

**FORMER  
PLATTSBURGH  
AIR FORCE BASE  
COMMUNITY  
RELATIONS PLAN**

**Appendix C**



**U.S. AIR FORCE**

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# Site Description

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## Location

Plattsburgh, New York is located in Clinton County, in the northeastern portion of the state, commonly referred to as the "North Country". It is located near the Adirondack State Park and along the western shore of Lake Champlain. Plattsburgh is approximately 26 miles south of the Canadian border and 64 miles south of Montreal, Canada. The state capital Albany, New York, is 167 miles to the south of Plattsburgh. What is collectively referred to as "Plattsburgh" is actually a combination of the City of Plattsburgh (5.3 square miles) and the Town of Plattsburgh (47.1 square miles). The population of Clinton County in 2010 was 82,128; approximately 45% of the county's population resides in Plattsburgh. Clinton County is a growing area in New York State and is the major center for commerce, trade and employment north of Albany. Plattsburgh is also the largest community in northern New York. The Former Plattsburgh AFB is approximately 3,447 acres in size with additional 1,292 acres in easements.

## *Adjacent Off-Base Land Use*

Over half the land use in Clinton County is dedicated to rural and commercial forest resources including: the generation of forest products, watershed protection and recreation. Agriculture accounts for approximately 15 percent of land use in the county; residential, industrial and commercial uses comprise the remainder of county land use. Lands to the east, west and south of the base are predominantly residential.

## *Topography*

The Plattsburgh AFB physical geography is characterized by a land surface that slope gently in an eastward direction toward Lake Champlain and to a lesser degree toward the Saranac and Salmon rivers, which border the base to the north and south respectively. Additionally, a basin feature, located in the southwestern portion of the base, drains south to the Salmon River.

The base is located entirely in Clinton County which lies in a physical geographic province called the St. Lawrence-Lake Champlain Lowland. The Adirondack Upland province (the Adirondack Mountains) borders Clinton County to the west and is the western source of surface drainage for much of Lake Champlain. The Adirondack Mountains lie 20 to 30 miles west of Plattsburgh AFB. The Green Mountains of Vermont, a component of the Appalachian Ridge and Valley physical geographic province, lie 25 to 40 miles to the east.

## History

The Plattsburgh area has a long history of military tradition dating back nearly 400 years to the time when the area was discovered by Samuel de Champlain, in 1609. The U.S. Government has maintained a facility in Plattsburgh since 1812; the first permanent structures were erected between 1838 and 1842. During the Civil War, Union army volunteers from Franklin and Clinton counties organized and departed from the post at Plattsburgh. In 1915, regular troops were stationed at the post, which came to be known as the "Training Camp for Young Business Men on Lake Champlain," the forerunner of the Reserve Officer Training Corps. The post was operated by the Army from 1865 until it turned the base over to the Navy in 1944. The installation operated as an officer training station for the U.S. Navy between 1944 and 1945, during which time 2,000 men were commissioned.

Plattsburgh became the site of the U.S. Army Air Corps Convalescent Hospital in 1945. One year later, the property covered by the old Army post was transferred to the state of New York; however, the federal government reserved the option-to reclaim the property for national defense within a 10-year period. From 1946-1953, Champlain College operated at the Plattsburgh facility, educating G.I.'s returning from World War II.

In 1954, the Department of Defense exercised its option to reclaim the post. The Air Force announced plans to build an air base, to include another 3,000 acres of newly purchased land. Groundbreaking for the Strategic Air Command (SAC) base was held in 1954. The 380th Bombardment Wing, Medium, was activated in July 1956 and included three B-47 squadrons and a KC-97 refueling squadron.

In 1964, the B-47 force was augmented by Atlas missiles as the 380th became a Strategic Aerospace Wing (HEAVY). Both the Atlas missile and the B-47 were eventually phased out and the 380th became a Bombardment Wing again in 1966, this time flying the 8-52G. The B-52s were moved to Fairchild AFB, Washington, in 1971, and the first FB-111 arrived in July 1971. In 1991, the Bombardment Wing was removed and operations were realigned to form the 380<sup>th</sup> Refueling Wing.

PAFB was closed on September 30, 1995 as part of the third round of base closures under BRAC.

## Environmental Actions

Environmental actions and progress are broken down by those included in the 2006 BRAC Master Plan (BMP) and each BMP update. These actions are summarized in the table at the end of this section.

