scarce recreational resource. The opposing point of view held that the property represented an attractive, even essential, State military training facility which promoted National Guard readiness and morale.

Changes Since the 1979 JLARC Study

The population of the City of Virginia Beach has continued to increase rapidly in recent years, from 238,000 in 1977 to an estimated 420,200 in 1997. In that time period, Virginia Beach became the most populous city in the State. With the tremendous growth in population also came growth in the demands for tourist facilities and recreational amenities to foster economic development and to improve the quality of

life of city residents. In addition, residential development has encroached on the northern boundary of the facility.

Throughout the 1980s, the City negotiated with the State on the expansion of the Red Wing Golf Course, increased day use of the Camp Pendleton Beach, and the acquisition of additional land along General Booth Boulevard for the widening of the highway in front of the Virginia Marine Science Museum. All of these initiatives reflected the City's interest in acquiring or at least gaining greater access to additional Camp Pendleton property.

Virginia Beach's continuing efforts to gain control of Camp Pendleton resulted in some strained relations with State officials. In 1987, the Secretary of Public Safety and Transportation announced that 564 acres of Camp Pendleton were declared to be surplus property and to be sold. The properties to be sold consisted of: (1) the Red Wing Golf Course (288 acres); (2) the forest tract, which could be used to expand the Red Wing Golf Course (130 acres); (3) the tract used for schools and the City fire department (70 acres); (4) the Owl's Creek Tennis Center (59 acres); and (5) an additional 17 acres west of General Booth Boulevard. (Figure 1 shows the location of each of these parcels in relation to the Main Base.) Under the Secretary's proposal, the City of Virginia Beach would be given first opportunity to purchase the land at fair market value; otherwise, the land would be sold to the public, which could include private developers. Furthermore, with regard to Camp Pendleton's beachfront property, the Secretary told the City that there probably would be "greater military use of the firing ranges," which would "reduce the amount of time the beach is available to the City."

The City strongly denounced the State's plan to sell the property at fair market value, while leases were still in effect. The City had been leasing most of the property, and the leases would not have expired for many years — for example, 1999 for the Red Wing Golf Course, and 2015 for the fire training tract and the Owl's Creek Tennis Center property. The City Council passed a resolution opposing the land sale. The resolution stated: "The citizens of Virginia Beach should not have to use their tax money to purchase said property, which is open to all of the citizens of the commonwealth and to the general public on equal terms." City officials especially objected to the Secretary's plan stipulating that either: (1) the City would have to buy the land at the fair market value (which is the same price that would be charged to private developers); or else (2) the property would be sold to the public (which could include private developers). City officials argued that the City should get a price break on the land, because the property would be used for public purposes, such as public recreation, schools and fire-fighting, rather than for commercial activities.

After meeting with representatives from the City, the Governor agreed to a compromise that allowed the City to buy the land at a price lower than fair market value. However, negotiations over the details of the agreement for sale continued for years. The agreement of sale was finalized on November 12, 1991.

According to the agreement of sale documented in Chapter 690 of the 1994 Acts of Assembly and Chapter 912 of the 1996 Acts of Assembly, the City of Virginia

Beach will make payments to the State according to the following schedule:

- by January 1, 1997 — \$884,879.50;
- by July 1, 1997 — \$874,879.50;
- by July 1, 1998 — \$874,879.50;
- by July 1, 1999 — \$864,879.50; and
- by December 31, 2000 — \$2,800,000.00.

At the same time, agreed-upon “take down” prices of the tracts to be sold were established:

- Red Wing Golf Course — \$1,385,000;
- Forest Tract — \$865,000;
- Fire Training / Elementary School Tract — \$1,462,500; and
- Owls Creek Tract — \$1,730,000.

As the City accumulates credit for payments to the State over time, then it may select which tracts are to be conveyed. Currently, the Owl’s Creek Tract is the first tract in the process of being conveyed to the City. Transfer of ownership of this tract has been accomplished. The City, up to this point, has not yet indicated to the State the order in which it will request the other tracts to be conveyed. Assuming the City continues to make its payments according to the schedule, however, the State recognizes that it will be requesting conveyance of all tracts sometime after July 1, 1999.

Current Status of Camp Pendleton Property

Currently, Camp Pendleton consists of 325 acres (the “Main Base” in Figure 1), on which over 100 buildings are situated. The operation and maintenance of the installation is funded primarily by the federal government through the National Guard Bureau. Two federal employees work at the site in the scheduling and issuance of buildings. Twelve Commonwealth employees, whose salaries are paid by the federal government, maintain the real property and facilities. In addition, 41 full-time staff work on the post with the Commonwealth Youth ChalleNGe program, a federally-funded military-style training program for high school dropouts. Further, many other federal employees work on the post in facilities leased to the Navy’s Military Sealift Command.

In the past, the federal government was the primary source of funding to operate Camp Pendleton. For example, until FY 1993 funding for Camp Pendleton was approximately \$950,000, coming primarily from the federal government. In more recent years, federal Department of Defense funding for the facility has declined, as shown in Table 1. Funding for Camp Pendleton in FY 1999 is approximately \$550,000, of which \$250,000 is now from the State, and the remainder is obtained through a lease with the Military Sealift Command, rental fees, billeting, the beach lease with the City of Virginia Beach, and limited federal funds. DMA staff reported that until the year 2002, revenues from the utilization of Camp Pendleton, leases, and the federal government are not anticipated to be sufficient to maintain operation of the facility.

Table 1

Camp Pendleton Funding, FY 1996 - FY 1998

Fiscal Year	Federal	State	Other	Total
1996	\$1,014,958	\$441	\$111,713	\$1,127,112
1997	653,993	131,547	46,689	832,229
1998	191,103	391,576	31,925	614,605

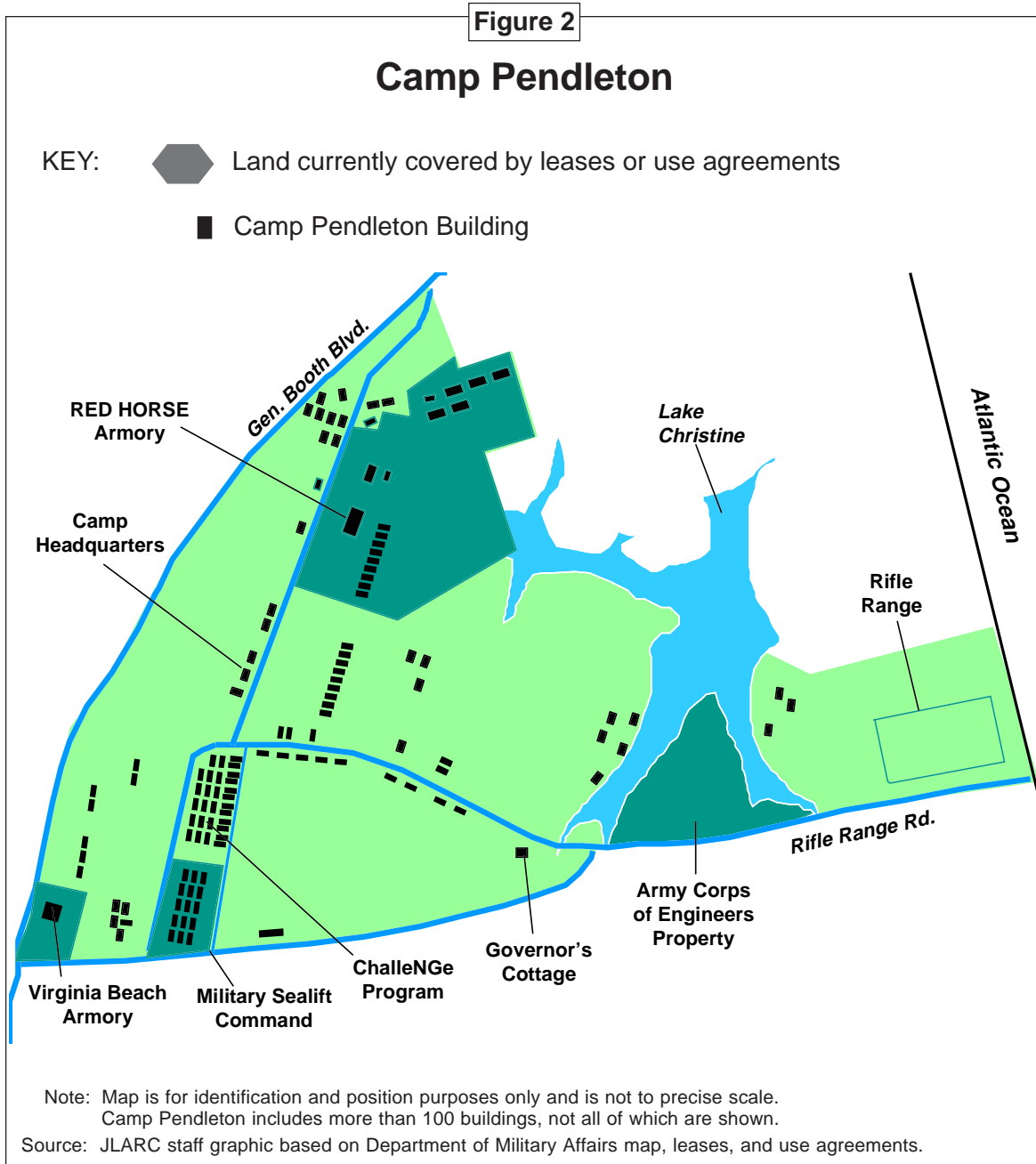
Source: Department of Military Affairs.

However, in the year 2002, additional revenue is anticipated from the Military Sealift Command, as well as from the Army National Guard. Therefore, DMA has stated its goal that in the year 2002, or shortly thereafter, Camp Pendleton should be self-sustaining and not in need of direct State support to maintain a minimum level of operation.

According to DMA, the primary purpose of the State Military Reservation now is the on-site training of personnel and organizations of the Virginia Army National Guard. National Guard units from other states also train at the site, as do components of the U.S. Armed Forces. State and local civilian agencies sometimes conduct training at the site when facilities are not otherwise in use by military organizations. Facilities currently include the small arms range, the helicopter landing strip, classrooms, barracks, dining halls, maintenance garages, training fields, and the chapel. Chapter III further discusses the current facilities and usage of Camp Pendleton property.

In addition, the State and the federal government have entered into some commitments regarding specific parcels that are on or adjacent to Camp Pendleton property. The State leases to the federal government two properties: the 203rd RED HORSE Air National Guard Armory; and the Military Sealift Command buildings. Further, the State has a use agreement with the federal government regarding the Virginia Beach Army National Guard Armory. The State also licenses from the federal government property that is adjacent to Camp Pendleton: the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land between the main base and the rifle range at the beach. The parcels affected by these leases and agreements are shown in Figure 2. The nature of these leases and use agreements are summarized below; copies of the full text of these leases are available for review at the JLARC office.

RED HORSE (Air Guard) Armory. The Commonwealth of Virginia leases 40 acres to the U.S. Government (in particular, the Air Force), which the Air Force leases back to the Commonwealth of Virginia for Air National Guard training. The tenant unit is the 203rd Flight of the Rapid Engineering Deployable Heavy Operations Repair Squadron Engineers, or RED HORSE. The lease is for 50 years beginning in 1987, and will expire in 2037. The federal government can *add* uses to the land, but if



the primary use of the land changes (that is, Air National Guard purposes), then the lease is no longer valid. The State has the power to revoke the lease before the year 2037, but if it does, then it has to reimburse the federal government for the costs of building the unit's facilities (which total approximately \$7.55 million), prorated according to how much time would be left in the lease, or replace it with a like structure (which has little chance of occurring without new construction, and is estimated to approach \$11 million in 1998 dollars). The RED HORSE unit has 28 full-time personnel and three State employees. The National Guard contingent of the RED HORSE unit has 11 officers and 194 enlisted personnel.

Virginia Beach Armory. While the Virginia Beach armory is owned by the State, the federal-State agreement regarding its use is in effect for 25 years. The agreement started in 1987, after construction of the armory was completed, and the federal government (along with the State) accepted the building as an armory. If the State were to stop using the Virginia Beach armory for Army National Guard purposes in these 25 years, it would have to reimburse the federal government for its share of the construction costs (prorated according to how much time is left in the agreement).

Military Sealift Command. This lease is between the Commonwealth of Virginia, DMA, and the U.S. Navy. The current lease runs for five years (starting in 1996), and expires in 2001. However, the federal government has three additional five-year options for renewing the lease. Some clauses in the agreement are worth noting. According to Section 21 of the lease agreement, the State may terminate the lease for any of the following reasons: (1) state of emergency declared by the Governor or the General Assembly; (2) the federal government defaulting on any of the terms or conditions of the lease; (3) inactivation or closing of Camp Pendleton as a military reservation; or (4) the leased property ceases to be used for the purpose for which it was originally leased. Another clause was that the federal government may terminate the lease with a 60-day notice. DMA staff indicated that such termination is unlikely, given how much money the Navy has spent on construction of the buildings to make them better suit their uses. Over a five-year term, the Navy has agreed to pay total rent of \$1.37 million, with the cash payment of around \$800,000. There were rent credits to the Navy for bringing the buildings “up to code”, but they did not cover “conveniences.” So the total rent is discounted by certain construction costs, which DMA staff said came to about \$450,000 for renovations. In addition, locating the Military Sealift Command at Camp Pendleton brought 332 jobs to Virginia Beach with an average annual salary of approximately \$45,000.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Land. The Army Corps of Engineers currently owns 27.5 acres of land that borders Lake Christine and the road connecting the main base to the rifle range at the beach. The Army has given the Commonwealth of Virginia a license to use the land for 25 years. The license expires in 2017. The difference between a license and a lease is that a license can be more restrictive regarding the use of a parcel for a specific purpose, when a lease is not. Further, the federal government can revoke the license at will with 30-day notice.

Alternative Views on Best Use of Camp Pendleton Property

There are still two competing conceptions concerning how Camp Pendleton property could be best utilized. One, which henceforth will be called the “military perspective,” is that Camp Pendleton has been and will continue to be essential for Virginia National Guard training and overall military preparedness in southeastern Virginia. Therefore, according to this point of view, the facilities and location of Camp Pendleton make it an installation that cannot be replaced without incurring prohibitively high costs or serious reductions in military readiness. The other view, henceforth the “public recreation perspective,” is that conditions have substantially changed since

Camp Pendleton was created in 1912. According to this view, Virginia Beach has become Virginia's primary beachfront destination as well as most populous city; therefore, as Virginia Beach strives to improve its desirability as a tourist destination and its quality of life for residents, the property on which Camp Pendleton sits is now a highly valuable and scarce resource to which the public should have greater access. According to this view, since the Commonwealth has in essence acquired Fort Pickett, a large military facility in Southside Virginia, Camp Pendleton is now entirely unnecessary and should be converted to public uses, such as a State park.

JLARC REVIEW

Item 16G of the 1998 Appropriation Act directed JLARC to study the feasibility of converting the State Military Reservation (Camp Pendleton) to a State park (Appendix A). JLARC is also directed to address:

- the need for additional oceanfront access and State park recreation areas in southeastern Virginia;
- the impact on tenants at the facility;
- cost and benefits to the Virginia National Guard in relocating all remaining training functions to Fort Pickett; and
- environmental remediation issues.

Research Activities

Research activities undertaken to address the study mandate included interviews, site visits, a title search, document reviews, a review of utilization records, and initial attempts at cost-benefit analyses.

Interviews. During the study, JLARC staff conducted interviews, either in person or by telephone, with the following:

- Department of Military Affairs staff, including Camp Pendleton staff;
- U.S. Army and Navy officials;
- the United States Congressman representing Virginia Beach, and his staff;
- Officials and staff from the City of Virginia Beach;
- Department of Conservation and Recreation staff;

- Department of General Services (Bureau of Real Property Management) staff; and
- Department of Environmental Quality staff.

Site Visits. JLARC staff made on-site visits to Camp Pendleton, reviewing the rifle range, barracks, mess halls, and other facilities on the base. For comparison purposes, site visits were also made to Fort Pickett and other military installations. Site visits were also made to Virginia Beach to observe the neighborhoods surrounding Camp Pendleton and to assess the beachfront, the recreational facilities, and additional needs identified by City staff. JLARC staff also examined the area surrounding Camp Pendleton by helicopter.

Title Search. JLARC staff consulted Bureau of Real Property Management (Department of General Services) staff and Department of Military Affairs staff to verify ownership, boundaries, and restrictions on the Camp Pendleton properties.

Document Reviews. A number of different documents were reviewed during the study. They included:

- the Department of Military Affairs strategic plan;
- various military regulations and field manuals;
- leases, licenses, and use agreements on Camp Pendleton property;
- the 1991 agreement of sale of Camp Pendleton property to the City of Virginia Beach;
- correspondence between the City of Virginia Beach and the Commonwealth of Virginia regarding Camp Pendleton property;
- resolutions passed by the City Council of Virginia Beach regarding Camp Pendleton property;
- the City of Virginia Beach Comprehensive Plan;
- the City of Virginia Beach Outdoors Plan;
- the 1989 and 1996 *Virginia Outdoors Plan*;
- U.S. Army regulations regarding the establishment and operation of rifle ranges; and
- U.S. General Accounting Office reports and other federal documents regarding environmental remediation issues and costs associated with U.S. military base closures.

Utilization Record Review. Utilization records reported to the National Guard Bureau (U.S. Department of Defense) by Camp Pendleton staff were analyzed. These records covered the time period from October 1990 to May 1998.

Cost-Benefit Analyses. To address part of the study mandate, JLARC staff began to estimate the costs associated with moving National Guard training operations from Camp Pendleton to Fort Pickett, and assessed the benefits as well. As the study progressed, it became evident that existing encumbrances on the property rendered moot the idea of totally relocating all National Guard training operations. Where appropriate, some costs are estimated. However, decisions by the General Assembly on the long-term use of the property would be necessary before a meaningful quantitative cost-benefit analysis could be done of relocation costs, environmental remediation, and other issues.

REPORT ORGANIZATION

This chapter has provided a historical overview of the State Military Reservation and its relation to the City of Virginia Beach, as well as introducing two competing conceptions concerning how Camp Pendleton property could be best utilized: the “public recreation perspective,” and the “military perspective.” Chapter II provides further discussion of the need for recreational space in the City of Virginia Beach, which is part of the “public recreation perspective” on how Camp Pendleton property could be used. Chapter III presents further discussion of the current function and uses of Camp Pendleton, and elaborates on the “military perspective” regarding how the property could be best utilized. Chapter IV assesses the feasibility of converting Camp Pendleton to a State park and presents options that are available to the State for future use of the facility’s property, with some analysis of their advantages and disadvantages.

II. The Need for Public Recreational Space in Virginia Beach

A major assumption behind the “public recreation perspective” regarding the best use of Camp Pendleton property is that there are strong public needs for additional beachfront access and recreational facilities in Virginia Beach. These public needs result in part from the growth in population and tourism that Virginia Beach has experienced in the last few decades. Further, the study mandate directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to examine “the need for additional oceanfront access and state park recreation areas in southeastern Virginia.”

Therefore, the first part of this chapter focuses on Virginia Beach and the Camp Pendleton area, with a review of the beachfront areas and other recreational areas in the City, the current City tourism and visitation picture, and the City’s vision for possible future uses of the land on which Camp Pendleton is situated. Overall, the City currently owns approximately ten more miles of beachfront than it did in 1979. Improving public access to the 4.6 miles of beachfront along the Chesapeake Bay beaches which the City now owns and to the one mile of beachfront at Seashore State Park could do more to meet the public demand for beach space than could changing the status of the 0.2 miles of Camp Pendleton beachfront property to a State park.

The second part of this chapter builds on the approaches developed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to estimate the demand, the supply, and the unmet need for beach space and other recreational facilities in the Hampton Roads area as well as statewide.

