

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

CONSCIENTIOUS CREWS ARE NON-NEGOTIABLE ON PFAS SITES

There's no room for error when sampling and testing for PFAS. Your contractor and their crews must be committed to getting every detail right.

CLIENT: AECOM

LOCATION: Camp Grayling Joint Manuever Training Center,
Michigan

TECHNOLOGY: Direct Push

SERVICE: Soil Sampling, Vertical Aquifer Profiling

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Established in 1913, Camp Grayling Joint Manuever Training Center (JMTC) is the largest National Guard training facility in the United States, covering 147,000 acres spread across three counties. Over the course of the last 100+ years, training programs have included instruction regarding aircraft fires and how to put them out. In the 1970s, aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) was introduced for firefighting purposes, but it contained PFAS and over time leached into the subsurface of the facility and surrounding areas.

AECOM was brought in to identify the areas and extent of PFAS contamination. They hired Cascade to conduct soil and groundwater sampling.

The project proved challenging for several reasons. The first hurdle was identifying a PFAS-free water source that could be used for drilling and decontamination. Only one such source was available on the entire facility; crews had to travel back to this one location after every boring to ensure proper decontamination of the tooling. Given the size of Camp Grayling, this was time consuming. Another challenge crews faced was the variety of terrains on the same project site. Additionally, at some drilling locations crews encountered heaving sands. All of these issues were made more difficult when the harsh Michigan winter arrived.

RESULTS

Sample integrity and safety were top priorities on this site, so crews adhered to best practices for PFAS handling and decontamination—even when it meant tedious trips back to the airfield's PFAS-free water source. Cascade managed the various terrains and heaving sands by keeping alternate equipment on site so it could easily be swapped in when needed. During winter weather, crews constructed tents and used portable heaters to keep equipment (and themselves) warm enough to continue sampling. These efforts cut down on wasted time and ensured AECOM received the samples they needed for testing and delineating areas of PFAS contamination.