### *Environmental Actions 2006 BMP*

An agreement with the EPA and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) was achieved to perform Soil Vapor Intrusion (SVI) sampling.

### *Environmental Actions 2007 BMP Update*

AFRPA completed sub-slab soil gas and indoor air monitoring, to assess the SVI pathway for the FT002/Industrial Area (IA) Groundwater Operable Unit (OU) and submitted the investigation report in October 2007. Negotiations between the AFRPA and regulators over the report's conclusions and recommendations were conducted in December 2007.

A Finding of Suitability for Early Transfer (FOSET) was submitted in November 2007 for approximately 325 acres of property, which is to be transferred via an Economic Development Conveyance (EDC) that is impacted by the FT002/IA Groundwater OU. The remaining property, to be transferred via and Airport Public Benefit Conveyance will be evaluated in a separate FOSET.

### *Environmental Actions 2010 BMP Update*

Records of Decision (RODs) for two sites, SS013 and SS016, were completed in 2008. The selected remedy at SS013 was Ozone Sparging, to address groundwater contamination, and Institutional Controls to address the SVI pathway. The SS013 system was installed and activated in 2007. The selected remedy for SS016 was No Further Action.

The FOSET for the EDC property was signed and all remaining un-deeded EDC property was transferred in July 2009.

Contamination was discovered under the recently demolished Base Central Heat Plant, an investigation was conducted in 2008 and an Air Sparging/Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) System was installed and activated in December 2009.

Additional SVI sampling for the FT002/IA Groundwater OU was conducted in 2008 and 2009. A soil vapor extraction (SVE) system was installed and activated at one building (Building 2753) in December 2009; two additional SVE systems were installed (at Building 2766 and New Building "C") and activated in December 2010.

Removal of petroleum contaminated soil was accomplished in July 2009 on transferred property that had been redeveloped into private residences. A work plan for additional investigation and remediation was developed and approved by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) in late 2009. The additional

investigation was performed in October 2010 and an additional removal action was planned for 2011.

The Third Five Year Review Report was completed and approved by the USEPA in November 2009.

The Plattsburgh Performance Based Remediation (PBR) contract was awarded in March 2010, and will run through December 2015.

A supplemental Proposed Plan, to address the SVI pathway, and a Revised ROD for the FT002/IA Groundwater O/U was submitted for regulatory review in April and May 2010 respectively. In addition, a Draft FOSET for the remaining property (to be deeded via an Airport PBR contract) was submitted for regulatory review in June 2010. Significant regulatory concerns were raised regarding the area requiring institutional controls.

#### *Environmental Actions 2011 BMP Update*

The Plattsburgh PBR contract has been successful in closing sites and optimizing remedial activities. The Air Force has obtained regulatory concurrence that IRP Fuel site ST030 has been cleaned up, decommissioning of the remediation system is in progress and site closeout is planned to occur by the end of FY 2011 (regulatory concurrence for the site closeout was received in May 2012). The Air Force has received regulatory concurrence that groundwater monitoring is no longer necessary at several sites (SS018/028), and has received approval to reduce monitoring at three additional landfills (LF021, 022, and 024) from annually to every two years. The Air Force is also working with the regulators to obtain approval to decommission the FT002 Source Operable Unit (OU) remediation system that was placed in stand by status in 2008, and obtain site closeout for it by early FY 2012 (now projected for FY2013).

The Air Force completed the SVI investigation of the FT002/Industrial Area Groundwater Operable Unit, and has recommended no further action for 10 buildings. After meeting with the EPA, the NYSDEC and New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), the area of groundwater and SVI restrictions was reduced from 979 acres to 548 acres. However, there is still disagreement over whether the SVI restriction should apply to all existing buildings (the regulatory position), or just new construction and the four impacted buildings (Air Force position). The Air Force is continuing to engage the EPA and the NYSDEC/NYSDOH on this issue. The Air Force reached an agreement, in January 2012, with the EPA and the NYSDEC on the scope of the groundwater and SVI restrictions for the FT002/IA Groundwater OU and are currently work on an developing a strategy to determine with the restrictions are no longer needed. An installation and Construction of SVE system at three buildings was completed and an occupancy restriction placed on one.