RECREATIONAL SPACE AND TOURISM IN VIRGINIA BEACH

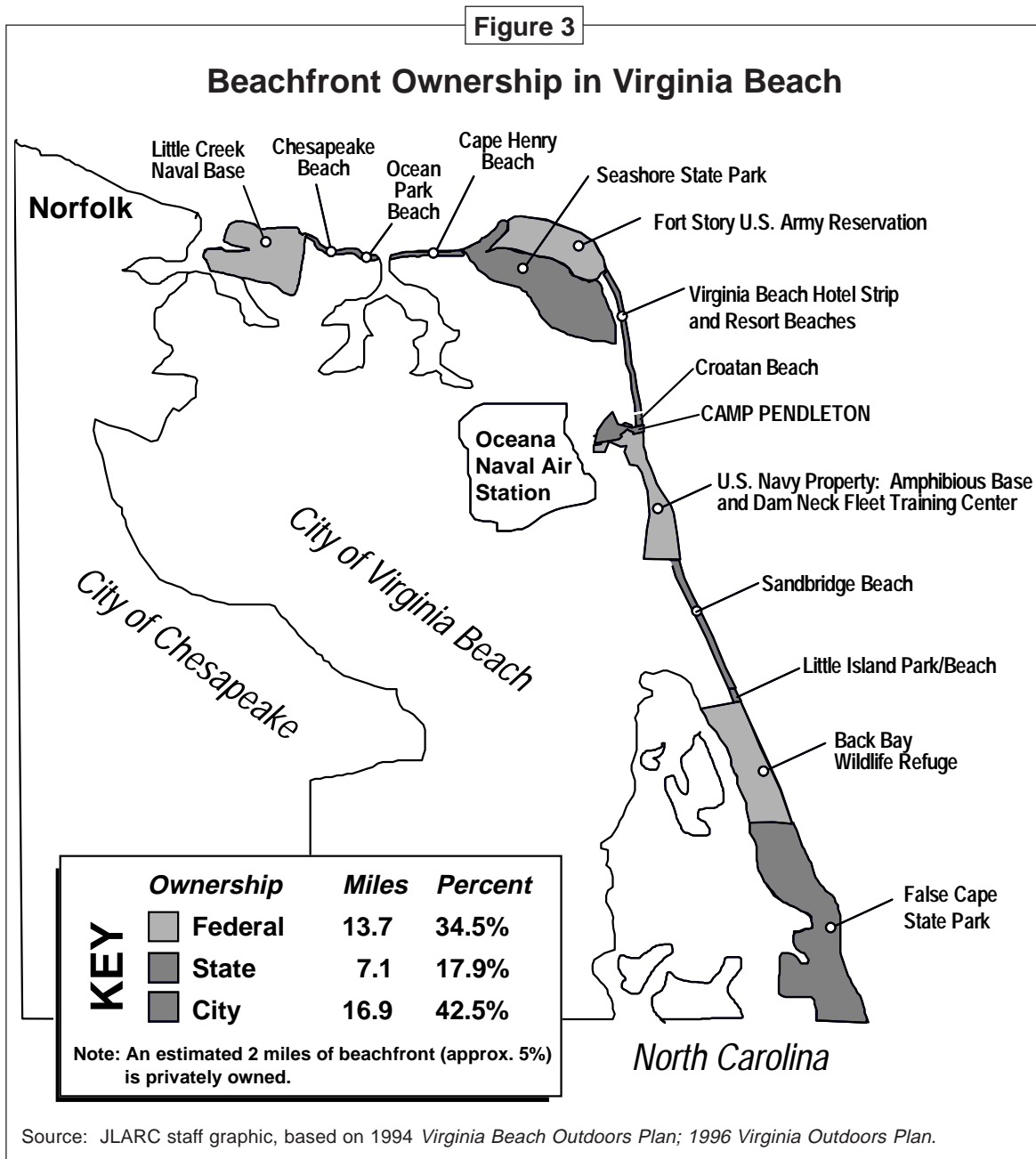
When examining the need for recreational space in Virginia Beach, the current ownership status of beachfront property in Virginia Beach is a primary issue. However, to provide a broader context for examining the need for recreational space, other open space and recreational facilities in the City are reviewed as well. Further, a substantial portion of this need, as it relates to Camp Pendleton property, may be driven by the current state, and future vision of, tourism in Virginia Beach.

Ownership of Beachfront Property

The biggest recreational draw of Virginia Beach as a resort city is the beaches. According to the *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan*, Virginia Beach has the majority of public beachfront in the State: statewide, there are 33.3 miles of public beaches (as defined under the Public Beach Conservation and Development Act); 16.9 of those miles of public beach are in the City of Virginia Beach. At the same time, the majority of

beachfront property in Virginia Beach is closed to the public. Almost all of the beachfront in Virginia Beach is owned by the federal, State, and City governments (Figure 3), leaving a very small percentage that is owned privately. Except for the City-owned beaches, most of this property has restricted access and limited use.

Federal Ownership of Beachfront. Over 13.7 miles of beach, approximately one-third of the City's total, is owned by various federal agencies. Access to and use of



this land is restricted to various military and conservation purposes. Three military installations and a wildlife refuge constitute the federal beachfront holdings in the City.

Military Installations. Over nine miles of beachfront property are owned by the Department of Defense and are used for training and recreational purposes by military personnel. These beaches are closed to the general public. There are three military installations in Virginia Beach with beach property:

- Little Creek Amphibious Base with properties on the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean south of Camp Pendleton;
- Fort Story at Cape Henry; and
- Dam Neck Naval Base on the Atlantic Ocean south of Little Creek Amphibious Base annex.

The only portion of federal military property available for public use is approximately one mile of beach at the south end of Fort Story, which is open to the public for swimming on weekends and holidays during the summer.

Back Bay Wildlife Refuge. The U.S. Department of Interior owns over four miles of beachfront in southern Virginia Beach. The 4,600-acre refuge was established to protect wildlife and the waterfowl habitat in Back Bay. Vehicular traffic through the refuge is currently limited to special permits.

No recreational facilities have been developed in Back Bay. However, refuge officials said that the beachfront is open to the public. Few people use the beach for recreation because no vehicles are allowed on the property, no parking facilities have been built, and there are no lifeguards or comfort facilities.

Public use of Back Bay Wildlife Refuge is limited to the beachfront. Due to erosion and environmental concerns, the dunes and marshlands are closed for general use.

State-Owned Beachfront. The State owns three large tracts of property with approximately seven miles of beachfront in Virginia Beach: Camp Pendleton, Seashore State Park, and False Cape State Park. Most of the beachfront, however, is inaccessible or has limited use.

Camp Pendleton. The main base of Camp Pendleton includes 44 acres of beach property. This parcel, with 1,200 feet of beachfront, is located between City-owned Croatan Beach to the north and the U.S. Naval Amphibious Base Annex to the south. The Camp Pendleton beach is used primarily for recreation and military training. Since 1971 the Department of Military Affairs has allowed the City to use 600 feet of the beach as a surfing area from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Seashore State Park. The 2,700-acre Seashore State Park is the most heavily used State-owned recreational facility. During the summer months, the 240 campsites and 20 cabins are fully occupied and many potential users are turned away. The park's 5,000-foot Chesapeake Bay beach is open only to persons using the campsites and cabins. City of Virginia Beach staff had approached DCR staff about improving public access to Seashore State Park's beach with a proposal for improved parking, but were turned away.

False Cape State Park. Accessibility remains a major constraint to the use of the 4,321-acre False Cape State Park. The State acquired the six miles of beachfront and marshland between Back Bay Wildlife Refuge and the North Carolina border in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The park is rarely used because of access issues. False Cape can be reached only by walking along the beach through the five-mile wildlife refuge, by boat across Back Bay, by a circuitous route through North Carolina, or by a small bus service. Further, access to False Cape is permitted only with a reservation made in advance through the DCR's Reservation Center.

City-Owned Beachfront. The City of Virginia Beach currently owns approximately 16.9 miles of beachfront, which comprises the vast majority of the public-access beaches in the City. This situation contrasts with the fact that the City owned only 6.3 miles of beachfront in 1979. The eight beaches currently owned by the City of Virginia Beach are: Chesapeake Beach, Ocean Park Beach, Cape Henry Beach, Resort Beach North End, Resort Beach, Croatan Beach, Sandbridge Beach, and Little Island City Park.

The Chesapeake Bay Beaches (Chesapeake, Ocean Park and Cape Henry) consist of approximately 4.6 beach miles and approximately 55.7 beach acres. In the 1994 *Virginia Beach Outdoors Plan*, these beaches were characterized as:

...underused due to lack of parking, limited access points, and lack of beach use facilities.... There are no public parking areas and the existing on-street parking is minimal and difficult to find. There are no public restroom facilities or lifeguard services.

The largest continuous section of city-owned beachfront extends from Fort Story to Camp Pendleton, and includes: the Resort Beach North End, the Resort Beach and Croatan Beach. This section covers about 6.8 beach miles, or about 162.5 beach acres. The hotel strip along the boardwalk (Resort Beach) is the most heavily-used beach area in the City. The City provides lifeguards and provides limited comfort facilities in this area. The beaches in the residential neighborhoods to the north of the hotel strip and Croatan Beach to the south are open to the public. Limited parking areas and support facilities discourage full utilization by the public, however.

The southern beaches owned by the City are Sandbridge and Little Island City Park. The City now owns about 27.3 beach acres, stretched out across 4.5 beach miles, at Sandbridge. All of these beach miles are now accessible because of the replenishment program at Sandbridge. The City also owns 3,600 feet of beachfront, or 8.5

beach acres, at Little Island City Park north of Back Bay Wildlife Refuge. The 1994 *Virginia Beach Outdoors Plan* characterized the number of access points, parking, life-guard services and access for the physically impaired at Sandbridge and Little Island as good. However, improvements to restrooms and infrastructure (such as walkways) were needed.

Other Open Space, Parks and Recreational Facilities in Virginia Beach

According to the City of Virginia Beach's 1997 *Comprehensive Plan Technical Report*, public open space is generally described as a wide range of outdoor areas and activities that are valued for their natural or nature-based setting. Public open space areas are protected for public use via easements, rights-of-way, parks, golf courses, and other means. Publicly-held areas protected by such mechanisms are typically more permanent than those properties defined as open space and held in private ownership without such protections.

City, State, and federal parks and wildlife refuges, along with municipal golf courses, comprise public recreational areas available to all citizens and visitors in the City. According to the City's 1997 *Comprehensive Plan Technical Report*, the open space system comprises the following:

- all public and semi-public parks;
- outdoor recreation amenities (including beaches);
- environmentally significant areas (including inland lakes and waterways, natural greenways, and beaches); and
- other areas that contribute to a sense of openness (such as agriculture land and military properties).

The following summary describes public parks and golf courses in the City.

Public Parks. The City of Virginia Beach divides City parks into three classifications, each providing a different role and function: neighborhood parks, community parks, and district parks. The characteristics of these three types of parks are generally consistent with DCR's standards for outdoor recreational planning, as described in the *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan*.

Neighborhood Parks. The smallest of the City parks, neighborhood parks range in size from less than one acre to 19 acres. Three hundred thirty three (333) neighborhood parks are located in the City. Each park serves the recreational and park needs of neighborhoods within a half-mile radius. Amenities include multi-purpose playing courts, playground equipment, exercise equipment, benches and picnic tables. The DCR park standard is three acres per 1,000 population, while the Virginia Beach standard is two acres per 1,000 population.

Community Parks. Thirty (30) community parks are located in the City. These parks are medium-sized, ranging from 20 to 49 acres. Each park serves the recreational and park needs of two or more neighborhoods within a 1 to 1.5 miles service radius. The DCR park standard is three acres per 1,000 population, while the Virginia Beach standard is two acres per 1,000 population. Amenities include those found in the neighborhood parks, plus tennis courts, playing fields, jogging trails, parking and restroom facilities.

District Parks. The largest of the City parks, each district park comprises a minimum of 50 acres. Nine (9) district parks are located in the City. These parks are designed to accommodate large numbers of people, and have a service radius of five miles. The DCR park standard is four acres per 1,000 population, while the Virginia Beach standard is three acres per 1,000 population. Amenities include those found at the community and neighborhood parks, plus regulation size playing fields, lighted multipurpose fields and courts, recreation buildings, nature trails, and large expanses of open space and natural areas.

The 1997 Virginia Beach *Comprehensive Plan Technical Report* reveals how the City's park system is meeting the demand for active recreational facilities. As of January 1996, neighborhood and community park acreage totaled approximately 1,806 acres. Likewise, district park acreage totaled 1,095 acres. As of January 1, 1994, there were: 203 ballfields, with an estimated City-wide shortage of two; 192 tennis courts, with an estimated shortage of 13; and 162 playing fields, with an estimated shortage of 25. However, the City has already planned additional facilities in its Capital Improvement Program through fiscal year 2000: 14 ballfields, eight tennis courts, and 21 playing fields. These planned facilities would eliminate the shortage of ballfields and vastly reduce the shortage of tennis courts and playing fields, regardless of whether Camp Pendleton property remains a military installation or is converted to a park.

In addition to neighborhood, community and district parks, the Department of Conservation and Recreation's *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan* identifies other components of the open space system: regional parks, greenways, and State parks.

Regional Parks. The purpose of regional parks is to supplement the community park system with more extensive open space areas and readily accessible passive recreational opportunities. The regional park should complement the facilities provided at other parks and is not a substitute for neighborhood, community or district facilities. In addition to the more intensively developed areas, the regional park should also offer an abundance of open space for recreational pursuits such as picnicking, hiking, nature study, and enjoying the outdoors. City of Virginia Beach staff have indicated that if Camp Pendleton property were converted to a park, it may be converted to a regional facility.

Greenways. Greenways serve several purposes: to protect, preserve, and maintain existing natural and cultural corridors; to link population centers with recreational, educational and business areas and other population centers; and to provide recreational and non-motorized transportation opportunities along these corridors by using

natural features (ridgelines, steep slopes), utility rights-of-way, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, and watercourses (streams, rivers, and canals). Depending on the location, a greenway can range from rugged terrain with scenic views and extensive vegetation to open level meadows. The greenway can be a separate entity or a portion of any of the other park categories.

State Parks. The purpose of a State park is to provide significant recreational experiences and to protect a significant natural resource base or landscape. Extensive open space or unique natural features in the form of views, terrain and vegetation are important qualities of the state facility. Access to a major lake, ocean, or river is very desirable. According to the *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan*, the planning standard for State parks is 10 acres per 1,000 population. Virginia Beach currently contains False Cape State Park (with 4,321 acres) and Seashore State Park (with 2,700 acres); as of 1997 it had an estimated population of 420,200.

Golf Courses. According to the 1997 Virginia Beach *Comprehensive Plan Technical Report*, golf course facilities in the City have and will continue to be under tremendous pressures from user demands. Golf courses are one of the few open recreational amenities that have waiting lists for users. The City has recognized this demand and has made commitments to develop additional courses. Those commitments are reflected in its current Capital Improvement Program.

Sixteen golf courses currently exist in the City and comprise more than 2,400 acres of open space that is heavily used by the public. The commitments made by the City to develop additional courses to meet the growing demand include sites at the Lake Ridge property and the soon-to-be-completed Heron's Ridge Golf Course. Further, the City is currently in the process of acquiring Camp Pendleton's "Forest Tract" in order to expand the Red Wing Lake Golf Course (which is also on property that the City is currently acquiring from Camp Pendleton, as explained in Chapter I).

Current State and Future Vision of Tourism and Recreation in Virginia Beach

The vision for the tourist industry in Virginia Beach, as it relates to Camp Pendleton real estate, has changed dramatically over the years. When Camp Pendleton was first created in 1912, it was located in a remote, sparsely-populated area and was surrounded by mosquito-infested swampland. Now Camp Pendleton is situated geographically in the middle of an area of Virginia Beach that has recently developed major recreational attractions that are receiving substantial amounts of tourist traffic. The significance of this evolution can be seen when examining: (1) the City of Virginia Beach's current objectives for developing tourism; (2) where out-of-town visitors go in Virginia Beach; and (3) options considered by the City of Virginia Beach for further development of tourism and recreational facilities in the vicinity of Camp Pendleton.

The City's Current Objectives for Developing Tourism. The 1997 *Virginia Beach Comprehensive Plan*, which was adopted by the City Council, states that one of its six "building blocks" is: "Virginia Beach must be a city of economic vitality."

One of the fourteen points to support economic vitality is: "Support the tourist industry through continued refinement and implementation of the Oceanfront Concept Plan, by more clearly defining our goals for the tourist industry, and by striving for greater diversity of attractions." The *Comprehensive Plan* elaborates on this point as follows:

The tourist industry...is exceptionally valuable as an importer of revenue into the community. It is one of the most important positive economic forces we have in the city. The recently revitalized resort strip and the recently initiated hurricane protection program are examples of the type of ongoing effort necessary to sustain this industry. To continue our success in moving toward a higher quality tourist industry and in achieving a greater return on the taxpayers' investment, we must continue to upgrade the resort area in a coordinated fashion and create a year-round diversified array of attractions throughout the city that will appeal to both tourists and permanent residents. Recent development of the Virginia Beach Amphitheater, the tripling in size of the Virginia Marine Science Museum, and the commitment to creating a golf destination are examples of the actions that must take place for us to succeed. Surfing also plays an important role for the City in terms of both recreation and economy. We should do what we can to enhance surfing and insure that it is compatible with all of the other amenities that are available to our citizens and visitors.... A plan for the tourist industry ought to be developed to determine and guide how investment can best be made by the City to support our initiatives and attain our goals.

The City's 1997 *Comprehensive Plan Technical Report* also said that ecotourism as a growth industry in federal and State parks contributes significantly to the increased success of the tourism industry in Virginia Beach.

Where Out-of-Town Visitors to Virginia Beach Go. The 1997 Virginia Beach Tourism Survey, on which the *Summer 1997 Virginia Beach Overnight Visitor Profile* is based, asked the following question: "While you are here in Virginia Beach, will you go to..." and several attractions were listed. The results from this question, and from earlier versions of this question asked in previous years, show some clear patterns of tourist traffic occurring near Camp Pendleton property (which can be seen in Table 2). Figure 4 shows the locations of key tourist attractions and recreational facilities that are near Camp Pendleton.

While the most frequently occurring activity among out-of-town visitors (besides going to the beach) is shopping at a mall, the next most visited attraction among Virginia Beach visitors is the Virginia Marine Science Museum. This attraction is located entirely on what had once been Camp Pendleton property. Furthermore, in recent years the percentages of respondents coming to this attraction have been increasing, so that by 1997 over one-third of Virginia Beach out-of-town visitors were visiting the Virginia Marine Science Museum.

Table 2

**Percentage of Out-of-Town Visitors by
Types of Activities Engaged In (Other Than the Beach)**

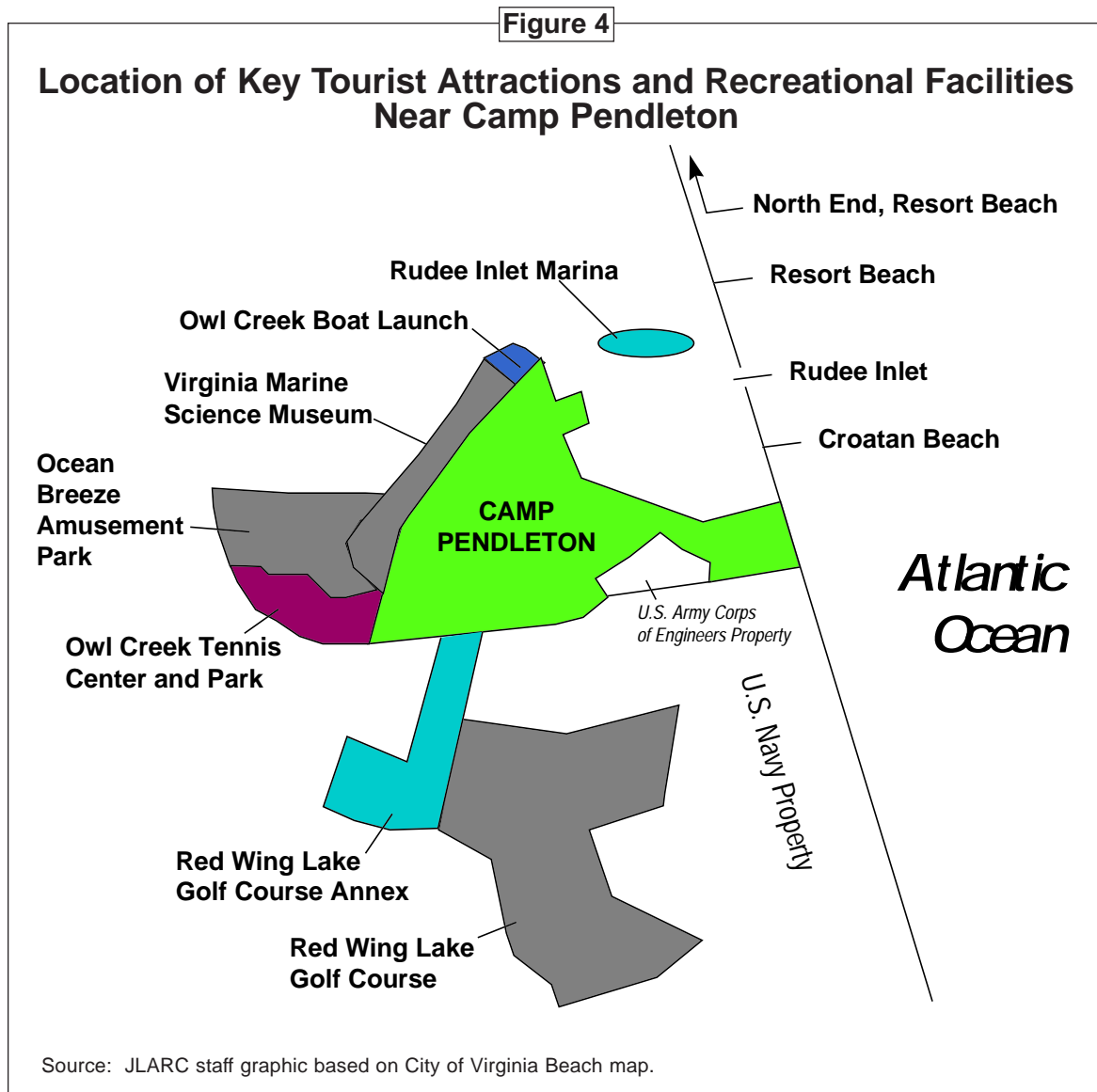
Activity	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
<u>In Virginia Beach</u>					
Go shopping at malls	56.3	54.7	54.3	46.8	52.3
Virginia Marine Science Museum	27.7	23.6	23.3	31.5	36.1
Life Saving Museum	11.2	8.2	8.3	7.3	11.9
Go fishing	12.8	10.3	12.7	9.3	11.2
Wild Water Rapids in Ocean Breeze Amusement Park	9.8	8.4	11.1	8.7	10.7
Motor World in Ocean Breeze Amusement Park	6.8	5.3	9.6	5.8	10.3
Play golf	6.4	6.3	7.4	6.2	8.1
Play tennis	3.7	3.7	4.8	3.5	2.9
<u>Outside Virginia Beach</u>					
Busch Gardens (Williamsburg)	20.2	22.0	22.9	21.1	23.6
Colonial Williamsburg	15.6	14.0	17.4	16.8	16.9
Waterside (Norfolk)	12.8	14.3	13.5	9.0	11.3
Nauticus (Norfolk)	n/a	11.7	8.7	4.8	3.9

Note: In 1993 through 1996, n = 1200; in 1997, n = 900.

