

Fact Sheet

Fort Ord – Ordnance and Explosives Program

Introduction

Since its establishment in 1917, until the inactivation of the 7th Infantry Division in 1994, Fort Ord was primarily a training and staging facility for the infantry. Many areas of the base had been used for the ordnance training.

The Department of Defense Ammunition and Explosives Safety Standard (DoD 6055.9 Standard) states that real property that is known to be contaminated with ammunition, explosives or chemical agents must be decontaminated with the most appropriate technology to assure the protection of the public consistent with the proposed end use of the property. This standard is incorporated into the Army Regulations 385-64 (U.S. Army Explosives Safety Program).

In 1993, an archival investigation was conducted to locate where ordnance may have been used. Additional archive searches, follow-on interviews and visual inspections conducted since 1993 indicate that approximately 12,000 acres are known or suspected to contain ordnance and explosives (OE). Twenty-nine OE sites are identified in the Phases 1 Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA). The Phase 2 EE/CA established a process to evaluate the remaining sites. The area ranges in size from less than one acre to less than 1,000 acres, although most of the areas are less than 200 acres. To date, over 3,000 acres have been investigated and/or received removal actions designed to minimize the explosive safety risk to the public. The removal process used at Fort Ord is documented in the EE/CAs, which were prepared in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). These documents

received thorough regulatory and public review.

A Multi-Range Area (MRA) is located in the south-central portion of Fort Ord. Lands within the boundaries of the MRA are expected to have the highest density of ordnance and explosives (OE), with specific target areas having the highest densities. OE is defined as bombs and warheads; guided and ballistic missiles; artillery and mortar; containerized and uncontainerized explosives and propellants; and all similar and related items and components explosive in nature or otherwise designed to cause damage to personnel or material; soils with explosives constituents sufficient to be reactive and present an imminent safety hazard. Known OE sites are posted with warning signs and are off-limits to unauthorized people.

Program Status

Ordnance removals are proceeding in areas where there is an explosives safety risk to the public. Fort Ord is coordinating the removal actions with Fort Ord Base realignment and Closure (BRAC) Cleanup Team, which includes the Army, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC).

Regulatory Requirements

Fort Ord has continued OE removal actions under the time-critical and non-time critical processes, as described in the National Contingency Plan (NCP). Removal actions must comply with the substantive requirements of applicable, relevant, and appropriate regulations (ARARs) to the extent practicable. The non-time critical removal process includes the preparation of an EE/CA. The EE/CA identifies removal

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objectives and analyzes and compares removal alternatives. The soundness, feasibility, and cost of the solutions are weighed, and only the most qualified technologies are addressed. From the analysis data, the recommended removal action alternative is clearly described as the alternative that best satisfies the evaluation criteria.

After the recommended solutions are published, one 30-day public comment period is required. However, the Army has held four public comment periods and several public meetings for the two EE/CAs. The public is involved throughout the entire OE project. The Army responds to all public concerns to achieve an acceptable solution.

The selected EE/CA removal alternatives are either a surface removal or removals of OE down to a depth of 4 feet but each must remove the imminent explosive threat. The Army recognizes that there are limitations in detection of OE. The Army is in the process of transitioning from CERCLA removal actions into CERCLA remedial actions results including the OE detection capabilities in a Remedial Investigations/Feasibility Study (RI/FS). The RI/FS will evaluate OE detection systems to be used in future work on former Fort Ord.

The RI/FS will also likely recommend language to be included in property transfer documents to notify the recipient of the location of the site, sampling efforts and results, and/or response actions results. Removals are conducted to the depths which are appropriate for the given OE characteristics.

OE Investigation Process

(EE/CA)

Once an area has been identified as potentially containing OE through archives

searches or interviews, the area is inspected by an ordnance safety specialist for evidence of OE. The inspection is documented in a report which may or may not recommend further action.

If further action is recommended, the site is characterized or sampled to verify the presence and determine the extent of OE.

The Army's OE contractor performs quality control (QC) by randomly re-checking areas that have been investigated. An Army safety specialist then performs quality assurance (QA) by randomly checking a minimum of 10 percent of the grids the contractor has completed. If the QA inspection does not pass, the contractor re-works the grid.

All discovered unexploded ordnance is detonated on the former Fort Ord.

As stated in the previous pages, the Army is transitioning from CERCLA removal actions to the CERCLA remedial actions. The Army has developed a Work Plan, which outlines the strategies to address remediation of the unexploded ordnance at the former Fort Ord.