The Air Force is aggressively pursuing transfer of the remaining property at Plattsburgh by the end of FY 2011, but progress is still being hampered by regulatory concerns related to the SVI component of the FT002 Groundwater Operable Unit. The area to be restricted was agreed upon, in January 2011, and the Draft Final FOSET was submitted for regulatory review in February 2011. The EPA also directed that all existing buildings within the FT002 Groundwater OU restriction area be subject to the SVI restriction regardless of their location relative to the groundwater contamination, and regardless of previous SVI sampling results. The Air Force is not in agreement with the EPA position but is working with them, and the NYSDEC/NYSDOH, to resolve this issue. The Air Force reached an agreement with the EPA and the NYSDEC on the restriction area in January 2012, resubmitted the FOSET in February 2012, and received preliminary approval in March 2012. The Final FOSET was submitted for approval by the USEPA Region 2 Administrator and the Governor of New York State in April 2012. The remaining property at Plattsburgh is expected to be transferred, by deed, by the end of September 2012.

Decision Documents for the three CERCLA IRP sites was delayed due to regulatory issues related to the FT002 Groundwater OU. The Proposed Plan for IRP Site SS041 Soil OU was completed in August 2011 and the ROD is projected to be completed by December 2011 (now projected to be December 2012), followed by removal of contaminated soil in early FY 2012 (now projected to be 2013). Negotiations on the SVI cleanup criteria and LUC/IC exit strategy are ongoing, and completion of the FT002 Groundwater OU Proposed Plan and ROD are currently projected to be completed early in FY 2012 (now projected to be 2013). Work on the Flightline Soil OU (SS004) has been delayed due to the regulatory issues with the FT002 Groundwater OU which underlies SS004 but the PP and ROD are currently projected to be completed early in FY 2012.

Two SVE systems were installed (at Building 2766 and New Building "C") and began operation in December 2010.

The planned metals contaminated surface soil removal at IRP Site SS041 was delayed, and is now projected to occur in early FY 2012 (now 2013).

The planned petroleum contaminated soil removal, from a recently transferred residential area is in progress and scheduled to be completed by December 2011. The soil removal was completed, but groundwater monitoring is in progress and is expected to be completed by December 2012.

Baseline review of Compliance sites is underway. Options for addressing these sites, if any, will be included in the 2012 BMP update.

Completed Actions			
2006 BMP	2007 Update	2010 Update	2011 Update
Continue RPO of active remedies	Completed FY07		Is ongoing via the Performance Based Remediation Contract
AF to achieve agreement with the EPA and NYSDEC relative to SVI at the former Plattsburgh AFB	Moved to FY08 as negotiations continued	Completed. Agreement reached with the EPA and NYSDEC Dec 2007. Individual actions in process	SVI issues remain with respect to applicability of SVI restrictions, and exit strategy for completion of remediation and determining when LUC/ICs are no longer required. The AF has reached an agreement with respect to the applicability but is still working on a mutually agreed upon exit strategy.
EPA approval of RI, PP, and ROD documents currently in review process  Delayed due to SVI issues	Continued delay due to SVI issues	Completed. Approval obtained following agreement on technical approach Dec 2007	The SS041 PP is complete; the ROD is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2011 (now 2012). The SS004 and FT002 Groundwater OU PPs and RODs are scheduled for completion in early 2012 (now 2013).
EPA approval that groundwater OU FT-002 remediation system is OPS		Completed. FT-002 included in FOSET, eliminating the need for OPS determination for transfer purposes	N/A



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# Community Background

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Clinton County is one of the fastest growing areas in New York State and is the largest center for commerce, trade and employment north of Albany. Plattsburgh is also the largest community in northern New York. Clinton County is comprised of fourteen towns, five villages and one city. As of the 2010 US Census, the population was 82,128. The population in Clinton County tends to be younger than the statewide median because of the presence of Plattsburgh State University.

## Key Community Concerns

A Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) was established in 1994 for PAFB and the surrounding community to provide a forum for interested stakeholders to obtain information and express concerns regarding the AF cleanup activities. The RAB is composed of representatives of environmental groups, local housing communities, local utilities, local officials, Plattsburgh Airbase Redevelopment Corporation (PARC), AFRPA, USEPA, NYSDEC, and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). It currently meets twice a year though there has been little interest over the last few years and will likely disband in the next year or two.