Source: Yochum, G. and Agarwal, V., Bureau of Research, Department of Business and Public Administration, Old Dominion University, *Summer 1997 Virginia Beach Overnight Visitor Profile*.

Two other nearby attractions with some substantial volume of tourist traffic are in Ocean Breeze Amusement Park. This amusement park is only a few yards away from the main base at Camp Pendleton.

Three other activities reported on the tourist survey may have some impact on facilities near Camp Pendleton: going fishing, playing golf, and playing tennis. Although there are many facilities for these activities throughout the City, the facilities near Camp Pendleton may have an especially high volume of out-of-town users. The facility serving tourists who wish to go fishing that is closest to the hotel strip is in the Rudee Inlet marinas, which is within a half-mile of Camp Pendleton. The Red Wing Lake Golf Course and the Red Wing Golf Course Annex are on tracts which had been



Camp Pendleton property, and which are still in the process of being purchased by the City of Virginia Beach. Finally, the Owl's Creek Tennis Center, perhaps the area's premier municipal tennis center, is also on land which had once been part of Camp Pendleton, and which had been recently conveyed to the City.

Options Considered by the City for Further Development of Tourism and Recreational Facilities in the Vicinity of Camp Pendleton. Given the State Military Reservation's close proximity to the southern end of the resort area, Figure 4 shows that Camp Pendleton now is geographically situated in an area that is becoming more and more developed to serve the growing recreational demands of the resort area. It is now surrounded by frequently-visited tourist attractions and recreational facilities. In a draft report on possible conversion of Camp Pendleton to a State or city park, City staff have also considered options for continuing this type of development in the

future. Among the listed possible future uses of Camp Pendleton property considered most desirable are: (1) expansion of the Virginia Marine Science Museum, including parking; (2) expanding beach visitation, including surfing events and volleyball events; (3) open space for passive recreation; and (4) using some of it as a natural preserve, possibly including nature trails and perhaps a wildlife interpretive center. Consideration by the City of these potential alternative uses indicates that the area surrounding Camp Pendleton will continue to evolve with more and more emphasis on developing tourism and recreational uses, and that the pressure to emphasize the alternative recreational uses of Camp Pendleton property will tend to increase rather than decrease over time.

THE DEMAND, SUPPLY, AND NEED FOR RECREATIONAL SPACE

It is a commonly-held opinion among many that there is a public need for more beachfront, with accompanying recreational facilities, in Virginia in general and in Virginia Beach in particular. For example, DCR stated in its *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan*: “there is much less public access to beaches than needed to meet demand.” Further, in an interview with JLARC staff for this study, the DCR Director emphasized repeatedly the need for greater oceanfront access to the public, especially in highly populated areas. In addition, newspapers in the Hampton Roads area have frequently quoted Virginia Beach officials and legislators saying that the public needs greater access to oceanfront facilities.

In the *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan*, DCR estimated the demand, supply, and unmet needs for recreational facilities (including beach acres) for households statewide and in the Hampton Roads area in particular. The DCR estimates and projections shown in Tables 3 and 4 are for recreational areas and facilities that have been proposed by City of Virginia Beach officials in the past, and still may be considered, as alternative uses of Camp Pendleton property. These recreational areas and facilities include: beach acres, for outdoor beach use and swimming; picnic tables, for picnicking away from home; football and soccer fields; baseball and softball fields; and inland water acres, for lake fishing and other water-related recreational activities. The methods used in calculating these estimates are described in Appendix B. However, as explained in greater detail in Appendix B, the DCR estimates do not include demand generated through tourism, especially visitation from people who live outside of Virginia. Therefore, JLARC staff included some additional rough indicators of demand for beach acres based on tourist information from the City of Virginia Beach.

Table 3 and Table 4 show estimates of the supply, demand, and need gaps associated with each type of recreational area or facility listed. The supply estimates come from a 1992 DCR statewide inventory of existing outdoor areas and facilities throughout Virginia; more information on this inventory is in Appendix B and the *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan*. The demand figures shown in the tables are for different points in time: 1992, 2000, and 2010. The demand figures are generally derived by DCR and represent local resident demand for the different recreational areas or facili-

ties. The exception is the demand for beach acres, which has an additional level of demand due to Virginia Beach tourism factored in. The need gaps associated with 1992, 2000 and 2010 are calculated by subtracting the supply from the corresponding demand levels. The estimated level of need, on the statewide level and for Hampton Roads in particular, is discussed in more detail below, separately by each type of recreational activity.

Outdoor Beach Use and Swimming

The most frequently mentioned recreational activity in relation to Camp Pendleton property is use of the beach. Statewide local demand for beach acres is far greater than supply, regardless of additional demand due to tourism in Virginia Beach, as shown in Table 3. When examining Hampton Roads in particular (as in Table 4), local residential demand appears to consume most, but not all, of the local supply of beach acres. But when tourism in Virginia Beach is factored in, then there appears to be a need gap arising from total demand that may not be entirely met.

Picnicking Away from Home

One possible alternative use of Camp Pendleton property, particularly if any or all of it is converted to a State park, that has been proposed in the past is to include picnic tables and overlooks. Table 3 shows that the statewide supply of picnic tables appears to exceed the statewide local demand. But in Table 4, the local demand in the Hampton Roads area appears to exceed the local supply, resulting in substantial need gaps, according to DCR estimates and projections.

Football and Soccer Fields

Another recreational use of Camp Pendleton property that has been proposed is to convert some of the parade grounds into soccer fields. Statewide, the supply of football and soccer fields appears to exceed demand estimates for 1992, but not demand projections in 2000 and 2010, resulting in statewide need gaps in 2000 and 2010 (according to Table 3). But for the Hampton Roads area, the local supply of football and soccer fields is estimated to exceed the local demand estimate for 1992 and the local demand projections for 2000 and 2010.

Baseball and Softball Fields

Some portions of Camp Pendleton property have been proposed to be converted to baseball or softball fields. According to Tables 3 and 4, at both the statewide level and in particular for Hampton Roads, the local demand for baseball and softball fields always exceeds the supply. Therefore, the need gap estimated for 1992 is projected to widen substantially in 2000 and 2010.

Table 3

Supply, Demand, and Needs for Recreational Areas and Facilities: Statewide

Activity	Total Supply	1992 Demand	1992 Need	Demand in 2000	Need in 2000	Demand in 2010	Need in 2010
Outdoor Beach Use and Swimming (In Beach Acres)	2,443						
- Local Demand		3,030		3,360		3,656	
- Virginia Beach Tourist Demand: "Out-of-State Tourist" Assumption		286	873	286	1,203	286	1,499
"Out-of-Town Tourist" Assumption		390	977	390	1,307	390	1,603
Picnicking Away From Home (Picnic Tables)	36,090	28,304	-7,786	31,124	-4,966	33,660	-2,430
Football and Soccer Fields	1,783	1,639	-144	1,818	35	1,995	212
Baseball and Softball Fields	3,360	3,519	159	3,895	535	4,247	887
Lake, River and Bay Use - Including Fishing (In Water Acres)	1,313,998	461,804	-852,194	510,494	-803,504	553,909	-760,089

Note: "Need" for a given year is calculated by subtracting supply from demand for the corresponding year. Positive amounts represent "unmet need." Negative amounts represent instances where supply exceeds demand.

Source: DCR, 1996 *Virginia Outdoors Plan*; JLARC staff analysis of City of Virginia Beach tourism data.

Table 4

**Supply, Demand, and Needs for Recreational Areas and Facilities:
Hampton Roads Planning Region (PDC 23)**

Activity	Total Supply	1992 Demand	1992 Need	Demand in 2000	Need in 2000	Demand in 2010	Need in 2010
Outdoor Beach Use and Swimming (In Beach Acres)	1,106						
- Local Demand		721		810		895	
- Virginia Beach Tourist Demand: "Out-of-Town Tourist" Assumption		390	5	390	94	390	179
Picnicking Away From Home (Picnic Tables)	4,871	5,974	1,103	6,719	1,848	7,420	2,549
Football and Soccer Fields	530	409	-121	461	-69	512	-18
Baseball and Softball Fields	787	841	54	944	157	1,047	280
Lake, River and Bay Use - Including Fishing (In Water Acres)	171,843	102,284	-69,559	115,032	-56,811	127,043	-44,800

Note: "Need" for a given year is calculated by subtracting supply from demand for the corresponding year. Positive amounts represent "unmet need." Negative amounts represent instances where supply exceeds demand.
Source: DCR, 1996 *Virginia Outdoors Plan*; JLARC staff analysis of City of Virginia Beach tourism data.

Lake Fishing/Lake, River and Bay Use

Finally, fishing in Lake Christine has been proposed if Camp Pendleton were converted to a park. Tables 3 and 4 show that, both statewide and in the Hampton Roads area in particular, the supply of lake, river and bay acres that could be used for fishing exceeds the estimated and projected local demand levels. Therefore, in light of the amount of water acres in the Hampton Roads area already available for fishing in relation to the local demand, there does not appear to be such a pressing need to make Lake Christine available to the public for fishing.

CAMP PENDLETON: NOT MUCH ACREAGE, BUT A PRIME OCEANFRONT LOCATION

In light of reviewing the demand and supply for recreational facilities, as well as the anticipated needs due to tourism in Virginia Beach, several conclusions emerge. Overall, Camp Pendleton may not have much potential to meet demand for recreational facilities in terms of quantity, but its beachfront is in a highly valuable location.

- Camp Pendleton is geographically situated less than one-half mile from the southern end of Virginia Beach's resort area, which is now the largest resort area in the State. As a result, Camp Pendleton is now sitting in the middle of frequently-visited tourist attractions and recreational facilities that serve many of the permanent residents, as well as the 2.5 million overnight visitors who come to Virginia Beach each year. The City has been considering alternative uses of Camp Pendleton property which would enhance the recreational value of this area.
- DCR could explore with the City of Virginia Beach ways to improve public access to the 5,000 feet of beachfront at Seashore State Park.
- The City could improve public access to its 4.6 miles of Chesapeake Bay beachfront.
- The Hampton Roads area already appears to have enough football and soccer fields to meet demand, as well as enough lake-, river- and bayfront acres available for fishing and other water-related recreational uses. Therefore, there appears to be no pressing need to convert Camp Pendleton property to these kinds of recreational uses.
- The City of Virginia Beach has already planned enough additional ballfields through fiscal year 2000 to meet its estimated demands. Therefore, there appears to be no pressing need to convert Camp Pendleton property to ballfields.

***Recommendation (1).* The Department of Conservation and Recreation should explore with the City of Virginia Beach ways to improve public access to the beach at Seashore State Park.**

In assessing its long-term plans for the use of Camp Pendleton, the General Assembly may wish to consider the long-term needs of the Commonwealth and the City of Virginia Beach for public recreation areas, particularly accessible beachfront to enhance tourism. Although Camp Pendleton may not have much acreage to meet the total demand for beachfront, its proximity to the Virginia Beach resort area makes its oceanfront property highly valuable. The location of this property is a major factor when questioning whether military use is the best use of this property.

III. Uses of Camp Pendleton

The overall military perspective is that the State Military Reservation, or Camp Pendleton, is essential to the activities of both the Virginia National Guard and adjacent federal military installations. However, the nature of Camp Pendleton's current actual use has three aspects warranting more detailed examination.

- Utilization of Camp Pendleton has become much more varied, compared to the period when it was known as the State Rifle Range. Consequently, the focus of Camp Pendleton as the State's primary military facility for the Virginia National Guard is lessening, as Camp Pendleton is supporting more the activities of federal military units and civilian organizations.
- The National Guard has long-term leases and use agreements with tenants, and it plans to continue and expand this practice as it seeks to make Camp Pendleton financially self-sufficient in the near future. Such a practice may eliminate alternative uses of the property in the future.
- The rifle range at Camp Pendleton has safety issues that affect the feasibility of its continued operation.

Converting Camp Pendleton property to other uses may have some benefits as well as costs to the military and to the State. The primary benefits would result from the consolidation of all National Guard training activities at Fort Pickett. The costs, which could be substantial, would include the expense of relocating existing functions, terminating leases, environmentally remediating the facility, and Virginia National Guard morale would be adversely affected. Finally, it would diminish the ability to use Camp Pendleton as a factor in attracting to the Tidewater region military units that are forced to relocate from other parts of the country.

THE OVERALL MILITARY PERSPECTIVE REGARDING CAMP PENDLETON

The overall military perspective is that Camp Pendleton is essential to the success of the Virginia National Guard and that it creates a valuable synergy with other nearby military installations. The United States Congressman representing the congressional district in which Camp Pendleton is located has emphasized the importance of Camp Pendleton in Virginia's successful pursuit of military units which have been forced to relocate as a result of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. For example, the ready availability of Camp Pendleton facilities is said to have been a key factor in the decision of the Military Sealift Command to relocate to the Virginia Beach area.

The Virginia National Guard is adamantly opposed to the loss of Camp Pendleton, or to further loss of control over any of the existing property. The National Guard sees the camp as being vital to its readiness, particularly in meeting classroom training needs. Even if classroom spaces were to be replicated at another facility, such as Fort Pickett, it would not want to lose the regional advantages of having a State facility in the eastern portion of the State in near proximity to federal military facilities which offer training multipliers and amenities.

Federal military commands in the area have stated their unconditional objection to Camp Pendleton being converted into a State park. The camp is seen as a vital buffer between the public and the Fleet Combat Training Center Atlantic at Dam Neck, as well as a useful facility for temporary military housing and occasional training activities.

Finally, the location of Camp Pendleton is seen as an overall benefit to military morale and, consequently, readiness. In its strategic plan, the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) cites as weaknesses the fact that units are at less than full strength from a personnel perspective, and that "the condition of some of our facilities makes them unpleasant places to work." While it is old, Camp Pendleton is an attractive, convenient, well-maintained facility which is located in one of the State's most popular recreational areas.

CURRENT UTILIZATION OF CAMP PENDLETON'S MAIN BASE AREA

One of the current uses of Camp Pendleton is as a training facility for the National Guard. However, other military and civilian organizations also make extensive use of Camp Pendleton. In fact, the level of other military and civilian activity at Camp Pendleton has increased to the point that, in federal fiscal year 1997, it exceeded the National Guard's use of the facility. In addition, use of Camp Pendleton has increased through long-term leases with tenant activities such as the Military Sealift Command.

Utilization of Camp Pendleton By Federal Military and Civilian Activities Is Increasing

Over 110,000 "usage days" were accounted for at Camp Pendleton during federal fiscal year 1997. (A usage or training day is one person's use of Camp Pendleton for one day or a portion thereof.) Although Camp Pendleton is operated by the Virginia National Guard and used for military training activities, utilization by civilian organizations has increased and in federal fiscal year 1997 accounted for almost as many usage days as the National Guard and federal military (Table 5).

Table 5

Usage of Camp Pendleton (Units in Usage Days)

	FY 1994 ¹	FY 1995	FY 1996	FY 1997
National Guard ²	32,162	38,353	31,721	28,411
Other Military ³	34,937	33,311	31,154	31,008
Civilian	17,980	21,415	17,855	51,211
Total	85,079	93,079	80,730	110,630

¹ FY denotes Federal Fiscal Year, from October 1 to September 30. Thus FY 1994 represents the period October 1, 1993 through September 30, 1994.

² National Guard includes the Air National Guard and the Army National Guard.

³ Other Military includes all other Department of Defense (DOD) users, including Active Army, Army Reserve, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and DOD civilians.

Source: JLARC staff analysis of DMA data.

These usage days include military training days and civilian use of the facility. The usage days do not include regular activities of permanent party military assigned to the post, military tenants such as the Military Sealift Command, or regular non-military tenants such as the ChalleNGe program.

The variety of uses Camp Pendleton experiences is a result both of the need of the National Guard for the facility and the marketing of Camp Pendleton to other military and non-military users. Exhibit 1 illustrates the activities that took place at Camp Pendleton during a week in July 1998. The activities shown in the exhibit generally are temporary in nature and do not represent the activities of the post's permanent personnel or long-term tenants, such as the Military Sealift Command or RED HORSE Armory. It should be noted that National Guard training at Camp Pendleton tends to peak in the months of March through October. The level of activity in other months is reduced by about 50 percent.

Since JLARC's previous study of Camp Pendleton, usage of Camp Pendleton has increased substantially. That report found that annual usage of the main base was 44,761 man-days during FY 1976 and 40,014 man-days during FY 1977. While part of the increase can probably be attributed to better record-keeping practices on the part of the National Guard, it is safe to say that documented facility use has approximately doubled in the 20 years since JLARC's 1979 study.

National Guard Uses of Camp Pendleton

The Virginia National Guard uses Camp Pendleton for a wide variety of activities. The post is used in a number of ways to support the overall missions of the

Exhibit 1**A Week in July 1998 At Camp Pendleton**

Although training cycles result in different types of activities throughout the year, JLARC staff selected the week of July 27, 1998 to illustrate some of the variety and magnitude of activities going on at Camp Pendleton in a “typical week.”

Military Training

- Four “CAS3” (Combined Arms Services Staff School) classes were being conducted. During this training, approximately 69 personnel participated in staff training culminating in a command post exercise. The officers used classrooms and housing.
- A Marine Corps Security Force Company (the Fleet Anti-subversion and Anti-terrorist Team from Yorktown) were training at Dam Neck. About 50 members of this active duty unit were using Camp Pendleton housing while training.
- The 1710th Transportation Company billeted and drilled at Camp Pendleton from July 31 to August 2. The unit consists of approximately 130 members. They used a Bachelor Officers’ Quarters (BOQ), a Bachelor Enlisted Men’s Quarters (BEQ), and two barracks.
- Forty members of the Troop Command from State National Guard headquarters met at Camp Pendleton for three days using housing and classrooms.
- The Personnel Management Center from Military Sealift Command rented a classroom. They used the classroom for orientation training for about 40 people.

State Activity

- Virginia Fire Marshals (approximately 20 persons) used a classroom for three days.

Civilian Activity

- The Sea Cadets, an organization of youth sponsored by the Navy League (Navy Veterans), used housing for 11 days.
- Boy Scout Cadet Troop 22 (about 15 scouts) from Dover, Pennsylvania camped behind the rifle range area for three days.
- Approximately 20 State Fair operators from the Atlantic Rural Exposition were housed at Camp Pendleton. They were organizing a portion of the post for the regional State fair which began on August 1.
- A Navy Junior ROTC unit from Maryland consisting of approximately 60 students and 10 sponsors was housed at Camp Pendleton and used training fields for drills.
- Eight Little League teams were housed on base while playing a tournament.

Source: Virginia National Guard data and JLARC staff site visit observations.

Virginia Army National Guard and the Virginia Air National Guard. According to the DMA Strategic Plan, the Guard's missions are as follows:

The primary role of the Virginia National Guard is to back up the active military during wars and during other times of crisis. Defending the nation and her policies/interests is our most important function. Virginia National Guard units have been deployed overseas during the Gulf War, patrolling the Iraqi no-fly zone, and are now serving in Bosnia. Other deployments have been made for training, peace-keeping, and nation-building.

Because the primary mission of the Guard is essentially federal in nature, most of its funding comes from the federal government, and many of its activities are coordinated with active military units, as well as National Guard and reserve units of other states. It is not inappropriate, therefore, for much of the activity at Camp Pendleton to involve non-state units. Indeed, for the period FY 1994 to FY 1997, total usage for National Guard units (130,647 usage days) and for other military units (130,410) is almost identical. With the State's acquisition of Fort Pickett, future use of Camp Pendleton may become even more oriented to other military usage. From October 1997 through May 1998, National Guard use of Camp Pendleton totaled only 9,071 usage days. Other military usage totaled 13,910 days.

In addition to its federal role, other missions of the Virginia National Guard are more oriented to State service. These missions (as stated in the DMA Strategic Plan) include:

- Maintaining order, preserving peace, and providing assistance during emergencies in the Commonwealth ... during natural disasters and civil unrest.
- Providing time, energy, and expertise to local communities for a variety of purposes.
- Providing access to low cost training facilities to other federal and state agencies, as well as assisting other states.
- Fulfilling a number of specific mandates (such as "the general management and care of armories") which are detailed in the *Code of Virginia* and other sources.

The principal military uses of Camp Pendleton are for classroom-type administrative and technical training and billeting. In addition, military units of battalion size or smaller can use Camp Pendleton's facilities to house and feed their soldiers during training activities. One small "compound" on the post illustrates Camp Pendleton's desirability as a location for small unit training.

Within a cluster of eight buildings near the post headquarters are officers' quarters, enlisted barracks, an administrative building, a mess

hall, and two classrooms. A company-sized unit could occupy this compound for its two week annual training and accomplish practically all of its non-tactical training activities. If necessary, company-size units could even use nearby Fentress Naval Air station for tactical field training.

In addition, the soldiers using these facilities would be located near major military establishments in Virginia Beach, where they could use base facilities for a variety of purposes, such as buying new uniforms or personal items from area post exchanges. Finally, the fact that Virginia Beach is a resort area would make the overall training period a desirable unit morale booster to offset some of the more spartan training and living conditions National Guard personnel often experience.

While Camp Pendleton's facilities are generally old, they have been well-maintained and regularly upgraded. Facilities used for temporary housing, classroom training, and other activities are generally adequate for their intended purposes and would be expensive to replace.

