

# PENNSYLVANIA

shape that resembled more of a slanted, oblong circle with site W-13 at Fort Meade, MD in the center. In at least one community in the Washington Defense Area, the Nike received a fairly warm reception. Now a densely populated suburb of Washington, D.C., Fairfax County, VA was home to no less than three Nike sites. In the 1950's and 1960's however, the landscape of most of Fairfax County was quite different, as the majority of Fairfax was rural farmland. W-83 in Herndon/Great Falls was established on land acquired from a family of dairy farmers. W-74, located off of Popes Head Road was placed within three or four miles of Fairfax City on land acquired from an orchard owner. That was as close to any of the sites in Fairfax got to anything that could be remotely considered an urban population. There was some resistance from landowners, but otherwise not many people were there to complain.

Situated on land formerly occupied by corn fields, and owned by a D.C. penitentiary, establishing Lorton site W-64 was especially easy. Its ideal location, proximity to Washington D.C, and establishment as a "double site" (meaning it housed twice as many Nike missiles as a normal site), also earned it the title of the "National Nike Site" or "National Show Battery". Practically anybody could go visit site W-64. Open houses were held regularly on Sundays. Visiting the Nike site at Lorton was like a field trip, something fun to do. Its relative isolation certainly helped. It's much easier to

appreciate such a place when it's in the middle of farmland owned by a prison, not in your backyard where you go to hang out, relax, and play. Accessibility changed with the arrival of the Nike Hercules and subsequent increased security measures, but according to several accounts, the soldiers stationed at W-64 and the other sites in Fairfax County continued to play an active role in the community as well. One author, declaring the Nike bases in Fairfax "not so bad neighbors", cites examples of Nike soldiers giving blood and hosting parties for schoolchildren. Designating W-64 in rural Fairfax County as a national site open to the public served a dual purpose really. On the one hand, it helped establish the site and others in Fairfax County as a welcomed part of the larger

▲	Launch site
■	Control site
	<b>BALTIMORE</b> (does not include suburbs)

**BALTIMORE**  
**MARYLAND**

**WASHINGTON D.C.**

**VIRGINIA**

**CHESAPEAKE BAY**

Potomac River

4

Scale: 1:500,000  
Projection: North American Equidistant Conic  
Map produced by Kevin Palmer from data compiled from various sources.

40°0'0"N

77°0'0"W

76°0'0"W

77°0'0"W

39°0'0"N

W-74

W-64

W-45

W-54

W-13

W-36

W-35

W-44

W-25

W-26

BA-43

BA-79

BA-92

BA-03

BA-09

BA-14/18

BA-30