Based on interviews conducted with community stakeholders, we learned the community would have more interest if they were more directly affected by the cleanup process. Clinton County is taking ownership of half the base and is already in operation on a 55 year lease, and the geographic situation of the base has minimal direct impact with the community. There have been “pockets” of concern, such as fumes affecting an area residential complex and some concern about a creek leading into Lake Champlain, but most sites are located on County Airport land. There is one ROD planned to be signed in FY12 and two in FY13. There was some thought that there may be some questions regarding Institutional Control inspections, but that those could be covered by the twice yearly RABs.

Public meetings will still be held for the two sites where a Proposed Plan has not gone for public comment. It was also noted that a newsletter would not have a point of distribution but if additional information needed to be conveyed that the *Press-Republican* is the best vehicle. It appears continuing the posting of Public Notices and keeping people informed via the RABs, while using the *Press-Republican* for additional announcements would provide the community with the information it needs and ability to express concerns.

# Recommended Community Involvement Approach

Given the current status of the clean-up efforts and information gathered through community interviews, it appears that the RAB is currently the best approach for sustained communication with the community, though depending on future response from community, discussions for adjournment should be considered. In addition, continue advertising meetings and other information in the *Press-Republican*. Specific strategies recommended for the former Plattsburgh AFB include those appropriate for the Proposed Plan, Record of Decision, Remedial Design/Remedial Action, Operation & Maintenance, and ultimately Deletion from the National Priorities List.

The EPA provides guidance on how and when to involve the community in the environmental clean-up process. While very few activities are specifically prescribed by the letter of the law, the EPA has repeatedly made it clear that the intent of the law was to “provide every opportunity for residents of affected communities to become active participants in the process and to have a say in the decisions that affect their community.”

The Air Force adopts the intent of the law and is committed to go above and beyond the letter of the law at each of the former eastern BRAC bases. The following table outlines the activities recommended by the EPA at various steps in the process. If an issue needs to be elevated, the BEC can use this table as a tool to determine the most appropriate course of action given the issue raised. Additionally, AFRPA strategic communications staff can help ensure that the information is presented in easy to understand terms and that technical terminology is clearly and concisely communicated.

	Restoration Advisory Board	Information Repository	Administrative Record	Fact Sheets	Open Houses, Poster Board Sessions, and Site Tours	Public Notices	News Releases/Media Relations	Neighborhood Notices/Flyers	Public Meetings	Public Comment Period	Responsiveness Summary	Website	Speaking Engagement/Outreach Mtgs
Proposed Plan (PP)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Record of Decision (ROD)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Remedial Design (RD)/ Remedial Action	●	●	●	●	●		●					●	●
Operation & Maintenance (O&M)	●	●	●			●	●			●	●	●	●
Deletion from the National Priorities List	●	●	●			●	●			●	●	●	●

For guidelines on each of these community relations strategies please see the main document. Base-specific recommendations are detailed below.

### **Restoration Advisory Board**

Given that the RAB is still the preferred method for disseminating information (based on community input) and that interest has waned over time, it might be beneficial to reach out to conduct outreach calls in advance of future RAB meetings to ensure affected or interested stakeholders are aware of or informed of the information covered in the meeting. Additionally, an e-mail announcement could be sent out in advance of the meeting to the RAB members asking them to forward the information to the stakeholders they represent. If there is not sufficient sustained interest, discussions should begin about adjourning the RAB.

### **Information Repository**

The Information Repository was closed in 2010 as the Administrative Record is now available online at <https://afarpaar.lackland.af.mil/ar/docsearch.aspx>.

### **Fact Sheets**

Fact sheets should be developed on an as needed basis around specific topics of interest to the local community or to share information about a specific approach or technique being utilized during mitigation efforts.

### **Public Notices/Open Houses/Public Meetings/Public Comment Period**

Public notices should be published any time a public meeting or event is scheduled or in relation to a public comment period. Open houses and public meetings should be scheduled as needed and tied to specific decision-making points in the process. For example, input from the public could be solicited when considering alternative methods for mitigating contamination or if the USAF needs to present a Proposed Plan or modify a previously approved plan. Comment periods are also required in conjunction with a Record of Decision and Deletion from the National Priorities List.

### **Meeting Location**

Previous meetings have been held at:

CLINTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER  
137 MARGARET STREET, FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
PLATTSBURGH, NY

### **Media Relations/Flyers**

These strategies are specifically useful for advertising upcoming meetings or events. An updated media list is attached for distribution purposes. Flyers should be available in both a print and electronic format. The electronic version can be emailed to stakeholders and to community partners for further distribution. They can also be posted to social media sites to help reach a larger audience.