For example, Camp Pendleton has 17 classrooms, with the capacity for 890 students. In addition, the RED HORSE armory has an auditorium which can accommodate 200 individuals and five classrooms that can accommodate 12-35 students each. Camp Pendleton also has private quarters that can accommodate 220, and its barracks can accommodate up to 780 soldiers. By contrast, Fort Pickett has the ability to house approximately 5,000 troops, but has much less usable classroom space than Camp Pendleton. (Many unused buildings at Fort Pickett could be converted to classroom use, were funding provided.)

Finally, six operational mess halls are also available to provide food to units visiting Camp Pendleton. Guard units also have access to open fields for formations and drills. Among some of the routine military uses of Camp Pendleton are the following:

- National Guard units use the various buildings for "command post exercises." These exercises are used to plan or simulate field operations without the expense of using heavy equipment and most troops. (Given the relatively small size of Camp Pendleton, most field training involving equipment and troops is done at Fort Pickett or other major training sites.)
- Meetings are often held at Camp Pendleton. Unit officers and senior enlisted personnel from across the region or State may meet there to plan more involved operations, such as field training exercises.
- Classes are held for individual soldier skills, such as logistical computer training, map reading, civil disturbance training, preliminary rifle instruction, and specialty training in the communications and the medical fields.

- State contingency response training occurs for natural disasters and civil disturbances. Rescue squads train at Camp Pendleton annually and hold a competition.
- An adjacent armory is able to use the roads on the post for training for truck drivers in the 1710 Transportation Company.
- Officer training groups, such as the Combined Arms Service Support Staff (CAS3) use the facility for classroom training and billeting.
- Individuals use the quarters for billeting when in the area for other military duty.

Because the National Guard makes extensive use of Camp Pendleton, National Guard training at Camp Pendleton tends to peak in the months of March through October. As noted earlier, the level of National Guard activity in other months is reduced by about 50 percent.

In addition to the National Guard military training activities that take place at Camp Pendleton, the facility is also available for recreational uses by National Guard members and their families. For a fee, guard members and other military personnel can rent rooms or cottages at the facility for personal use. Six hundred feet of the Camp's beachfront is set aside for use by military personnel and their families. A parking lot, grill, and portable toilet are located adjacent to this beach area.

The Commonwealth “ChalleNGe” Program’s Use of Camp Pendleton

As noted in Chapter I, the Commonwealth ChalleNGe program is a primarily federally funded, state-administered program which serves approximately 200 high school dropouts each year. It is a five-month, military-style residential program which prepares young high school dropouts to pass the General Equivalency Degree (GED) exam. In addition, the program is designed to provide attendees with military-type values, skills, and self-discipline which will lead to later success in life. A majority of the attendees have been minority (51 percent), male (82 percent) high school dropouts from the Tidewater area (72 percent).

While in the program, cadets participate in a rigorous program of academics, physical education, study, and community service. Program administrators claim high levels of success in rehabilitating dropouts and directing them towards productive life activities, including employment, military careers, and college.

The program is largely federally funded. According to the DMA, the program has invested “over \$500,000 on renovation and maintenance of facilities at SMR.” In recent years, however, State matching funds have been required, a trend that is likely to continue, if not increase. The ChalleNGe program occupies nine renovated buildings

on Camp Pendleton. These include three barracks, various classrooms, a mess hall, and an administration building.

Federal Military Uses of Camp Pendleton

In addition to military uses of the tenant federal organizations, such as the Military Sealift Command, other military units use Camp Pendleton. As earlier illustrated in Table 3, other military users actually exceeded National Guard users in federal FY 1997. This trend continued into federal FY 1998.

Principal direct uses of Camp Pendleton include temporary military housing, classrooms for training, and occasional use of the rifle range. According to the post commander, another attractive feature of Camp Pendleton is “that we have plenty of parking available.” Other federal military uses have included:

- On occasion, Navy SEALs will use camp Pendleton for incursion training. The advantage of Camp Pendleton over Dam Neck or Little Creek property is that it is unfamiliar terrain for training. The training exercises have included landing helicopters at Camp Pendleton and dropping parachutists onto the post.
- As the culmination of a training program, Navy security personnel conduct a security inspection of Camp Pendleton.
- A communications post exercise was held in 1998, on the western edge of Camp Pendleton. A mobile communications site was established with up-links to active military installations.

A primary use of Camp Pendleton by the federal military activities is as a “buffer” between active military training and the civilian population. To underline their support of the continued usage of Camp Pendleton as a State military facility, neighboring military commands prepared a comprehensive briefing for JLARC staff regarding the value of Camp Pendleton as a buffer to their facility’s operations. Because Camp Pendleton is a restricted military facility, access to the post is controlled, ensuring that civilians will not be able to simply wander from the public beach onto adjacent U.S. Navy property.

Some of the military training activities conducted just south of Camp Pendleton are classified in nature. Other training activities involve ordnance testing. In addition, major naval amphibious operations take place to the south of Camp Pendleton three or four times each year. These sea-to-land operations are major exercises which involve naval vessels, landing craft, and troops. The military regards Camp Pendleton as a necessary safety buffer during such operations and would prefer a military neighbor, such as the National Guard, rather than civilian activities.

Civilian Uses of Camp Pendleton

There are varied civilian uses of Camp Pendleton. The most civilian usage days are generated by large public events, such as the regional State fair held at the post in 1997 and 1998. In 1997, this event ran for ten days and resulted in an estimated 30,000 usage days. However, some ongoing civilian activities are not captured by usage data. The leased surfing beach attracts many visitors between Memorial Day and Labor Day, but the National Guard no longer attempts to quantify usage.

Virginia State agencies also use Camp Pendleton for a variety of purposes. National Guard logs show usage by the following State agencies in fiscal year 1997:

- Department of Forestry,
- Department of Corrections,
- Department of State Police, and
- Department of Juvenile Justice.

As with federal users, the principal attractions of Camp Pendleton are the availability of affordable classrooms and housing in an attractive resort area.

Other civilian users in FY 1997 included Regent University, which did filming at the site, a Kiwanis Club barbecue with about 600 attendees, and a variety of others. In addition, the Governor of Virginia has a cottage at Camp Pendleton. According to the post commander, Virginia's governors make regular use of the cottage for recreational purposes and office retreats.

NATIONAL GUARD'S PLANS FOR THE FUTURE USE OF CAMP PENDLETON

With the assumption of scheduling control of Fort Pickett, the Virginia National Guard has dedicated more of its resources to that facility; consequently, fewer funds are available for the operation and maintenance of Camp Pendleton. To address this situation, DMA has adopted a program to make Camp Pendleton financially self-supporting. It has done this through the implementation of long-term, income generating leases and use agreements with the Military Sealift Command, the ChalleNge program and other activities. It also charges for the use of its classrooms, officers' quarters and barracks, and other facilities.

The DMA plans further such leases or use agreements in the future. Its overall vision is to make Camp Pendleton a self-supporting military and government training facility with a focus on classroom and distance learning. According to the Adjutant General in a July 1998 letter to JLARC staff, "it is our goal that in the year 2002, or shortly thereafter, SMR [State Military Reservation] should be self-sustaining - not in need of direct State support." (The Adjutant General's full letter is at Appendix C). The beach location and the proximity of Camp Pendleton to area military facilities with

large commissary, post exchange, club, and other recreational facilities makes it a particularly attractive military training destination and administrative location. Consequently, it is possible that the DMA could be successful in achieving its long-term goal of financial self-sufficiency for the post.

The DMA also has unrealized plans to enter into a “cooperative agreement with a State school or consortium to run the existing distance training centers (provided with federal dollars)...” Such a program would optimize Camp Pendleton’s standing as the center of National Guard classroom training, with field training based at Fort Pickett. The post commander also speaks of Camp Pendleton’s potential as a State conference or retreat center. The post commander reported that the ability of Camp Pendleton to provide classrooms, housing, and meals at a relatively low cost should make the post an attractive destination for State agencies needing such resources.

While the funding and development strategies of the National Guard make sense from its perspective, such a use may not represent the highest and best use of the property at Camp Pendleton. One could reasonably ask if such activities could be located elsewhere, or restricted to a more limited area of the existing facility, while opening the beachfront and other portions of the base to greater public use. However, if military improvements to the site continue to be made, the potential for alternative uses of the site will be rendered moot, as the availability of sufficient property for a State park or other public uses is already marginal.

In addition to income-generating leases, instruments such as use agreements could also encumber the State’s ability to use portions of Camp Pendleton’s property for other purposes. For example, a federal-State agreement governed the construction of the Virginia Beach Army National Guard Armory at Camp Pendleton. Under the agreement, the federal government provided 75 percent of the funding for the armory’s construction with the State retaining ownership of the facility and property. However, the terms of the federal-State agreement requires that the Commonwealth reimburse a prorated share of the federal construction funding if the facility is used for another purpose.

The evolution of Camp Pendleton into a regional military classroom training facility could easily happen without any formal endorsement by the Governor or General Assembly. Because of the Adjutant General’s extensive authority for property management, it could be possible for the National Guard to encumber Camp Pendleton property indefinitely, without the General Assembly or Governor having the opportunity to determine whether such uses are consistent with the broader State goals and objectives for the facility.

***Recommendation (2).* The General Assembly may wish to consider amending §44-19 of the *Code of Virginia* to require gubernatorial or legislative approval of all long-term encumbrances of property at Camp Pendleton.**

THE CAMP PENDLETON RIFLE RANGE

The rifle range was the primary feature that led to the establishment of Camp Pendleton more than 80 years ago. When Camp Pendleton opened, the range was in a very remote area. That situation has dramatically changed. Despite the steps taken by the National Guard to ensure that the operation of the range does not result in unsafe conditions for the adjacent residential development, the extent of the development north of the range complex has led to concerns about the range's safe operation. As a result, the State should give serious consideration to permanently closing the Camp Pendleton rifle range.

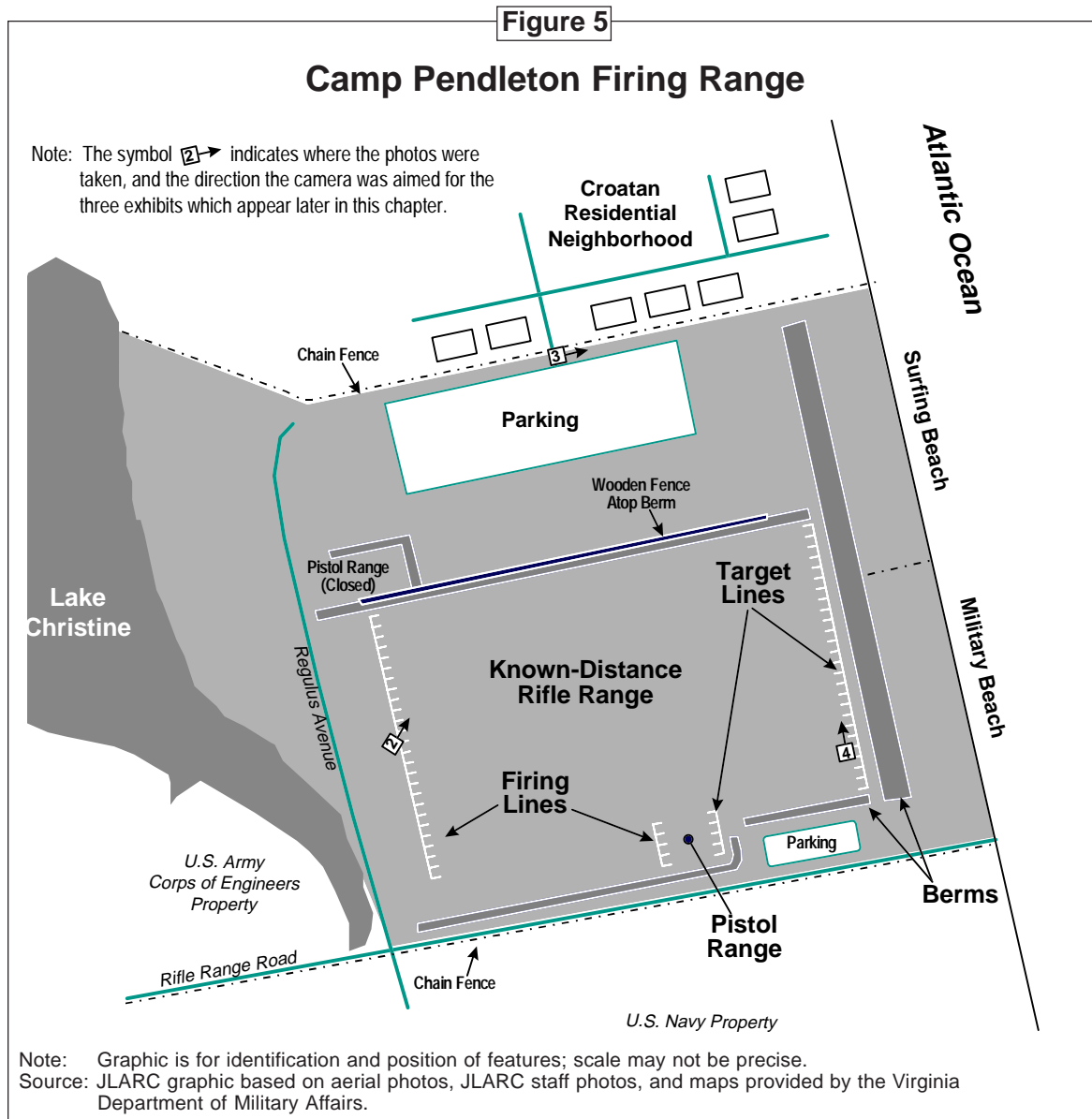
This review determined that utilization of Camp Pendleton by Army and Air National Guard units is heavier during the months that the range is closed and that use of the range by the National Guard is relatively light when the range is open. As a result, options do exist for the National Guard to ensure that their weapons training activities currently conducted at the Camp Pendleton range can still be continued. For example, the National Guard has scheduling authority for the rifle ranges at the Fort Pickett facility. Moreover, ranges that are at least comparable to the range at Camp Pendleton exist at the adjacent U.S. Navy facility. These ranges could be used by the National Guard to ensure that units receive the required training.

Overview of the Camp Pendleton Weapons' Firing Range

Camp Pendleton initially began operation as the permanent rifle range and camp site for Virginia National Guard training. In fact, the installation initially was called the State Rifle Range. The current rifle range at Camp Pendleton comprises the majority of the 41 acres adjacent to the facility's 1,200 feet of beachfront property (Figure 5).

Access to the range and the beach at Camp Pendleton is on a two-lane road that runs through a 27.5-acre tract of land that is owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Access to this property is provided through a license between the National Guard and the federal government that runs through the year 2017.

On the range, soldiers fire east towards the ocean at targets from firing points spread across the western boundary of the range. Earthen berms have been built to border the northern and southern edges of the range. A wooden fence approximately eight feet in height runs along the top of the range's northern berm (Exhibit 2). Although a natural sand berm acts as a backstop to the targets on the rifle range, the beach area is required to be closed to all personnel when the range is in operation. In addition, portions of the Atlantic Ocean directly behind the range have been designated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to be part of the range's danger zone during weapons firing exercises.



At the present time, the range complex at Camp Pendleton is comprised of four ranges with different target characteristics or environments (Table 6). Two of the ranges, the 25-meter pistol range and the 40mm air defense artillery range have been placed in a non-operational status by the National Guard.

To ensure that the range is efficiently utilized to maximize training for National Guard units and soldiers, Camp Pendleton has established a schedule for the range's use. According to National Guard policy, priority for range use is as follows:

- first priority is assigned to Virginia Army or Air National Guard units,
- second priority is assigned to Army or Air National Guard units from other states, and

Exhibit 2**Rifle Range Northern Boundary Berm and Fence
Viewed from Safety Observer Tower**

Source: JLARC staff photograph.

Refer to Figure 5 for camera angle.

- third priority is assigned to Navy or Marine Corps active component units.

Personnel from the training units are required to operate the firing range at Camp Pendleton. Training units are responsible for providing weapons and expendable training resources, including ammunition. Camp Pendleton is generally responsible for providing range materials such as targets and target frames. In addition, Camp Pendleton staff are responsible for scheduling authorized units or individuals to use the ranges, evaluating safety procedures of the units or individuals using the ranges, and advising unit commanders of environmental factors or environmental contingency plans that might be in place at the facility.

Another important responsibility of National Guard staff regarding the operation of the Camp Pendleton range is a letter that, according to regulation, is to be issued at least 72 hours before the scheduled firing at any of the ranges. This letter is

Table 6

Camp Pendleton's Firing Ranges and Operating Status

Type of Range	Number	Status	Active Firing Points
Pistol Range (25 Meter)	1	Non-Operational	10
Rifle/Pistol Range	1	Operational	15
Rifle Range (Known Distance)	1	Operational	30
40mm Air Defense Artillery Range	1	Non-Operational	16

Note: Known distance is associated with older ranges that use targets behind berms at 100 yard or 100 meter intervals.

Source: JLARC staff analysis of VaARNG Regulation No. 385-63, *Safety: SMR Range Regulation*, September 1988, and JLARC staff interviews with DMA staff.

to include the date, time, and the type of weapons to be fired. The letter is distributed to a number of organizations — including area military bases, the Federal Aviation Administration, the U.S. Coast Guard, the local police department, and local boating marinas — to ensure as many individuals as possible are aware of the planned weapons firing activities at Camp Pendleton.

The ranges at Camp Pendleton are closed each year from Memorial Day through Labor Day. During that time, 600 feet of Camp Pendleton's beachfront is available to the City of Virginia Beach for use by surfers and swimmers. Parking for that segment of the beach is located within the Camp Pendleton security fence adjacent to the northern safety berm of the rifle range. The remaining 600 feet of beachfront, known as "Soldiers Beach," is available to military personnel and their families or other groups conducting training at Camp Pendleton.

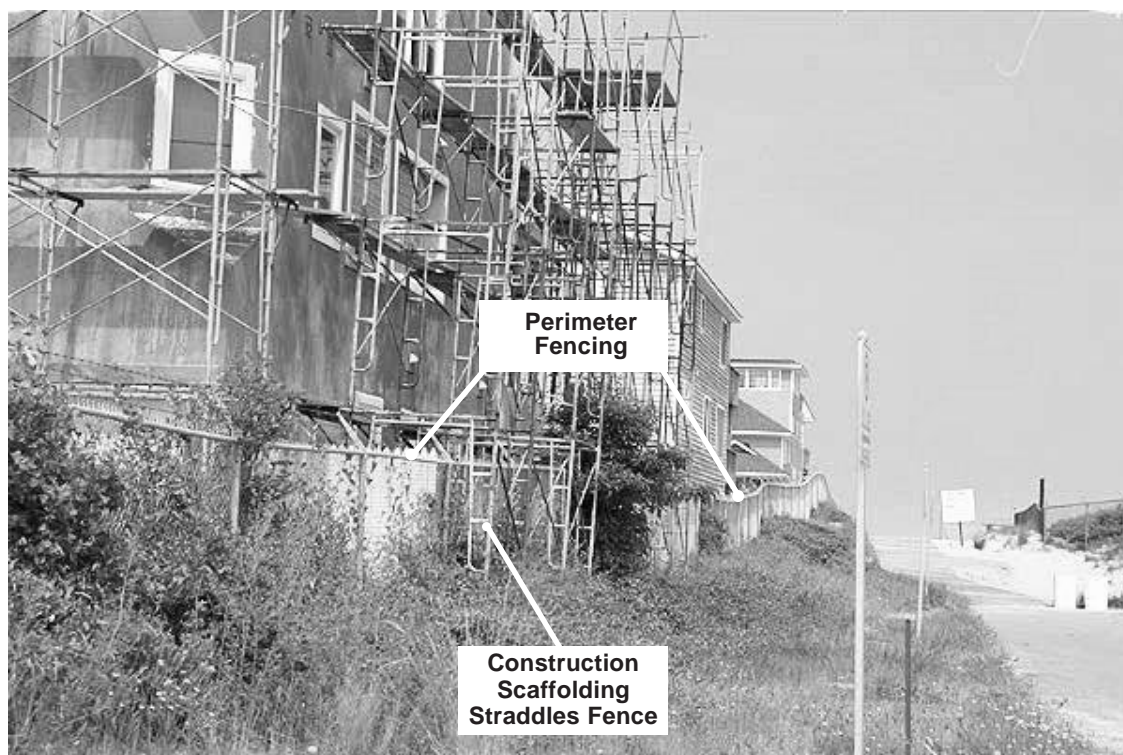
Residential Development Has Influenced DMA to Close a Pistol Range and Alter Operations at the Rifle Range

In 1912, the range was so remote that a rail head had to be constructed to transport troops to the site. With few people either north or south of the site and the Atlantic Ocean to the east, range safety was relatively easy to achieve.

One factor that has changed substantially since even the 1979 JLARC Camp Pendleton study is the level of residential development that has occurred directly adjacent to the facility. While throughout much of Camp Pendleton's operation the local population did not impact or encroach upon the facility, that has changed significantly in the past 15 years. Camp Pendleton staff reported that the residential development in the Croatan neighborhood adjacent to the northern boundary of the base began in earnest around 1985. Exhibit 3 clearly illustrates the extent to which residential hous-

Exhibit 3

Proximity of Residences to Camp Pendleton's Northern Perimeter Fence



Source: JLARC staff photograph.

Refer to Figure 5 for camera angle.

ing has developed directly adjacent to Camp Pendleton's northern perimeter security fence. This housing is about 500 feet from the range complex's northern berm.

The recent development in the Croatan area and the accompanying residential and tourist traffic has had an impact on range operations at Camp Pendleton. For example, Camp Pendleton has closed the pistol range on the north side of the range complex. Despite being separated from both the parking lot and the Croatan neighborhood by an earthen safety berm, the range was still placed in a non-operational status for safety reasons by DMA.

