



Sites in Reuse

Beulah Landfill Superfund Site

0.5 miles north of U.S. 90 on Jamesville Road, Escambia County, Florida 33404



Images from left to right: A plaque marking the dedication of Fritz Field in 2005, a local modeler preparing a plane for launch and a model plane soaring above the site.

Site Size: About 80 acres

Current Site Uses: Recreation and open space

INTRODUCTION

Fritz Field, part of the Escambia County Modelers Park, is located at the former Beulah Landfill Superfund site. Since 2002, Rae Fritz and the Northwest Florida Modelers have made Fritz Field their home for model aircraft lessons and flying. This innovative reuse of the Beulah Landfill is the result of a collaborative partnership between EPA, the local government and the model aircraft club.

SITE HISTORY

The former Beulah Landfill Superfund site is located northwest of Pensacola in Escambia County, Florida. Escambia County operated the 80-acre municipal landfill from 1950 to 1984. A small stream, Coffee Creek, divides the landfill into two areas. The northern area received municipal and household wastes from 1950 to 1960. The southern area received septic tank wastes, industrial wastes and municipal sludges from 1968 to 1984.

EPA placed the site on the Superfund program's National Priorities List (NPL) in 1990. Escambia County, the landfill's operator and current owner, is responsible for the site's long-term stewardship. EPA's remedy addressed soil and groundwater contamination. Cleanup included the placement of caps on the site's northern and southern areas. After construction of the site's remedy, EPA took the site off the NPL in 1998. Today, monitoring, operation and maintenance activities – landfill gas vent monitoring, cap and fence repairs, and mowing – and five-year reviews of the remedy's protectiveness are ongoing.

LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD: THE REUSE PLANNING PROCESS

Model aircraft enthusiasts across the country have long known that capped landfills can be ideal locations for model aircraft flying fields. Often located in secluded areas, landfills offer vacant areas with low vegetation well suited to model aircraft flying requirements – lots of space, a lack of large obstacles and flat places to land.

After confirmation of Beulah Landfill's closure, Rae Fritz began sharing the idea of reusing part of the landfill as a model aircraft flying field. With support from local county supervisors, surrounding landowners and the governor of Florida, Fritz and the Northwest Florida Modelers organization began to work with EPA and the Escambia County Solid Waste Management Department to make recreational reuse of Beulah Landfill possible. Based on these discussions, the Northwest Florida Modelers reached an agreement with Escambia County to use the site for aero modeling.

Today, the northern part of Beulah Landfill hosts Fritz Field, a well-established model airplane flying field. The facility includes a model airplane runway, a model helicopter flight pad, an area for model glider flying, a gravel parking area, and concrete pads that support shaded shelter areas. The Northwest Florida Modelers organization, a chapter of the national Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA), manages site access. Organizations must use money generated from the use of the facility for site improvements and maintenance.



Shelters providing shade for modelers on site.

COLLABORATING TO OVERCOME REUSE OBSTACLES

The reuse planning process at the site focused on addressing access and liability concerns and partnership building. The goal was to ensure the long-term protectiveness of the site's remedy and enable the area's recreational reuse.

Addressing site access concerns was straightforward. Escambia County provided the Northwest Florida Modelers organization with keys to the gate on the northern part of the site. The group locks the gate whenever the facility is not in use. To address Escambia County's liability concerns, all site users must be registered members of an insured organization. The AMA provides liability coverage for smaller clubs nationwide. The AMA's commercial liability coverage provides an annual aggregate limit of \$5 million per site, which covers flying-related incidents involving bodily injury and property damage. These limits exceed Escambia County's liability coverage requirements. The Northwest Florida Modelers organization verifies that all facility users carry AMA insurance.

Disclaimer: EPA does not warrant that the property is suitable for any particular use. Prospective purchasers must contact the property owner for sale potential.

DID YOU KNOW?

Through a national partnership with the AMA, EPA supports opportunities for model airplane flying fields at Superfund sites across the United States.

To learn more, please visit:

<https://www.epa.gov/superfund-redevelopment-initiative/superfund-redevelopment-partnerships#ama>

As part of partnership-building efforts at the site, EPA worked with local organizations to make sure site reuse would be compatible with the remedy. Use of the southern part of the site remains restricted, to protect the cap and methane gas vents. The asphalt runway was placed on top of the cap on the site's northern area, avoiding any remedy impacts. Local modelers help maintain the remedy by regularly mowing site areas, while facility users provide a regular presence that deters trespassing and illegal dumping.

Successful efforts at the Beulah Landfill Superfund site illustrates how careful planning, innovative partnerships, and community agreements and leadership can result in reuse projects that provide multiple benefits and help ensure the long-term protection of public health and the environment at Superfund sites across the United States.

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Site Summary: www.epa.gov/superfund/beulah-landfill



In May 2017, EPA established a task force to restore the Superfund program to its rightful place at the center of the Agency's core mission to protect health and the environment.

epa.gov/superfund/superfund-task-force