### **Speaking Engagement/ Outreach Meetings**

In cases where changes or impact are tied to a specific geographic area, rather than the entire community, it may be more appropriate to conduct one-on-one meetings or to present at meetings for existing organizations. This approach provides a low-cost option to target specific stakeholders.

# ATTACHMENT 1: Stakeholder Database

Governor	Senator	Congressman	Mayor	Town Supervisor	City Council Members
<p>Andrew M. Cuomo            NY State Capital Building            Albany, NY 12224            Phone: (518) 474-8390            Press Office  <a href="mailto:press.office@exec.ny.gov">press.office@exec.ny.gov</a></p>	<p>Kristen Gillibrand            478 Russell Senate Office Building            Washington DC 20510            Phone: (202) 224-4451            Anna Widdowson  <a href="mailto:anna_widdowson@gillibrand.senate.gov">anna_widdowson@gillibrand.senate.gov</a></p> <p>Charles E. Schumer            313 Hart Senate Office Building            Washington DC 20510            Phone: (202) 224-7433            Matt House  <a href="mailto:matt_house@schumer.senate.gov">matt_house@schumer.senate.gov</a></p>	<p>Bill Owens            431 Cannon House Office Building            Washington DC 20515            Phone: (202) 225-4611            Sean Magers  <a href="mailto:sean.magers@mail.house.gov">sean.magers@mail.house.gov</a></p>	<p>Donald M. Kasprzak            City Hall - 2nd Floor            Phone: (518) 563-7701  <a href="mailto:mayor@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov">mayor@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov</a></p>	<p>Bernie Bassett, Supervisor            3 Nut Hatch Lane            Morrisonville, NY 12962            (518) 562-6813  <a href="mailto:BernieB@townofplattsburgh.org">BernieB@townofplattsburgh.org</a></p>	<p>Ward 1: Tim Carpenter            Phone: (518) 563-6978  <a href="mailto:t.carp@live.com">t.carp@live.com</a></p> <p>Ward 2: Mark Tiffer            Phone: (518) 335-9505  <a href="mailto:mtiffer@verizon.net">mtiffer@verizon.net</a></p> <p>Ward 3: George Rabideau            Phone: (518) 563-2357  <a href="mailto:gergram@verizon.net">gergram@verizon.net</a></p> <p>Ward 4: James Calnon            Phone: (518) 593-3278  <a href="mailto:jcalnon@westelcom.com">jcalnon@westelcom.com</a></p> <p>Ward 5: Chris Case            Phone: (518) 563-1729  <a href="mailto:ccc51@gmail.com">ccc51@gmail.com</a></p> <p>Ward 6: Chris Jackson            Phone: (518) 563-7653  <a href="mailto:chris_jackson2007@yahoo.com">chris_jackson2007@yahoo.com</a></p>

## Plattsburgh RAB Members

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Plattsburgh NY 12901

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Ray Brook NY 12977-0296

Mr. Bruce Steadman  
PARC  
231 New York Road  
Plattsburgh NY 12903

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## ATTACHMENT 2: Media List

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### Plattsburgh AFB Plattsburgh, NY - BRAC 1993

Radio Station	POC	Position	Phone	E-mail
WXLU 88.3 FM		News Staff	(315) 229-5356	radio@ncpr.org
WCEL 91.9 FM	Stephanie Abel	News Director	(518) 465-5233	sabel@wamc.org
WCEL 91.9 FM	Donna Frank	News Director	(518) 465-5233	dfrank@wamc.org

TV Station	POC	Position	Phone	E-mail
WTEN/ABC	Terry Cavanaugh	Assignment Manager	(518) 436-4822	news@wten.com
WRGB/CBS6	Chris Cornell	Assignment Manager	(518) 381-4988	news@wrgb.com
WFXV-TV/FOX33	Jennifer Lee	Reporter	(315) 797-5220	jlee@wutr.tv
WPTZ/NBC5	Sinan Sadar	News Director	(518) 561-5555	newstips@wptz.com

Newspaper	POC	Position	Phone	E-mail
Plattsburgh Burgh	John Gerau	Editor	(518) 561-9680	johng@denpubs.com
Plattsburgh Republican	Lois Clermont	Editor	(518) 565-4148	news@pressrepublican.com
Press-Republican	Lois Clermont	Editor	(518) 565-4148	news@pressrepublican.com