In addition, operations at the known distance rifle range were altered substantially in May 1998 to account for the close proximity of the Croatan residential community on Camp Pendleton's northern boundary and the range. Specifically, DMA headquarters' staff on a walk-thru inspection of the range noted that:

Overall, the condition of the ranges looked excellent. It was observed however that the rifle range left safety fan Area "A" (secondary danger area/buffer zone) runs directly adjacent to the [Camp Pendleton]

boundary line and possibly could encroach on adjacent private property consisting of residential dwellings.

In an effort to limit the potential danger to residential dwellings from the range's operation, the Adjutant General in May 1998 required that Camp Pendleton staff place firing points one through ten in a non-operational status, leaving 30 firing points for use. (Firing points one through ten are the positions closest to the range's northern berm and closest to the residential dwellings in the Croatan neighborhood.) In addition, the Adjutant General ordered that the fence line on the northern beach corner of the facility be raised because "You can tell where people have been climbing over the fence." The Adjutant General also ordered that the Camp Pendleton range regulation be updated.

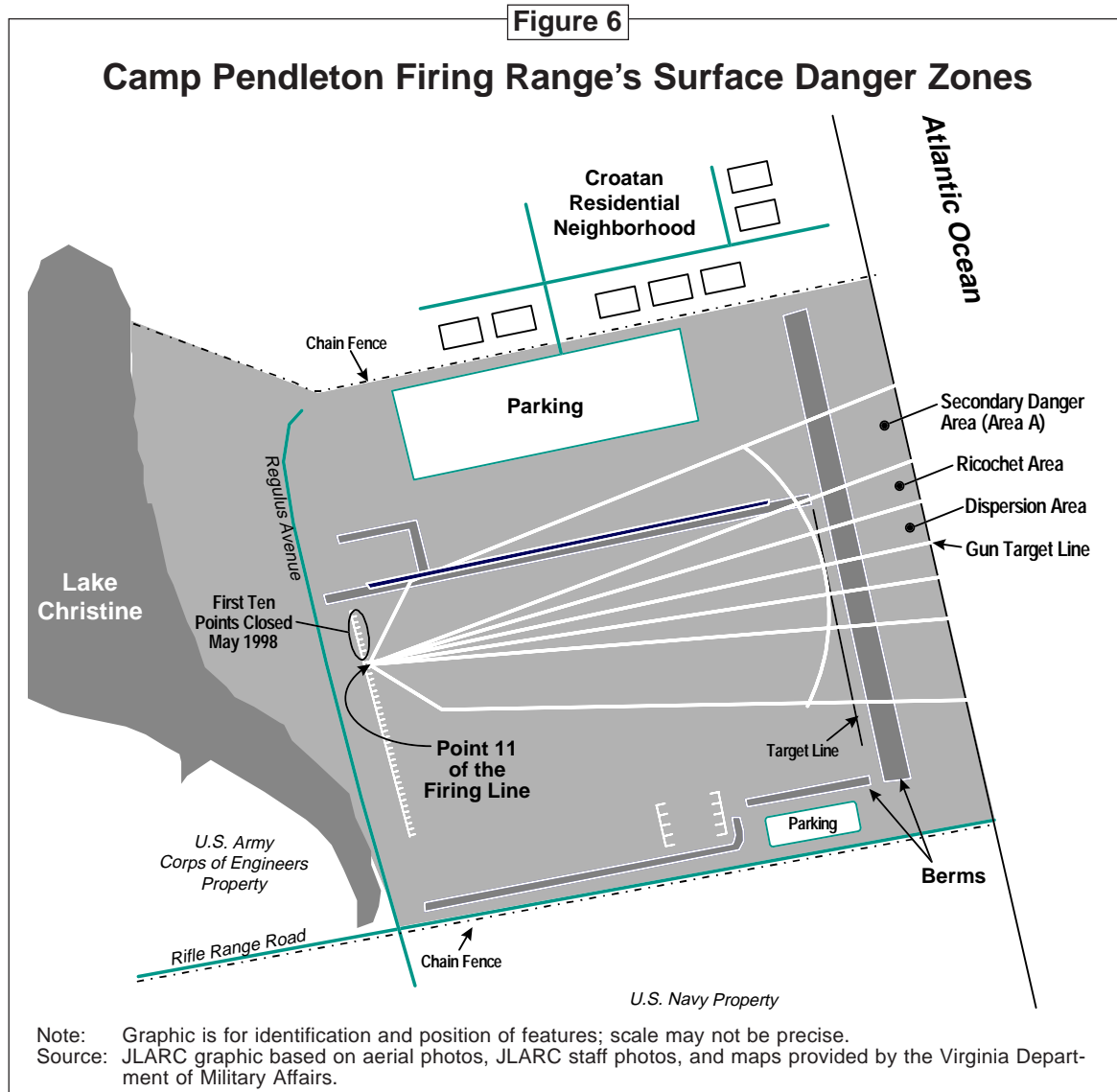
Closing firing points one through ten on the rifle range had the effect of increasing the distance between the range's safety fan and the housing in the Croatan neighborhood. Now, although the ricochet and dispersion areas are entirely within the range's northern safety berm, the outer edge of the Area A safety fan still exceeds the northern safety berm (Figure 6). According to DMA staff, this meets U.S. Army standards for range operations. However, in a 1994 report to the General Assembly, DMA reported that to construct a 16 firing point range where a 7.62mm machine gun could be fired required that "...the width of the range at the firing points would be 480 meters." In contrast, the width of the entire range along the firing line at Camp Pendleton is about 225 meters.

The National Guard has taken actions that are designed to promote range safety. Moreover, there is no record of an incident or injury occurring in the Croatan community caused by the operation of the range. However, due to the proximity of residential housing, concerns regarding the continued operation of the range still exist.

Safety Concerns Still Exist Regarding Operation of the Rifle Range in an Area of Substantial Residential Development

While DMA has taken action to ensure that the operations at the Camp Pendleton rifle range are conducted in as safe a manner as possible, JLARC staff inquired about the safety of the range in an area of heavy residential development and raised questions about its continued use. According to DMA staff, the rifle range meets the requirements for safety fans and they are continuing to do all they can to make operations at the range as safe as possible. Moreover, according to Camp Pendleton staff, they are considering additional changes such as the use of baffles between the existing firing points to further enhance the range's safe operation.

Nonetheless, the proximity of residential housing to the Camp Pendleton range still raises a safety concern that should be addressed prior to re-opening the range. Specifically, the height of some of the homes in the Croatan community makes the issue of range safety in its current configuration to these homes a concern. For ex-



ample, some of the homes near the northern boundary of the range are three stories high and have observation decks on the upper level.

As a result, the upper level of some homes are visible above the berm as well as the wooden fence from the southern end of the firing line used for 5.56mm (M16) rifles. This factor is particularly relevant when the range of weapons fired at Camp Pendleton is compared to the distance from the range's firing line of some of the houses in the Croatan neighborhood. In addition, the northern berm and wooden fence do not separate the range's target line from private residences (Exhibit 4).

For example, the maximum range of a 5.56mm rifle used at the Camp Pendleton range is about 3,100 meters. In contrast, much of the residential housing in the Croatan neighborhood is within approximately 400 meters of the range's firing points. The

Exhibit 4

View to North from Rifle Range Target Line



Source: JLARC staff photograph.

Refer to Figure 5 for camera angle.

maximum range of some of the weapons fired at the Camp Pendleton facility is provided in Table 7.

The wooden fence along the top of the berm on the northern edge of the range gives the illusion of protecting homes or individuals from weapons firing, but in reality one of its primary benefits is as a noise barrier. For example, U.S. Army range policies require that logs wired together be 28 inches thick in order to protect individuals involved in overhead fire on a range. In contrast, the fence along the northern berm is composed of two layers of approximately one-half inch thick planking.

As a result, this type of fence could be pierced by an errant round from some of the weapons fired on the range. DMA staff acknowledged that the primary benefit of the wooden fence along the berm would be to minimize noise to the residential community from the weapons firing exercises and possibly contain a ricochet, but not to stop a direct hit from a bullet fired from some of the military weapons used at Camp Pendleton.

Because Camp Pendleton is State-owned property, the Commonwealth could be potentially liable for damage or injury in the surrounding community caused through

Table 7

Maximum Range of Selected Weapons Fired at Camp Pendleton's Rifle Range (In Meters)

Weapon	Maximum Range (Meters)
12 Gage Shotgun (00 Buckshot)	600
.45 Caliber Pistol	1,300
9mm Pistol	1,800
5.56mm (M16) Rifle	3,100
7.62mm (M14) Rifle	4,100

Source: Army Regulation 385-63, Field Manual No. 23-35, and interviews with Department of Military Affairs staff.

operation of this range. DMA has also recognized that the range's current location adjacent to a residential neighborhood could pose safety concerns. For example, DMA staff in a June 1998 report on Camp Pendleton concluded that:

Over the past several years, new homes have been constructed in the Croatan community that lies just north along the [Camp Pendleton] boundary line, within a few hundred feet of the rifle range. These new homes can be seen easily while standing on the firing points of the range. [Camp Pendleton] has proactively built a wooden fence to divide the range from the Croatan housing development, in an attempt to avoid an unsafe situation, but is unable to completely eliminate safety concerns due to the close proximity of the homes which are literally a few feet from the fence.

Concerns regarding the operation of the range in close proximity to a residential neighborhood were also expressed by military officers from other services upon observing the location of the range complex.

After receiving a briefing on Camp Pendleton's importance to the active federal military activities that are located directly south of the post, JLARC staff received a tour of the Navy facility adjacent to the Camp Pendleton beach and range complex. JLARC staff asked the active duty military personnel if they would look at the rifle range on Camp Pendleton. Observing the range from Navy property, one of the officers accompanying JLARC staff expressed his surprise when shown how close the range was to residential property.

After receiving a stern look from a superior officer, he remarked that the range probably could be operated safely if a safety officer were present at each firing position. The senior officer remarked that he

was sure the National Guard took the appropriate steps necessary to operate the range in a safe manner. No further remarks on potential safety hazards were made by other members of the group.

Despite DMA's efforts to address the safety concerns, common sense indicates that the near proximity of an open weapons range to residential development is ill-advised. As a result, use of the Camp Pendleton range should be discontinued until the safety issues related to the proximity of Croatan housing are fully addressed. If a long-term decision is made to continue using the range, the services of an independent military rifle range safety expert should be obtained to fully evaluate the range and its proximity to the residential neighborhood and beaches and, if possible, identify mechanisms that can be implemented to fully ensure the range is safe to operate.

National Guard Utilization of the Camp Pendleton Range

One of the frequent arguments used to support the continued operation of the range at Camp Pendleton is the role it plays in training and subsequent readiness of National Guard units. However, analysis of National Guard training conducted at Camp Pendleton indicates that the highest level of training occurs when the range is closed. Further, National Guard units do not extensively use the range at Camp Pendleton for training.

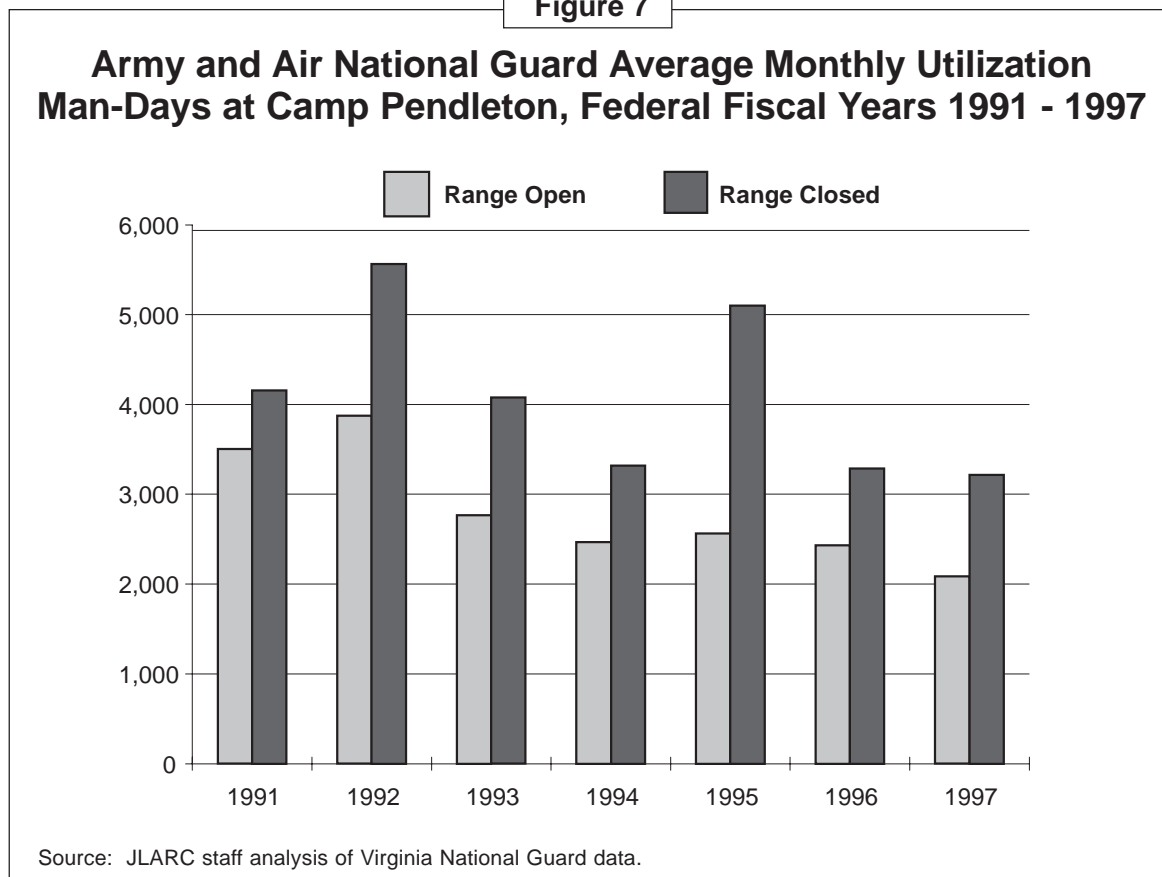
More National Guard Training Activity at Camp Pendleton Occurs When Range Is Closed. As noted earlier in this chapter, the ranges at Camp Pendleton are closed from Memorial Day through Labor Day for safety considerations. As a result, it would seem likely that the utilization of Camp Pendleton by National Guard units would to some degree coincide with the availability or operation of its range.

However, analysis of Camp Pendleton utilization data indicates that the highest intensity of use by National Guard units of the Camp Pendleton facilities almost always occurs when the range is closed. As illustrated in Figure 7, the average number of man-days per month in each federal fiscal year that Camp Pendleton was utilized by Virginia Army and Air National Guard units was higher during the summer months when the range is closed (June through August) than during the remaining nine months when the range is operational.

National Guard Utilization of Camp Pendleton Range Is Relatively Low. If the range at Camp Pendleton is an integral part of the National Guard training process, it would be expected that many of the units or groups using the range belong to the National Guard. However, analysis of federal fiscal year 1997 utilization data of the Camp Pendleton range indicates otherwise. Specifically, the majority of the units utilizing the Camp Pendleton rifle range were associated with the U.S. Navy.

The range at Camp Pendleton was utilized for training a total of 43 different occasions in federal fiscal year 1997. However, National Guard units did not make the most extensive use of the range. For example, U.S. Navy-based units used the Camp

Figure 7



Pendleton range about 60 percent of the time. National Guard units only used the Camp Pendleton range about 26 percent of the time. Other groups using the range in federal fiscal year 1997 included the Virginia State Police and the City of Virginia Beach Police Department.

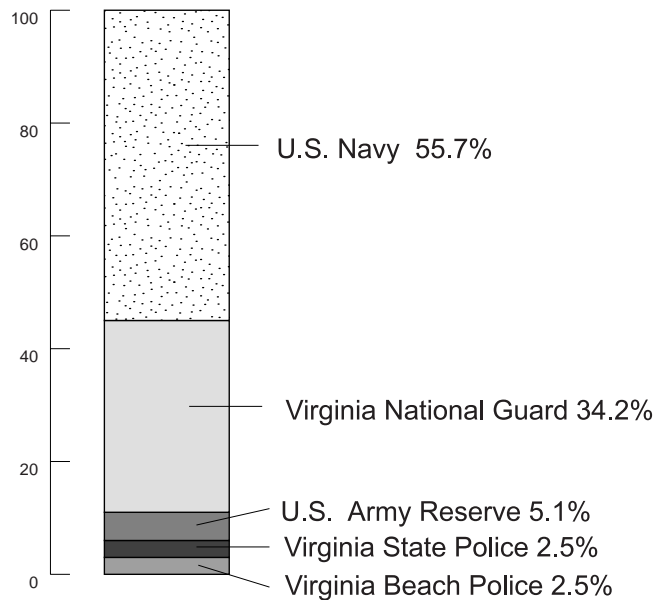
However, simply measuring whether a group used the range does not totally reflect the amount of time unit members spent using the range. Therefore, a measure of the number of training days the range is utilized by each unit is likely to be more reflective of the extent that National Guard units rely on the range for weapons qualifications. This would take into account occasions that units used the range for more than one day for training.

Even by this measure, National Guard units utilized the range substantially fewer days in federal fiscal year 1997 than did units attached with the U.S. Navy. For example, as illustrated in Figure 8, units attached with the U.S. Navy used the range about 55 percent of the days it was operated. By comparison, National Guard units — primarily the 203rd RED HORSE Flight — used the range about 34 percent of the days.

It should be noted, however, that the number of man days the range is utilized by each group could vary significantly. For example, Camp Pendleton staff reported that on one occasion 200 personnel from the National Guard 203rd RED HORSE Flight

Figure 8

Camp Pendleton Range Utilization (Based on Days of Range Use by User, FFY 1997)



Source: JLARC staff analysis of Virginia National Guard data.

Unit used the range. In contrast, 44 personnel from the U.S. Navy NAS Security Department used the range for training on one occasion. While utilization measured by man days would be a more effective measure than a measure based on units using the range or days of range use, DMA staff could not provide comprehensive data in this manner.

National Guard Could Use Other Ranges at Fort Pickett or the Dam Neck Fleet Combat Training Center

Despite the relatively light use by National Guard units of the Camp Pendleton range, some National Guard units use the range for training purposes. As a result, closing the range at Camp Pendleton could impact unit training to some degree and require that other avenues for receiving that training be developed.

In 1994, the General Assembly required that DMA conduct a study on the feasibility of conducting Camp Pendleton range activities at the Oceana Naval Air Station. The study reported that Oceana Naval Air Station did not have a small arms range and concerns were identified regarding the availability of the ranges at the Dam Neck Fleet Training Center. Therefore, DMA recommended that the lack of available ranges in the Tidewater area precluded relocating range activities from Camp Pendleton.

However, the National Guard situation regarding access to other training facilities has changed substantially since 1994. The National Guard now operates the large military installation at Fort Pickett. Unlike Camp Pendleton, Fort Pickett is in a rural area and is a large facility comprised of over 40,000 acres. In addition, at Fort Pickett the National Guard has two M-16 rifle ranges in place and four 25 meter ranges in operation.

The M16 rifle range at Fort Pickett is located in an area of the base where routine civilian or military traffic, housing, or commercial/industrial buildings are not in sight. Unlike the range at Camp Pendleton, the safety of non-military property or personnel outside of the facility is not an issue at the Fort Pickett rifle range observed by JLARC staff. Moreover, the ranges at Fort Pickett are not closed during the summer months.

However, according to DMA staff, simply transferring range functions from Camp Pendleton to Fort Pickett raises other issues that would need to be addressed. For example, funding may not always be available to transport National Guard units and the associated equipment from armories in the Tidewater region to Fort Pickett. DMA staff reported that units from the Tidewater region were scheduled to travel to Fort Pickett to use the range in the early 1998, but funding was not available and scheduled training activities had to be canceled. Situations such as this could negatively impact units' training readiness.

Finally, the National Guard could explore the possibility of utilizing the ranges at the Dam Neck Fleet Training Center, which is almost directly adjacent to Camp Pendleton, to supplement the ranges at Fort Pickett and meet the training needs of its local units. The ranges at the Dam Neck Fleet Training Center are equal, if not superior, to the Camp Pendleton range, without the safety concerns related to adjacent residential housing.

While National Guard units might not always receive scheduling priority at the Dam Neck Fleet Training Center ranges, use of the ranges for training purposes is still a possibility that could be explored. During a JLARC staff visit to this facility, the Dam Neck Fleet Training Center staff reported that the range is not often scheduled on weekends but that it could be. However, they noted that a number of issues would need to be addressed including: the security of the range, lack of range personnel, and the possibility that scheduled training for National Guard units could be canceled on short notice.

The issue of available training funds could be a factor in the degree to which the ranges at Fort Pickett can always be utilized as the alternate for the Camp Pendleton range. To address this, the ranges at Dam Neck could be used to bridge the periods when training funds are not available to transport units to Fort Pickett. This would ensure that unit readiness was maintained. Therefore, DMA should begin the process of exploring the development of a use agreement with the U.S. Navy for use of the ranges at the Dam Neck Fleet Training Center.

Environmental Remediation of Range Complex Will Be Necessary

If a decision is made to permanently close the Camp Pendleton range, the full extent of any environmental contamination at the facility will need to be determined. A variety of weapons firing and ordnance-related activities have occurred at the facility since it opened in 1912. As a result, some level of environmental contamination in the range complex is likely, especially contamination related to lead or explosive-related material in the safety berms or firing line areas. It is also possible that unexpended rounds of ammunition may have been discarded and covered with sand. Such ammunition could be a safety hazard, particularly if the property were converted to use as a State park.

In response to the study mandate, JLARC staff requested that staff from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) review the facility and identify the steps that would likely be necessary to close and begin to environmentally remediate the range complex at Camp Pendleton. This review was based on the assumption that the future use of the range complex would be as part of a State park. Appendix D contains the complete report of DEQ's preliminary assessment of the environmental remediation issues related to closing the Camp Pendleton range.

Both DEQ and DMA staff reported that although the range at Camp Pendleton was on State-owned land, the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) would apply to this facility. In essence, this would require that Camp Pendleton be treated similarly to federal military installations regarding the application of environmental laws. In addition, DEQ staff in its report identified a proposed Department of Defense rule that could also apply when closing the range. Finally, because the alternative use for the range is potentially as a State park, remediation of contaminants found in the range would be necessary.

According to DEQ staff, assessments of military ranges usually conclude that remediation of lead-contaminated soils is necessary. Regarding lead-contaminated soils, DEQ staff noted that:

The site inspection found that the soils of the range complex contained observable deposits of lead fragments, particularly the soils behind the target impact area of the rifle range.

As a result, it is likely that the contaminated soils would need to be excavated and taken off-site for disposal, which can be costly. In 1998, DMA staff also reported that because the berm material would need to be treated as a hazardous waste, disposal was estimated to cost a minimum of \$150,000.

DEQ staff also reported that, historically, the operating ranges included areas of Camp Pendleton that are now used for activities such as public beach parking. As a result, a full environmental assessment would need to address more of the base than only the range currently used for training. In addition, the extent to which the natural

sand dune behind the target berm contains lead fragments and other ordnance-related debris would need to be fully evaluated.

Based on the on-site review of the Camp Pendleton range complex, DEQ staff concluded that:

The preliminary conclusion from the site inspection and historical photograph analysis is that there are potential human health and environmental exposures to range-related contaminants at the Camp Pendleton range complex.

Additional unidentified environmental issues may also be present at the range. This factor is especially relevant since the facility was under the control of the federal government during World Wars I and II.

Camp Pendleton staff reported that there is little or no documentation of the level and type of weapons training that was conducted during these periods. This is an important observation, since disposal practices for weapons-related material and explosives were not as sophisticated as currently required. As a result, the extent to which activities conducted during these two periods have negatively impacted the environment at the range is relatively unknown.

However, evidence of this type of contamination has been found at Camp Pendleton. For example, DMA staff reported that:

Over the years, both soldiers and contractors have stumbled upon unexploded ordnance at [Camp Pendleton], while training or working at the site. In 1996, while excavating during construction of a Vehicle Maintenance Complex, three white phosphorus incendiary grenades were uncovered. Since 1985, two additional ordinances were discovered by the 203rd RED HORSE.

Clearly, the possibility of finding other ordnance — especially at the range complex — must be taken seriously.

Therefore, it is necessary for a full assessment to be conducted to ensure all the environmental- and unexploded ordnance-related issues are properly identified. This will better enable policy makers to ensure that the area is environmentally sound and in compliance with all applicable State and federal laws. Such an assessment was beyond the scope of this study and would likely require the appropriation of funds for that purpose.

Finally, as noted earlier, the federal government had control of the facility for the periods of World Wars I and II. During that time, it is more than likely that extensive weapons training was conducted at the range. As a result, some consideration could be given to exploring the potential for the federal government to share in some of

the cost — based on some measure of usage — for the environmental remediation of the range complex at Camp Pendleton.

Recommendation (3). Due to the residential development that has occurred adjacent to Camp Pendleton, the General Assembly may wish to consider directing the Department of Military Affairs to permanently close the rifle range at the facility.

Recommendation (4). If a long-term decision is made not to permanently close the range, the General Assembly may wish to direct the Secretary of Public Safety to bring in independent safety experts to fully assess the range at Camp Pendleton and, if possible, make recommendations on steps needed to ensure the range is safe to operate with residential housing and tourist beaches in close proximity. Use of the range should be suspended until the conclusion of the safety review and completion of necessary improvements.

Recommendation (5). The Virginia National Guard should begin the process of developing use agreements with the U.S. Navy for Virginia Army and Air National Guard use of the ranges at the Dam Neck Fleet Training Center.

Recommendation (6). If the range at Camp Pendleton is permanently closed, the General Assembly may also wish to consider directing the Department of Environmental Quality to conduct a full environmental assessment of steps necessary to fully remediate the property for other uses. This assessment should also include the issue of unexploded ordnance.

THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS ON THE MILITARY OF CONVERTING CAMP PENDLETON TO CIVILIAN PURPOSES

The conversion of Camp Pendleton to civilian purposes would have mixed benefits and costs to the military. The benefits of such a conversion would be the probable consolidation of National Guard training facilities and activities to Fort Pickett. Because of its size, Fort Pickett can be used for both field training exercises and for command post exercises. Simply stated, almost everything that is done at Camp Pendleton could be done at Fort Pickett, were its facilities modified and upgraded for those purposes. In particular, Fort Pickett would need additional classroom space. Camp Pendleton, on the other hand, is limited by its size to non-tactical training.

While there would be initial costs to relocating National Guard facilities from Camp Pendleton to Fort Pickett, in the long run the expense of operating one facility could be less than operating both. Complete relocation of Camp Pendleton facilities may not be feasible, however, given long-term leases and environmental issues. The feasibility of relocating Camp Pendleton is discussed more fully in Chapter IV.

The costs of converting Camp Pendleton to civilian activities, such as a State park, would include:

- relocating existing functions,
- considerable lease breaking expenses,
- environmental remediation of certain sites,
- relocation costs and replacement of classrooms and other facilities,
- degradation of facility quality, and
- reduced National Guard unit morale.

In addition, the loss of “synergy” with the considerable federal military presence in the Tidewater area should not be overlooked. Camp Pendleton has been effectively used as a factor in attracting military units forced to relocate as a result of the BRAC process. While this factor cannot be quantified, it should not be overlooked when assessing the costs and benefits of changing the use of the facility.

Finally, the determination of costs associated with closing Camp Pendleton and converting it to a State park would be substantial. Prior to such a determination, certain policy decisions would need to be made regarding the State’s objectives and its willingness to plan for such a conversion over an extended period of time. Such a determination would also need to take into account the needs of the public for additional recreational property. These issues are discussed in the following chapter.

IV. The Feasibility of Converting Camp Pendleton to a State Park

It is not feasible to convert Camp Pendleton in its entirety to a State park because of long-term leases, environmental issues, the cost of replacing facilities, and other factors. However, there is a need for public recreation property in the Virginia Beach area, and portions of the Camp Pendleton property lend themselves to public use. This chapter assesses the feasibility of converting Camp Pendleton to a State park from two points of view: (1) an issue-based assessment, focusing on usage, needs, leases, and environmental issues, and (2) a parcel-by-parcel review of Camp Pendleton, assessing the current and potential uses of the property. Finally, it presents options for legislative consideration.

ISSUES AFFECTING THE POTENTIAL CONVERSION OF CAMP PENDLETON TO A STATE PARK

There are four principal issues which must be assessed in determining the potential conversion of Camp Pendleton to a State park. These issues are: (1) a balancing of the military need for the facility and the competing need of the public for recreational property in the area; (2) current, long-term leasing practices which encumber the property; (3) the feasibility of environmentally remediating the Camp Pendleton properties; and (4) the overall benefits and costs to the Virginia National Guard of relocating training from Camp Pendleton to other areas, such as Fort Pickett.

Balancing Competing Needs for the Camp Pendleton Property

As shown earlier in this report, Camp Pendleton is used extensively by the Virginia National Guard and other military units. Further, the facility serves as a useful buffer between civilian property and active duty military uses that take place on the Navy property to the south of Camp Pendleton. Reflective of that, Camp Pendleton is clearly useful and convenient to the Virginia National Guard and the overall U.S. military. It is more difficult to make a compelling case that Camp Pendleton is *essential* to these military organizations.

For example, the Virginia National Guard now has scheduling control of Fort Pickett, a huge facility capable of supporting more extensive training activities than Camp Pendleton. While the State does not own Fort Pickett and could conceivably lose it in a national emergency, during both World War I and World War II, Camp Pendleton itself was taken over by the federal government. Thus ownership is no guarantee that the Virginia National Guard would always retain control over the property. In the broader context, the U.S. military owns huge parcels of land and beachfront in the City of Virginia Beach. The retention of Camp Pendleton, though useful and convenient, is not necessarily essential to these military operations.

A similar argument can be made regarding public recreational need for Camp Pendleton. While there may be unmet need for public recreational facilities in the Virginia Beach area, the 325 acres still comprising Camp Pendleton can hardly be regarded as essential to the development of the City of Virginia Beach or to the fulfillment of public need for beachfront recreational facilities. The City of Virginia Beach has made approximately ten miles of additional beachfront accessible to the public since JLARC's 1979 study. Further, City officials acknowledge that the National Guard has been a good neighbor to Virginia Beach, selling it large portions of its property and making more and more concessions to the City in terms of beach usage, rifle range closing, and property access.

Still, the City has pressed for greater public access to, and ultimately ownership of, much of Camp Pendleton's properties. Realistically, however, even if all of Camp Pendleton were converted to a State park, the primary users of such a small facility would most likely be local or regional visitors. Ultimately, it cannot be concluded that conversion of Camp Pendleton to a State park would do the City and public more good than it would cause harm to the National Guard. Moreover, several other factors mitigate the value of the entire property for conversion to a State park. These include the leasing practices of the National Guard, environmental issues, and costs of relocation.

Leasing Practices and Agreements of the National Guard

For a variety of reasons explained earlier in this report, the Virginia National Guard has encumbered substantial portions of Camp Pendleton to other users. In effect, most of these leases commit for many years into the future major portions of Camp Pendleton property to the federal government for military purposes, with substantial costs to be incurred if the State terminates the leases and agreements before their expiration. Specifically, these leases and agreements involve: (1) the RED HORSE Armory; (2) the Virginia Beach Armory; and (3) the Military Sealift Command. In addition, another major tenant on Camp Pendleton property is the Commonwealth Challenge program. The conversion of these properties to a State park would be expensive and would have an adverse effect on the tenants.

RED HORSE Armory. A 50 year lease to the federal government of the 41 acres that include the RED HORSE Armory renders, by itself, the question of converting the entire facility to a State park virtually moot. It would make little sense to evict an important tenant which has made in excess of \$7.5 million in capital improvements, and replace it with a public recreational facility which could possibly get relatively lower use. If the State breaks this lease, then it must either reimburse the federal government for the cost of the capital improvements (prorated according to how much time is left in the lease), or relocate the RED HORSE unit to a comparable facility. Unit staff estimated that the cost to relocate the RED HORSE facilities in 1998 dollars would approach \$11 million, which the State would have to pay in its entirety with no financial support from the federal government. In addition to the costs involved, a relocation of this facility would have an adverse effect on the unit's readiness and operations.

Virginia Beach Armory. The State also has an agreement with the federal government regarding the construction of the Virginia Beach Armory. The 25 year agreement began in 1987, meaning that the agreement is in effect until 2012. Construction costs for the Virginia Beach Armory totaled over \$1.9 million. If the State wished to terminate the agreement before 2012, it would have to reimburse the federal government for its share (75 percent) of the construction costs, prorated according to how much time would remain in the agreement. In addition to the costs involved, a relocation of this facility would have an adverse effect on the unit's readiness and operations.

Military Sealift Command. The current lease between the State and the U.S. Navy expires in 2001, although the Navy has three additional five-year options for renewing the lease (thereby possibly committing the property until 2016). However, the lease agreement states that the State may terminate the lease in the event of "inactivation or closing of Camp Pendleton as a military reservation." Yet if the State were to terminate this lease, there would be additional costs. One cost is that over the initial five-year term of the lease, the Navy has agreed to pay total rent of \$1.37 million; terminating the lease obviously would cut off this source of revenue to the State. Another cost is the potential loss of 332 jobs to Virginia Beach, which came when the Military Sealift Command relocated from New Jersey. In addition to the costs involved, a relocation of the Military Sealift Command would have an adverse effect on the organization's operations.

The Commonwealth ChalleNGe Program. Adjacent to the Military Sealift Command on Camp Pendleton property is another major tenant, the Commonwealth ChalleNGe program. While there is no formal lease agreement with the federal government regarding the ChalleNGe program being housed on Camp Pendleton property, the usage of Camp Pendleton property is counted as the in-kind part of the State match for federal funding of the program, according to the 1998 Appropriation Act. Therefore, if the ChalleNGe program were removed from Camp Pendleton, the State in-kind match would be eliminated and, consequently, federal funding for the program may be jeopardized, unless the program were to be relocated to State property elsewhere, such as Fort Pickett. Such a relocation may cause some disruption in staffing and recruiting participants for the program, as most participants currently come from the Tidewater region.

Environmental Issues Related to the Conversion of Other Selected Camp Pendleton Property Tracts

Even if Camp Pendleton were not useful to the Virginia National Guard and were not encumbered by long-term leases, the conversion of the property to public recreational purposes would be complicated by a number of environmental issues. As discussed in Chapter III, environmental remediation of the Camp Pendleton rifle range will likely be necessary if it is closed and the process is initiated to convert it to a State park. However, environmental concerns extend beyond the range boundaries and lead-contaminated soils.

For example, DEQ staff also observed that the range's drainage system may have also resulted in other environmental issues. Specifically, because the range's drainage system discharges directly into Lake Christine, there is a possibility that range contaminants may also "...have impacted the water, sediments and fish in Lake Christine." (The DEQ report on issues related to the environmental remediation of the Camp Pendleton rifle range can be found in Appendix D).

In addition, other areas of Camp Pendleton may have to be evaluated for environmental contamination. For example, the banks of Lake Christine were reportedly built up years ago with dirt and other debris that was trucked in from other locations. Because there were apparently no controls in place to regulate the content of the material placed around the lake, an environmental assessment of that area should be conducted to determine whether remediation action is necessary.

Other situations could also require a formal review. For example, it appears that a truck washing compound was established near Lake Christine at one time. The runoff from that compound could have impacted the lake. In addition, Camp Pendleton staff noted that during the time the compound was in operation, it was an accepted practice to simply discard waste that was in the trucks directly into the lake.

Even prior practices such as coal storage could have an impact on the type of environmental remediation required. Large coal piles were kept on the ground near the main entrance to the post. The runoff from those piles could have penetrated the ground. In addition, areas such as the motor pool are susceptible to problems because oil was likely dumped directly on the ground. Even around the barracks environmental issues like paint and heating oil should be considered.

Finally, during World Wars I and II, Camp Pendleton was a very active military facility. As with the range complex, it is difficult to identify fully all of the activities that occurred during those periods of time that could have had negative impacts on the environment at Camp Pendleton. Nonetheless, there are areas for which, if the current use of the facility or parts of the facility is changed, environmental assessments should be conducted to ensure the property is properly prepared for a different type of use.

Overall Costs and Benefits of Relocating Military Activities

As discussed earlier in this report, it can be anticipated that there would be substantial costs to relocating the military activities currently located at Camp Pendleton. Key policy decisions regarding the extent of changes to the status quo would need to be made before realistic cost estimates can be made. Such costs would include those incurred through breaking leases, replacing existing facilities, environmentally remediating the property, and costs to displaced units. In addition, there would be unquantifiable costs, such as a potential decline in morale, and the loss of the synergy which exists by having a State military facility located in close proximity to the many active duty installations in the Virginia Beach area.

Despite the apparent costs of converting Camp Pendleton to a State park, there would also be some benefits to the National Guard. In addition to meeting public recreation needs, the relocation of Camp Pendleton activities to Fort Pickett would centralize most National Guard training activities at one facility. The National Guard would not have the expense of operating two military reservations, a problem the agency is trying to address by making Camp Pendleton financially self-supporting (See Appendix C for the Adjutant General's letter). Further, closing Camp Pendleton would alleviate the safety concerns associated with operating a rifle range in close proximity to a heavily populated area.

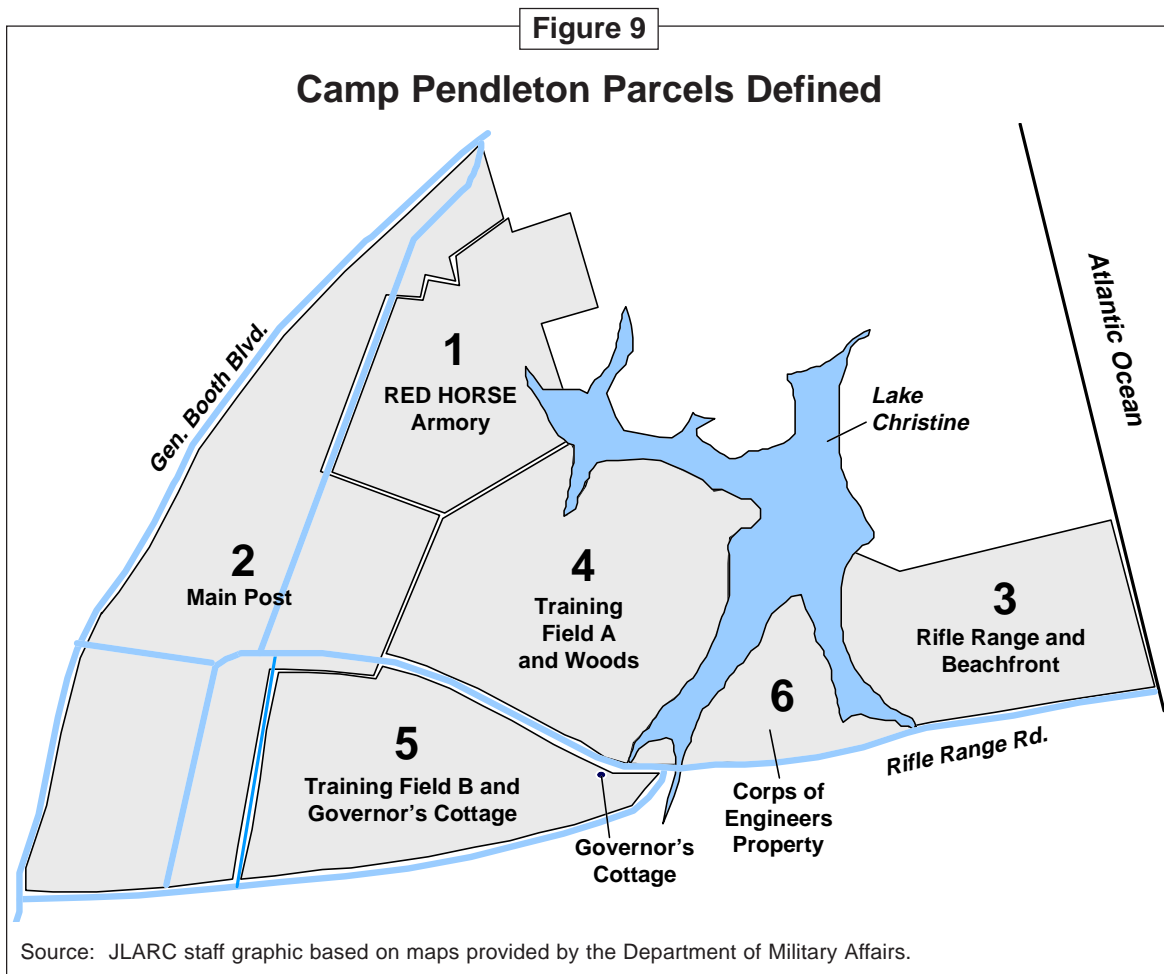
ASSESSMENT OF THE FEASIBILITY OF CONVERTING PORTIONS OF CAMP PENDLETON TO MORE PUBLIC USES

As concluded earlier, the conversion of all of Camp Pendleton to a State park is not feasible. However, there are still areas of the post which theoretically could be set aside for more public uses such as a small State park. The decision to redirect the use of Camp Pendleton would be a public policy choice, essentially a determination that the "highest and best use" of the property suggests such a change. It is important that the General Assembly and the Governor make such a determination in the near future.

One of the key reasons the post cannot be converted in its entirety has been the practice of encumbering substantial portions of the property on a long-term basis. Given the official strategy of the Virginia National Guard to make Camp Pendleton financially "self-sustaining," it is possible that the post could be so encumbered by long-term leases in the future that no alternative uses would be possible. In assessing the possibility of converting portions of Camp Pendleton to a State park or other public uses, JLARC staff divided the property that would be affected into six principal segments (Figure 9). The Camp Pendleton parcels, as defined for this study include:

- the RED HORSE armory (Parcel 1),
- the "Main Post" area (Parcel 2),
- the rifle range/beachfront area (Parcel 3),
- Training Field A and adjacent wooded area (Parcel 4), and
- Training Field B area, including Governor's cottage (Parcel 5).

In addition, the feasibility of converting portions of Camp Pendleton to a State park will be affected by the ability of the State either to lease or buy the parcel currently licensed by DMA from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Parcel 6). Without some rights to this property, users of the beachfront would have to drive through the Croatan residential area, which does not have suitable access roads for a facility of any magnitude.



The RED HORSE Armory (Parcel 1)

The property (parcel 1 on Figure 9) constituting the RED HORSE Armory is not feasible for development as a State park. As already discussed in this report, the costs associated with the State terminating its 50 year lease with the federal government is prohibitively high. Action to relocate this facility would also disrupt the operations and readiness of the unit. Further, State action to move a military installation so recently located on its property could adversely affect future efforts by the Commonwealth to attract military units seeking new locations as a result of military base closures in other parts of the country. Finally, demolition of existing facilities (such as the armory building and motor pools) and cleanup would substantially add to the expense of converting the property to a park.

The "Main Post" Area (Parcel 2)

The "Main Post" area (parcel 2 on Figure 9) represents the area Northeast of C and E streets, not including the property leased to the RED HORSE Armory. This

property includes the Camp Pendleton headquarters, most of Camp Pendleton's classrooms and housing, space leased to the Military Sealift Command and the ChalleNGe program, and other buildings and property. The main post area is not feasible for conversion to a State park.

As earlier noted in this report, the Military Sealift Command recently relocated to Camp Pendleton from New Jersey. While the State's lease provides that it can be terminated if Camp Pendleton ceases being a military installation, the tenant has made substantial modifications to the facilities it occupies and has plans for further improvements. Requiring this tenant to relocate again would adversely affect its operations. In addition, State action to move a military operation only recently located on its property could adversely affect future efforts by the Commonwealth to attract military activities seeking new locations as a result of military base closures in other parts of the country.

Other facilities (principally billeting and classrooms) on the "Main Post" area are used by the ChalleNGe program, National Guard units, and other military and governmental organizations. Were this parcel converted to a State park, many of the facilities would have to be demolished and a number would have to be replaced. Because Fort Pickett has many buildings which are not budgeted for operation, it would be feasible to renovate some of them to replace most of the facilities at Camp Pendleton. Inadequate classroom availability at Fort Pickett would require the conversion of at least some buildings. Many active military units currently using Camp Pendleton for billeting and classrooms would be unlikely to use Fort Pickett, however, because of its distance from the military facilities in Virginia Beach.

(The City of Virginia Beach has expressed an interest in using or acquiring a relatively undeveloped portion on the western edge of this parcel for use by the Virginia Marine Science Museum. Such a plan would have to be reviewed on its own merits.)

Rifle Range/Beachfront Area (Parcel 3)

If a decision is made to convert portions of Camp Pendleton to a State park, the range complex and beachfront should be included in such a conversion. It is feasible, *given the fulfillment of a number of conditions*, to convert this area to a small regional or State park. Including the range complex and beachfront would likely make conversion of other Camp Pendleton parcels more feasible and attractive. In addition, the role of the range complex in the operation of the U.S. Navy facilities adjacent to Camp Pendleton should be addressed. This would ensure that conversion of the range to a State park would not entirely mitigate the value of the property to the adjacent U.S. Navy training facilities.

Range and Beach Should Be Included in Any Conversion of Camp Pendleton Property. The beachfront property at Camp Pendleton will likely be a key factor in determining the feasibility of converting other tracts of the facility into a

State park. For example, the total acreage of the tracts of land at Camp Pendleton that could reasonably be converted into a park would not meet the minimum threshold of 600 acres currently suggested for State parks. Despite this acreage limitation, the 1,200 feet of beach on the Atlantic Ocean that is currently part of the range is the key factor that would make the conversion of Camp Pendleton to a small State park attractive.

While the State has abundant beaches, not enough are currently available to the public to meet demand. The DCR director reported that it would be advantageous for the State to have more access to oceanfront property. As a State park, the beach at Camp Pendleton would be the primary attraction. In addition, DCR staff noted that because Camp Pendleton is in a densely populated area, it could address the relative lack of accessible State-owned beachfront in the area, as well as provide potential access to other amenities such as Lake Christine. Moreover, if the range were part of a State park, it is possible that the property could be retained close to its current condition and not be subject to future commercial or residential development.

Role of Range and Beachfront in U.S. Navy Training Activities Should Be Addressed. Clearly, the range and beach are important factors in developing other Camp Pendleton tracts into a State park. However, the role of the Camp Pendleton beach and range in training activities conducted at the adjacent U.S. Navy facility should also be considered in any discussion of converting the property to other than military uses. In addition to the classroom and billeting facilities available at Camp Pendleton, the post provides a useful buffer for military training activities conducted on Navy property.

Camp Pendleton, because of its military mission, is restricted-access property that provides additional security to the adjacent Navy training facility. This is important since some of the military training conducted at the Navy facility can be either potentially dangerous or classified in nature. As a result, Navy staff reported that when civilian functions such as the regional State fair are hosted at Camp Pendleton, the level of Navy operations and training activities on its facility must be reduced. In addition, amphibious landing exercises are conducted on the Navy beach about three or four times each year. Navy staff reported that there have been exercises in which the landings were off target. In such a scenario, the Camp Pendleton property would help ensure that transport craft or troops were not landed on civilian beaches or property. In this role, Camp Pendleton provides a buffer that helps separate the civilian population from military operations that occur on U.S. Navy property.

To moderate the impact of converting the Camp Pendleton range to a State park on Navy training activities, access agreements giving the federal government the right to use the converted property for specified periods could be developed. For example, an agreement between the State and the U.S. Navy could be developed that would enable the closing of either all or a portion of the park during the amphibious landing exercises or other sensitive training activities. This would ensure that the beach area and the land directly behind the existing beach were closed to tourists and

other civilian personnel during these training exercises. Such an agreement could essentially provide a comparable buffer from the civilian population currently provided by the Camp Pendleton range and beachfront.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Property (Parcel 6) Will Be Necessary for Development of a State Park at Camp Pendleton

The value of converting any of the tracts of Camp Pendleton property to a State park is directly linked to the extent full access to the 1,200 feet of beachfront property and the adjacent range complex is achieved. However, access to the beachfront area would need to be addressed, as the State does not own the property separating the range complex from the main Camp Pendleton facility west of Lake Christine.

Although, access to the Camp Pendleton range complex and beachfront could be provided through the Croatan community, it would likely increase the traffic and congestion in the residential area. Moreover, simply providing access to the beachfront through the Croatan neighborhood would likely not result in a direct link between the tracts of Camp Pendleton property separated by Lake Christine. That direct link is currently provided by Rifle Range Road and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers property.

Direct Access to Range Complex and Beachfront from Main Complex Is Through Corps of Engineers Property. As illustrated in Figure 9, access to the Camp Pendleton range and beachfront is currently on Rifle Range Road, which runs through Parcel 6. However, this direct access route to the range and beachfront is not owned by the State. Instead, Parcel 6 is currently owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and used by Camp Pendleton through a 25 year license with the federal government which expires in 2017.

Therefore, in order to ensure adequate direct public access to the range complex and beachfront from the main section of the Camp Pendleton complex (Parcels 4 and 5), the State would need also to take steps to ensure adequate public access to the range complex and beachfront. In addition, access to the U.S. Corps of Engineers property, because it is wooded, would be valuable as part of any park-related conversion at Camp Pendleton.

State Ownership or Contractual Agreement to Use the Corps of Engineer Property Would Be Necessary. To ensure full access and utilization of a park at Camp Pendleton, the State would likely have to either purchase the property or enter into a contractual agreement for the purpose of using the property as a park. However, purchasing this property could be costly and time consuming. In addition, the neighboring Department of Defense military installations might oppose such a sale.

Another option available to the State for obtaining use of the property and Rifle Range Road would be to enter into a contractual agreement with the federal

government regarding access to the property. At the present time, the State has a 25-year license expiring in 2017, which allows National Guard access to the 27.5-acre tract of land "...to use and occupy for year-round training and support of the Virginia Army National Guard...."

While the current license apparently limits the use of the property to activities that support the National Guard, it provides an example of how the State might pursue other uses of the property. Under the current license, National Guard generally has unhindered access to and use of the 27.5 acres of property. The federal government, however, has the authority to revoke the license at will and to use the property as it deems necessary in the interest of national defense.

In addition, as with the current license, the State would likely have to agree to a number of conditions that include: allowing certain military training activities like helicopter and aircraft flyovers, limitations regarding structures that could be constructed on the property, and allowing the U.S. military units to occasionally use the property for training purposes. However, these are similar to the limitations contained in the current license agreement between the Virginia National Guard and the federal government.

Such conditions would be substantial, but not necessarily insurmountable. If the property were converted to a State park, these types of limitations should not significantly impact most routine park-like activities or operations. Rather, they would more likely impact the availability of the park and its frequency of use by civilians. Some of the anticipated military training activities may require that civilian use of the property be restricted. However, training activities of this type would probably impact the entire Camp Pendleton complex and not only the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer property. In addition, this type of use agreement might be the most acceptable to the federal government.

Clearly, if a decision is made to convert portions of the Camp Pendleton property to a State park, the issue of access to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' property must be addressed to ensure that the park — especially the existing range and beachfront — is utilized to its full potential. State ownership of the property would be the most desirable option. However, a license or use agreement could enable both the State and federal government to have necessary access to and use of the property that meets both parties' needs.

Training Field A and Adjacent Wooded Area (Parcel 4)

This area is relatively undeveloped and (notwithstanding training needs or environmental issues) could feasibly be included in a small State or regional park. While the area is used for military training, it is one of the least used parcels on post. Its loss would have a negative effect on overall training, but not nearly to the same extent as the potential loss of the "Main Post" parcel.

There may be some environmental impediments to converting this area to a State park. According to the DEQ, Lake Christine — which forms the border for about half of this parcel — is potentially contaminated. Further assessment of the environmental quality of the water, sediments, and fish would be necessary before this parcel could be converted.

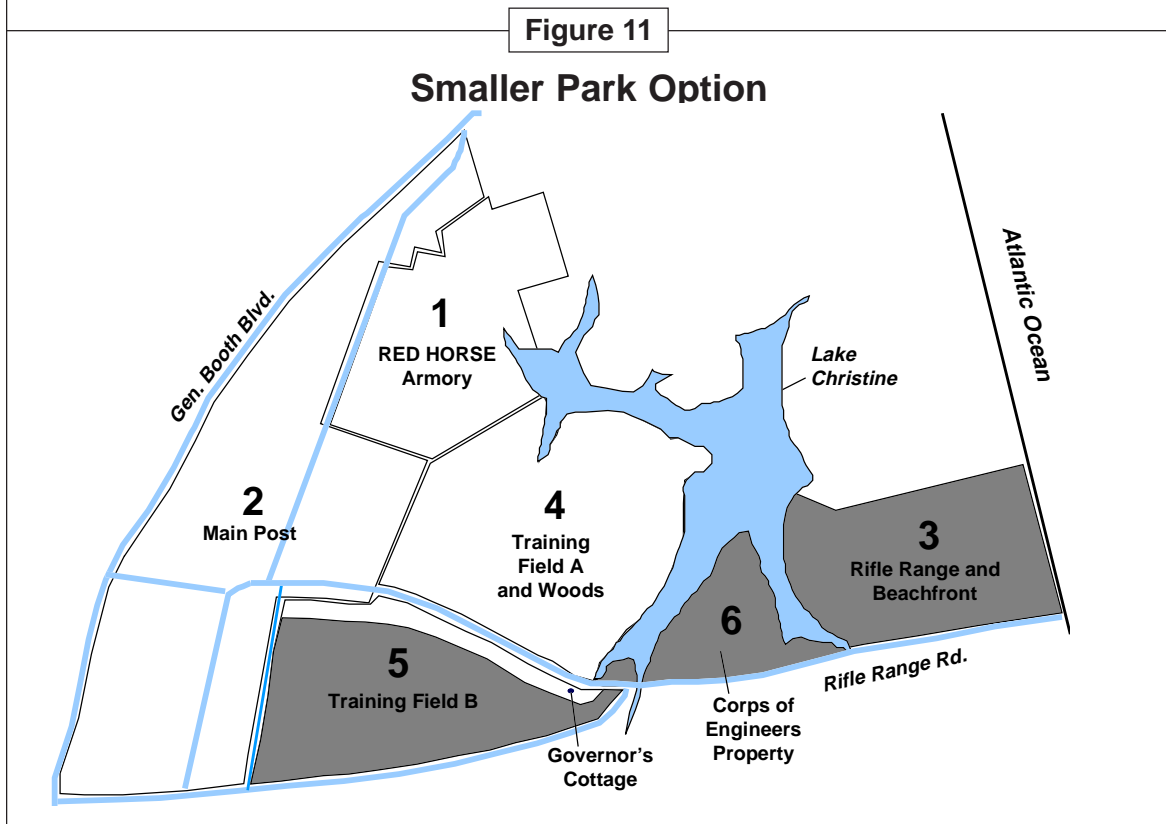
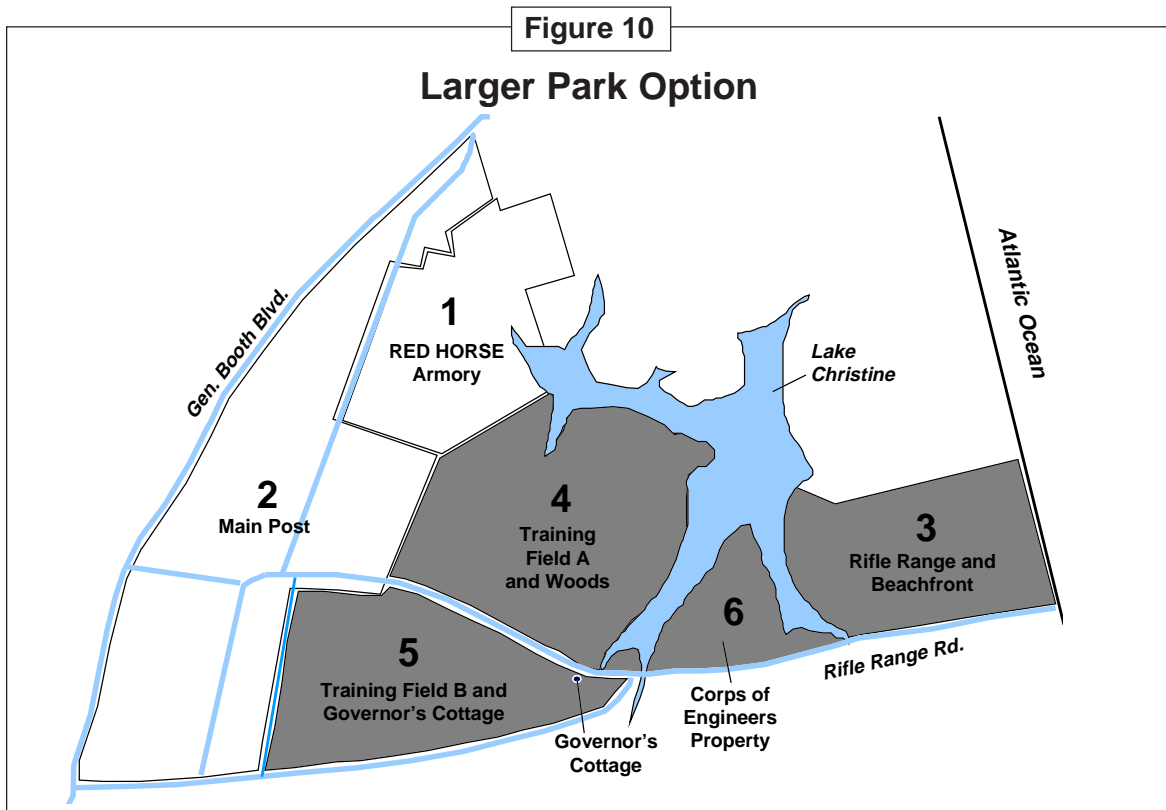
Training Field B, Including Governor's Cottage (Parcel 5)

The "Training Field B" parcel is occasionally used for military training and includes several structures, primarily housing units. It also includes the Governors' cottage. A park could theoretically be drawn around most of the buildings which border Jefferson Avenue. The rest of the area is relatively undeveloped and is already frequently used for public events, such as the regional state fairs held on Camp Pendleton in 1997 and 1998. Therefore, it is unlikely that there would be substantial issues of environmental remediation involved. This parcel could feasibly be included in a small State or regional park.

The Governor's cottage represents somewhat of an impediment to the development of a State park. Long used by the governors of Virginia for rest and retreats, the cottage's preservation seems to be in the best interests of the State. The Director of DCR has stated that there would be no problem in having the Governor's cottage located on a State park. In the event that a decision were made to include the "Training Field B" area in a potential State park, some accommodation should be reached with the Governor's office to ensure that the cottage is appropriately sequestered.

Another option which could accommodate the continued availability of the Governor's cottage would be to eliminate "Training Field A" (Parcel 4) and all of Jefferson Road from the park (currently designated as a part of Parcel 5). The remaining area — approximately 100 acres — could be accessed via Birdneck Road. The park area, then, would consist of Parcel 5, less the Governor's cottage and structures on Jefferson Road), Parcel 6 (the Corps of Engineers Property, assuming its availability), and Parcel 3 (the Rifle Range and Beachfront).

In summary, *given the fulfillment of a number of conditions*, it would be feasible to develop a small regional or State park on portions of Camp Pendleton property. The larger of the options, shown at Figure 10, would comprise parcels 3, 4, 5 and 6. Such a park would be approximately 200 acres. A smaller option (shown at Figure 11), would basically feature the beachfront and a smaller area for other recreational activities. This smaller park would be about 100 acres and would comprise parcels 3 and 6, and a portion of parcel 5. It must be reiterated that the feasibility of even these relatively small park areas would be dependent on reaching an agreement with the federal government on use of the Corps of Engineers property (Parcel 6).



Source: JLARC staff graphics based on maps from the Department of Military Affairs.

OPTIONS FOR THE USE OF CAMP PENDLETON

It is not feasible to convert all of Camp Pendleton to a State park. However, should the General Assembly determine that current development plans for the property do not represent its highest and best use, long-term planning could produce a small regional or State park of somewhere between 100 and 200 acres. To effect such a use, the federal, State, and City governments would have to enter into contractual agreements for the purposes of military training, land use, environmental remediation, and other issues.

While it does not appear feasible to convert Camp Pendleton in its entirety to a State park, there are a variety of policy options regarding the site open to the State. A brief discussion of these options, and their advantages and disadvantages follows. The options are:

1. Make no changes to Camp Pendleton or to the Department of Military Affairs' management of Camp Pendleton.
2. Preserve State flexibility for the future development of Camp Pendleton for alternative purposes by restricting future encumbrances on the property.
3. Direct the Secretary of Public Safety to provide for an independent safety review of the Camp Pendleton rifle range and make appropriate changes to the range. Suspend use of the range until the conclusion of the safety review and the completion of needed modifications.
4. Direct the Department of Military Affairs to close its rifle range at Camp Pendleton, develop usage agreements with neighboring military facilities for range use, and begin the environmental remediation of the range.
5. Designate portions of Camp Pendleton for conversion to a State park; initiate planning for acquiring permanent access to the beachfront through Corps of Engineers property; and develop plans for the conversion of substantial portions of Camp Pendleton to a State park.

These options are discussed in somewhat more detail below.

The variety and order of the options can be considered to reflect different degrees of tradeoffs between the military perspective and the public recreation perspective. At one end of the spectrum, reflecting the military perspective, is Option 1, which is essentially to make no changes to Camp Pendleton. At the other end of the spectrum, most reflective of the public recreation perspective, is Option 5, which would essentially convert as much of Camp Pendleton as possible to a State park. The other options could be considered as varying degrees of compromise between these two perspectives.

Option 1: Make no changes to Camp Pendleton or to the Department of Military Affairs' management of Camp Pendleton.

The advantages of this option are that it recognizes the needs of the military for Camp Pendleton and preserves DMA flexibility in the management of the site. This option has the least impact on current tenants. Because the site retains its military usage designations, no environmental remediation would be necessary. Facilities at Camp Pendleton would not need to be replaced at alternative locations, nor would other costs of relocation be incurred. In addition, Camp Pendleton could remain a useful component of State efforts to attract military units relocating as a result of the Base Realignment and Closure process.

The disadvantages of this option are that it does not increase oceanfront access or public usage of Camp Pendleton for recreational purposes. In addition, should DMA's strategy to make Camp Pendleton financially "self-sustaining" fail, the State could find itself in the position of funding the operation of two military installations. Further, this option may result in the additional long-term encumbrances of the property. Should such encumbrances continue, the State may lose its ability to manage the property in an alternative manner for the foreseeable future.

Option 2: Preserve State flexibility for the future development of Camp Pendleton for alternative purposes by restricting future encumbrances on the property.

The advantages of this option are that it preserves the flexibility of the State to develop Camp Pendleton for alternative purposes in the future. Thus, while not directly addressing the public need for recreational space in the Virginia Beach area, it keeps this option open for future decision makers. This option also has little impact on existing tenants. The financial implications are mixed, as existing facilities and operations would not have to be relocated. (However, DMA's ability to attract other income-producing tenants could be adversely affected.) Further, no environmental remediation would be necessary as long as the site retains its military designation.

The disadvantages of this option are that it does not increase oceanfront access or public usage of Camp Pendleton for recreational purposes. It also restricts military use and development of the property, including the ability of the State to use Camp Pendleton to attract military units relocating as a result of the Base Realignment and Closure process. Further, this option would probably prevent the National Guard from achieving its objective of making Camp Pendleton financially self-sufficient by 2002. Finally, such an approach could create an air of uncertainty regarding the future of Camp Pendleton and might impede its long-term utility as a military installation.

Option 3: Direct the Secretary of Public Safety to provide for an independent safety review of the Camp Pendleton rifle range and, if possible, make appropriate changes to the range. Suspend use of the

range until the conclusion of the safety review and the completion of needed modifications.

The advantages of this option are that it requires range safety issues to be independently addressed and corrected if possible on a timely basis. The disadvantages of this option are that noted safety issues may not be resolvable without substantial expense. Consequently, such an approach could conceivably result in the closing of the range, resulting in the expense of addressing environmental issues. Without a well-defined use for the Camp's beachfront property, additional pressure to convert the remainder of Camp Pendleton to non-military uses may result, thus adversely affecting current tenants and military users.

Other advantages and disadvantages of this option would depend on the outcome of the safety review and subsequent decisions regarding the range.

Option 4: Direct the Department of Military Affairs to close its rifle range at Camp Pendleton, develop usage agreements with neighboring military facilities for range use, and begin the environmental remediation of the range.

The principal advantage of this option is that it would eliminate the safety concerns caused by using lethal weapons in close proximity to highly developed civilian areas. In addition, it begins a process which could eventually lead to the "highest and best use" of the rifle range property. While the construction of a rifle range in this location made sense in 1912, it is difficult to justify under current conditions. A high quality military range exists a little more than a mile to the south of the Camp Pendleton ranges. With a reasonable amount of cooperation between the Navy and the National Guard, it would seem that the relatively modest usage of the Camp Pendleton range could take place instead at the ranges on the adjacent military facility. Further, DMA now has scheduling control of the firing ranges at Fort Pickett, which gives it additional options for National Guard training it did not have until recently.

Disadvantages of this option would include costs and inconvenience to user units, scheduling conflicts, and the difficulty the State may have in reaching agreements with active duty military units that are adamant in their opposition of increased civilian use of the Camp Pendleton property. Closing the range would also result in the costs associated with needed environmental remediation of the range area. In addition, as stated above, the closing of the range could result in additional pressure to convert the remainder of Camp Pendleton to non-military uses, thus adversely affecting current tenants and military users.

Option 5: Designate portions of Camp Pendleton for conversion to a State park; initiate planning for acquiring permanent access to the beachfront through Corps of Engineers property; and develop plans for the conversion of substantial portions of Camp Pendleton to a State park.

The advantages of this option are that it eliminates safety issues posed by the rifle range and would address the need for additional oceanfront access and public recreational space in the Virginia Beach area. Developed properly, a park could be created which has a limited impact on current tenants and National Guard users. As a State park, scheduling and access could be controlled in such a manner that some military uses could continue by closing the park for scheduled military activities and training.

Disadvantages of this option include the loss of flexible training space for current military users. Even under a carefully crafted use agreement, the military would not enjoy the priority of use which it currently has as owner of the property. Further, Camp Pendleton would lose much of its effectiveness as a buffer separating the civilian population from military activities occurring on adjacent Navy property. Another disadvantage would be the costs of facility replacement and training relocation, depending on the layout of the park. The extent of environmental remediation, unknown at this time, would also be a cost of changing the use of Camp Pendleton property. Further, the ability to use Camp Pendleton as a factor in attracting units displaced by the Base Realignment and Closure process would be affected. In addition, the morale of the National Guard would be adversely affected.

Finally, it must be recognized that such an option cannot be realized without some measure of cooperation from the federal government, particularly regarding access of the beachfront through U.S. Army Corps of Engineers property. It is possible that the State could embark on a long-range objective of converting portions of Camp Pendleton to a State park and not be able to realize that objective because of an inability to achieve access agreements with the federal government. Were that to happen, many of the costs of conversion would occur without realizing the major benefits.

CONCLUSION

While it might be possible, and from some perspectives desirable, for the Commonwealth to convert portions of Camp Pendleton to a small State park, many conditions would have to be met to effect such a conversion. For such a conversion to be feasible, the Commonwealth would need to make policy choices to change the use of the property (or portions of it) and develop a long-term plan in support of such a policy. Moreover, such an approach is not entirely under the State's control. To have a workable, though small, park facility, the cooperation of the federal government would be essential. This is a formidable concern, as active duty military units in the area and the Congressman representing the area are all adamantly opposed to the conversion of Camp Pendleton to a State park.

Nonetheless, if the Commonwealth were to pursue a decision to change the use of Camp Pendleton, any feasible approach would need to address the following issues:

- restricting the ability of the National Guard to encumber further the property in the future;
- developing agreements with the federal government for access to the beachfront through property owned by the Corps of Engineers;
- providing funding, if necessary, for the relocation of those activities and facilities displaced by the conversion; and
- determining and funding needed environmental remediation of converted property.

Without such a policy decision and a comprehensive plan to implement it, it is likely that the Camp Pendleton property will be further developed and encumbered. If that occurs, the Commonwealth could lose the opportunity to convert the property in any meaningful way for the foreseeable future.

***Recommendation (7).* The General Assembly may wish to make a long-term policy decision regarding the future use of Camp Pendleton. Should the General Assembly adopt such a policy, the Department of Military Affairs should revise its strategic plan to reflect legislative intent.**

Appendixes

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Appendix A
Study Mandate

Item 16 G - 1998 Appropriation Act

**The Feasibility of Converting
Camp Pendleton to a State park**

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall examine the feasibility of converting the State Military Reservation (Camp Pendleton) in the City of Virginia Beach to a State park. The study shall include, but not be limited to: (i) the need for additional oceanfront access and State park recreation areas in southeastern Virginia; (ii) the impact on tenants at the facility; (iii) cost and benefits to the Virginia National Guard in relocating all remaining training functions to Fort Pickett; and (iv) environmental remediation issues. In conducting this study the Commission shall consult with the Department of Military Affairs, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the City of Virginia Beach and Camp Pendleton tenants. A report on the findings of the study shall be presented to the 1999 Session of the General Assembly.

Appendix B

Methods for Estimating Demand, Supply, and Unmet Needs for Recreational Facilities

The overall approach borrows heavily from the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) *1996 Virginia Outdoor Plan* and the *1992 Virginia Outdoors Survey*. The approach can be summarized briefly in terms of demand, supply, and estimated need gaps:

- **Demand** for facilities and recreational areas to support each activity was estimated using two major components. One was activity days, which was an estimated number of individuals participating in a given activity for a given year, based on *1992 Virginia Outdoors Survey* results. The other component was capacity standards developed by DCR. DCR calculated current demand based on 1990 Census figures, and projected demand based on 2000 and 2010 official population projections obtained from the Virginia Employment Commission. The DCR demand estimate does not take into account *imported demand* such as tourism from outside the state or local area. Therefore, JLARC staff made some assumptions regarding demand for beach use generated by tourism, to add to the local demand for beach use estimated by DCR.
- **Supply** estimates were taken from the statewide inventory of recreational areas and facilities that is maintained and updated by DCR.
- **Need** gaps were calculated by subtracting the current supply from the current or projected demand for each activity.

More detailed descriptions follow of the methods for estimating demand and supply.

ESTIMATING DEMAND FOR FACILITIES AND AREAS TO SUPPORT RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

DCR estimated the demand for 40 recreational activities, such as “outdoor beach use and swimming,” “picnicking away from home,” “football,” “soccer,” “baseball” and “softball.” All 40 recreational activities are listed in Exhibit B.1. Demand levels of some activities (particularly “outdoor beach use and swimming”) would be especially affected by tourism, when other activities would be primarily reflecting local demand (such as soccer and softball). JLARC staff attempted to take tourism into account in the estimated demand level for beach acres, in addition to the DCR demand estimates.

Exhibit B.1

Recreational Activities for which DCR Estimated Demand

Jet skiing
Lake fishing
Power boating
Sailboarding
Sailing
Salt water fishing
Water skiing
Canoe, kayak, jon boat
Rafting
Stream fishing
Tubing
Outdoor beach use and swimming
Outdoor pool swimming
Swimming indoors
Tent camping
Developed camping
Picnicking away from home
Hunting
Football
Soccer
Baseball
Softball
Basketball
Tennis
Snow skiing
Golf
Playground use
Bicycling for pleasure
Hiking, backpacking
Horseback riding
Fitness trail use and jogging
Off-road motorcycling
All-terrain vehicle
Skateboarding
Volleyball
Visiting gardens
Visiting historic sites
Visiting natural areas
Four-wheel off-road vehicle

Source: DCR, *1996 Virginia Outdoor Plan*

DCR Demand Estimates

DCR used a formula to estimate demand. The formula as a whole is presented first, along with a description of the components of the formula. Then a specific example is used to illustrate more concretely what the formula means and the logic behind it. Finally, the specific method for projecting demand into the future is discussed. Much of this description is taken from the 1989 and 1996 *Virginia Outdoors Plans*.

DCR Formula for Estimating Demand. The formula is:

$$D = [(A/W)P]/C$$

where:

D is the demand in units,

A is the annual number of activity days spent in the activity,

W is the number of weeks the activity is in season,

P is the proportion of activity days that occur on the peak day of the week, and

C is the daily capacity of the facility or area unit.

The daily capacity, C, is calculated as:

$$C = IT$$

where:

I is the instant capacity, and

T is the turnover factor per day.

An Activity Day is the participation by one person in any recreation activity during any part of one day. If an individual swims, picnics, and plays baseball during the day, that individual has generated three activity days (occasions) of recreation, one each for swimming, picnicking, and baseball. Activity day estimates were derived from the *1992 Virginia Outdoors Survey*. Activity days were measured as the estimated number of individual persons in each survey household reported as participating, multiplied by the median number of days spent by each participant within the survey region. There were four survey regions: the Chesapeake Region, the Urban Corridor, the Piedmont Region, and the Mountain Region. Further description of the *1992 Virginia Outdoors Survey* can be found on pages 323 through 325 of the *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan*.

Capacity Standards relate to the instant, daily, or seasonal capacity of a particular recreational facility. They are utilized to determine the amount of land or water required to accommodate a particular activity within a park complex and to determine how many people can be accommodated during an average day, week, or season. They are developed by DCR as rule-of-thumb aids in developing management plans and/or determining the adequacy of facilities to meet local desires. When the capacity standard of a particular facility is known, the planner can then determine (based on local demand) how many facilities are needed. The capacity standards are subject to variations depending on the quality of the facility and its management. For example, a ball field which is night lighted has a greater daily capacity than one that is not. This report uses estimations that are based on capacity standards that can be found on pages 317 through 322 of the *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan*.

Instant Capacity refers to how many individuals may be served at the same time per area or facility unit, during the peak day of the week.

Daily Capacity is the number of individual activity days that can be served per acre or facility unit, during the peak day of the week.

Turnover refers to the number of times that a particular facility may be used by different individuals or groups during a day. For example, a baseball field might have a turnover factor of four games per day, since the average warm up and game will last almost two hours. Thus, the planner can reasonably expect to accommodate up to eight teams per field, per day.

An Illustrative Example to Show How the DCR Formula Works. To demonstrate more concretely the logic and reasoning behind the DCR formula, the Hampton Roads Recreation Planning Region 1992 demand (based on activity day estimates from the *1992 Virginia Outdoor Survey*) for softball is shown.

The formula is:

$$D = [(A/W)P]/C$$

where:

A is the annual number of activity days spent on softball, or 2,609,280;

W is the number of weeks softball is in season, or 26;

P is the proportion of activity days that occur on the peak day of the week, or 0.37; and

C is the daily capacity of the facility unit (namely, a ball field).

The daily capacity, C, is calculated as:

$$C = IT$$

where:

I is the instant capacity, or 20 for a ball field; and

T is the turnover factor per day, or 4 times per day.

Therefore, substituting the specific values for softball into the formula:

$$\begin{aligned} D &= [(2,609,280/26)0.37]/(20 \times 4) \\ &= [37,132]/(80) \\ &= 464 \text{ ball fields.} \end{aligned}$$

The logic of this formula implies that: (1) there are on average 37,132 individual activity days on the peak day of the week spent on softball in the Hampton Roads area; (2) that the daily capacity of a field used for softball is 80 people; and (3) therefore, the demand in the Hampton Roads area for softball fields on the peak day of the week, on average, is 464 ball fields.

Projecting Demand into Future Years. In addition to calculating 1992 demand levels for recreational facilities, DCR also projected demand levels to the years 2000 and 2010. The method of making the projections is essentially an adjustment to the estimated number of activity days spent in a given activity. The total number of activity days for 1992 was estimated using two pieces of information from the *1992 Virginia Outdoors Survey*: (1) the percentage of respondents surveyed reporting having participated in a particular activity; and (2) the median number of days spent in a particular activity. This percentage and median was multiplied by the 1990 Census population estimate to derive the estimated number of activity days for 1992. To project a number of activity days for the years 2000 and 2010, corresponding population projections (from the Virginia Employment Commission) were substituted for the 1990 population estimates.

Demand Due to Tourism

The DCR demand calculations from the *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan* are for local demand, and do not include demand that is generated by tourism (particularly from out-of-state tourists). *The 1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan* states on page 325: "The [demand] applies only to the specified area (i.e., locality, planning district, or state-wide), and therefore does not take into account *imported demand* such as tourism from outside the state or local area." Yet tourism is an important economic factor for the Hampton Roads area, and especially Virginia Beach. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that tourists, in addition to the local population, would be generating considerable demand for beachfront, that would not be reflected in the DCR demand estimates.

Data and Assumptions on which Tourist Demand Estimates Are Based.

Data from surveys of tourism in Virginia Beach, along with some accompanying assumptions which are described below, were used to derive estimates of the tourist demand for beach acres. The tourism surveys were the *Summer 1997 Virginia Beach Overnight Visitor Profile* and the *1997 Annual Economic Impact Study and Visitor Profile*, both of which were produced by the Bureau of Research in the College of Business and Public Administration at Old Dominion University. These surveys provided the following information on the number and characteristics of out-of-town visitors in Virginia Beach:

- number of monthly out-of-town visitors to Virginia Beach (see Table B.1);
- among out-of-town visitors during summer season, percentage from the Richmond or northern Virginia metropolitan areas — 26.6;
- among out-of-town visitors during summer season, percentage from out of State — 73.4;
- among out-of-town visitors during summer season, average stay — 4.4 nights;
- among out-of-town visitors during summer season, percentage on vacation at Virginia Beach — 60.2;
- among out-of-town visitors during summer season, percentage on weekend trip at Virginia Beach — 19.7; and
- among out-of-town visitors during summer season, percentage “visiting friends” in Virginia Beach — 8.9.

In order to use this information to derive some estimates of tourist demand for beach acres using the DCR formula, some assumptions were made. One assumption is the number of weeks that DCR assumes beach use is “in season,” which is 20 weeks. The formula is intended to estimate the demand for the peak day of the week when a recreational activity is in season. Therefore, the “season” for beach use was assumed to be the 20 weeks from May through September. Consequently, only the number of visitors from May through September of 1997 were used in the calculation (which totals 1,722,443).

Another assumption is that none of these out-of-town visitors are included in the DCR estimates of local demand for beach acres for Hampton Roads residents, although there may be some overlap for the DCR statewide estimates. Therefore, for the statewide estimates of demand for beach acres, “Out-of-Town Tourist” and “Out-of-State Tourist” assumptions were developed. According to the “Out-of-Town Tourist” assumption, the DCR demand estimate is assumed to include no activity days spent on the beaches of Virginia Beach by out-of-town residents who live in Virginia; therefore, in-state as well as out-of-state visitors are included in the Virginia Beach tourist demand estimate under this assumption. According to the “Out-of-State Tourist” assumption,

Table B.1
Number of Monthly Out-of-Town Visitors
to Virginia Beach in 1997

January	75,587
February	87,286
March	119,787
April	138,422
May	297,090
June	331,470
July	415,918
August	444,663
September	233,302
October	146,725
November	148,160
December	102,694
TOTAL	2,541,104

Source: Yochum, G. and Agarwal, V., Bureau of Research, Department of Business and Public Administration, Old Dominion University, *1997 Annual Economic Impact Study and Visitor Profile*.

the DCR demand estimate is assumed to include activity days spent in Virginia Beach by Virginia residents who live outside the Hampton Roads area; therefore, only out-of-state visitors to Virginia Beach are included in the tourist demand estimate under this assumption. In contrast, the local demand estimates for Hampton Roads residents are assumed to exclude the demand attributable to residents from the Richmond or Washington D. C. areas, which is a reasonable assumption, given how the *1992 Virginia Outdoor Survey* was administered.

Finally, not all out-of-town visitors to Virginia Beach are assumed to be spending substantial amounts of time at the beaches. For example, according to the *Summer 1997 Virginia Beach Overnight Visitor Profile*, 11.2 percent of the overnight visitors surveyed reported being in Virginia Beach as a stopover to some other destination, as a business trip, or for a convention. Therefore, these visitors were assumed not to spend any activity days at the beaches in Virginia Beach. However, the proportion of visitors who were on vacation or visiting friends in Virginia Beach were assumed to spend four activity days on the beaches (as the average length of stay was reported to be 4.4 nights).

The proportion of visitors who were on a weekend trip in Virginia Beach were assumed to spend two activity days on the beaches.

Calculating Tourist Demand Estimates. The DCR demand formula was used:

$$D = [(A/W)P]/C$$

where:

A is the annual number of activity days in season spent at the beach (calculations under different assumptions are shown below);

W is the number of weeks beach use is in season, or 20 according to DCR;

P is the proportion of activity days that occur on the peak day of the week, or 0.43; and

C is the daily capacity of the facility unit (namely, a beach acre).

The daily capacity, C, is calculated as:

$$C = I T$$

where:

I is the instant capacity, or 150 for a beach acre; and

T is the turnover factor per day, or 2 times per day.

Therefore, substituting the specific values for beach use into the formula:

$$D = [(\text{activity days}/20)0.43]/(150 \times 2).$$

The number of activity days is calculated under two different assumptions: the "Out-of-Town Tourist" and the "Out-of-State Tourist" scenarios.

Under the "Out-of-Town Tourist" Assumption, in which all visitors from outside the Hampton Roads area are counted, activity days are calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Activity days} = [(\text{Number of out-of-town visitors}) \times (\text{proportion on vacation or visiting friends}) \times (\text{assumed number of visits to beach})]$$

$$+ \text{ [(Number of out-of-town visitors) x} \\ \text{(proportion on weekend trip) x} \\ \text{(assumed number of visits to beach)]}$$

Substituting numerical values from the 1997 surveys into the formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Activity days} &= [(1,722,443)(.602+.089)(4)] + [(1,722,443)(.197)(2)] \\ &= 4,760,832 + 678,642 = 5,439,474. \end{aligned}$$

Under the “Out-of-State Tourist” assumption, in which only visitors from outside Virginia are counted, activity days are calculated using the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Activity days} &= \text{[(Number of out-of-town visitors) x} \\ &\quad \text{(proportion from outside Virginia) x} \\ &\quad \text{(proportion on vacation or visiting friends) x} \\ &\quad \text{(assumed number of visits to beach)]} \\ &+ \text{ [(Number of out-of-town visitors) x} \\ &\quad \text{(proportion from outside Virginia) x} \\ &\quad \text{(proportion on weekend trip) x} \\ &\quad \text{(assumed number of visits to beach)]} \end{aligned}$$

Substituting numerical values from the 1997 surveys into the formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Activity days} &= [(1,722,443)(.734)(.602+.089)(4)] \\ &\quad + [(1,722,443)(.734)(.197)(2)] \\ &= 3,494,451 + 498,123 = 3,992,574. \end{aligned}$$

As a result, there are two estimates of Virginia Beach tourist demand for beach acres. The “Out-of-Town Tourist” assumption has an estimated tourist demand for 390 beach acres. The “Out-of-State Tourist” assumption has an estimated tourist demand for 286 beach acres.

ESTIMATING SUPPLY OF FACILITIES AND AREAS TO SUPPORT RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In 1992, DCR conducted a statewide inventory of existing outdoor areas and facilities throughout Virginia. This survey was designed to solicit information from all

cities, towns, counties, and local parks and recreation agencies. Respondents were provided with an inventory of local recreational sites and facilities and were asked to make additions and/or deletions to existing sites. Respondents were furnished with a form on which to tabulate and record recreation resources not currently listed in the State's supply system. To determine the true supply and subsequent need for outdoor recreational areas and facilities, it was requested that information on all recreational providers – public, quasi-public and private – be included. The statewide supply of all recreational facilities inventoried is listed on page 330 of the *1996 Virginia Outdoors Plan*.

Appendix E

Agency Responses

As part of an extensive data validation process, State agencies involved in a JLARC assessment effort are given the opportunity to comment on an exposure draft of this report. Appropriate technical corrections resulting from the written comments have been made in this version of the report. Page references in the agency response relate to an earlier exposure draft and may not correspond to page numbers in this version. This appendix contains the response from the Department of Military Affairs, the Commander, Naval Base Norfolk, and the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation.



JLARC Staff

DIRECTOR: PHILIP A. LEONE

● *DEPUTY DIRECTOR:* R. KIRK JONAS

DIVISION I CHIEF: GLEN S. TITTERMARY

DIVISION II CHIEF: ROBERT B. ROTZ

SECTION MANAGERS:

PATRICIA S. BISHOP, FISCAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

● JOHN W. LONG, PUBLICATIONS AND GRAPHICS

● GREGORY J. REST, RESEARCH METHODS

PROJECT TEAM LEADERS:

● CRAIG M. BURNS

LINDA BACON FORD

HAROLD E. GREER, III

WAYNE M. TURNAGE

PROJECT TEAM STAFF:

CYNTHIA A. BOWLING

BETH SILVERMAN CROSS

STEVEN E. FORD

WAYNE A. JONES

APRIL R. KEES

MELISSA L. KING

ERIC H. MESSICK

SUZANNE R. PRITZKER

LAWRENCE L. SCHACK

E. KIM SNEAD

PAUL VAN LENTEN

CHRISTINE D. WOLFE

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH SUPPORT STAFF:

JOAN M. IRBY

BETSY M. JACKSON

BECKY C. TORRENCE

STEVE MYRON, INTERN

DON MOONEY, INTERN

● *Indicates staff with primary assignment to this project*

FORMER JLARC STAFF WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT:

DEBORAH MOORE GARDNER

JLARC
Suite 1100
General Assembly Building
Capitol Square
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(804) 786-1258 Fax: 371-0101
<http://jlarc.state.va.us>

