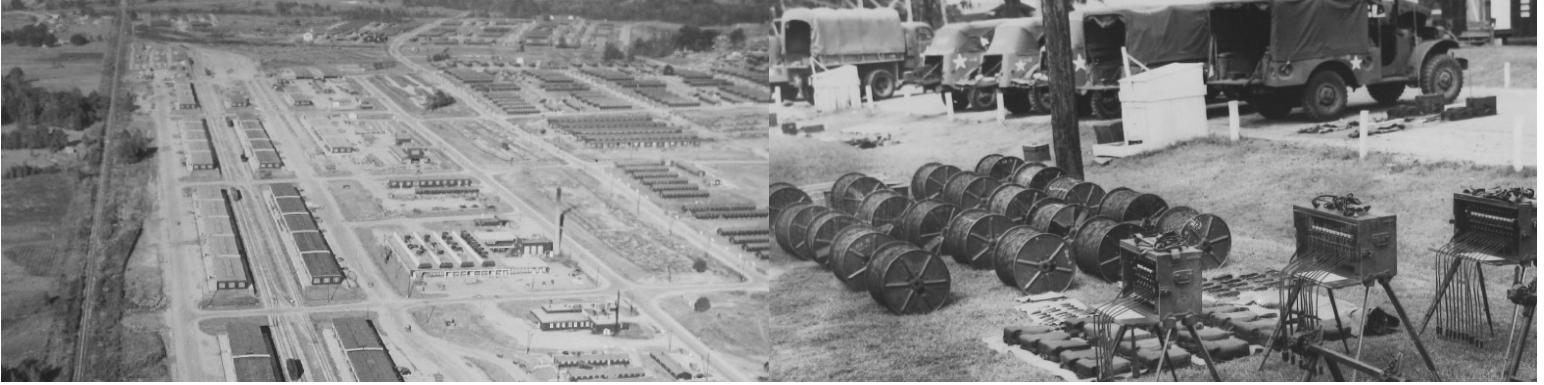


FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES | Van Dorn Army Training Camp

Feasibility Study Phase



SEPTEMBER 2020

DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROGRAM FOR FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES

Across the country, the Department of Defense acquired properties, often during times of war, to use for military training, testing, and demonstrations. When no longer needed, many of these properties were cleaned up according to the best practices available at the time and then transferred to other owners such as private individuals or other government entities. These Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) can range from privately-owned farms to National Parks. They also include residential, industrial, and educational properties. We are committed to protecting people and the environment and improving public safety by cleaning up these properties. The Defense Environmental Restoration Program for Formerly Used Defense Sites was established to evaluate and, if necessary, to remediate Formerly Used Defense Sites. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) manages the program on behalf of the Department of Defense.

Congress passed the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, also known as Superfund, in 1980 and the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act in 1986. These laws give the Corps the authority for certain cleanup activities and dictates the process we must follow. We conduct investigations to determine the potential risk to people and the environment from the military's use of the property. Public involvement and community participation are important components of the process. The Corps partners with stakeholders throughout the process, including congressional representatives, state and local governments, regulatory and environmental agencies, and affected property owners.

BACKGROUND

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) manages the environmental restoration of Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) such as the former Van Dorn Army Training Camp. During WWII, the U.S. government acquired approximately 41,543 acres of land located in Wilkinson and Amite Counties, Mississippi for the construction of a basic and advanced divisional infantry training camp. The Army constructed numerous rifle ranges and impact areas where soldiers trained in small arms, grenades, artillery, and mortars. By January 1946, the Corps began the process of closing the installation and disposing the property. By October 1950, the War Assets Administration disposed of all Camp Van Dorn land to private individuals, businesses, and the town of Centreville.

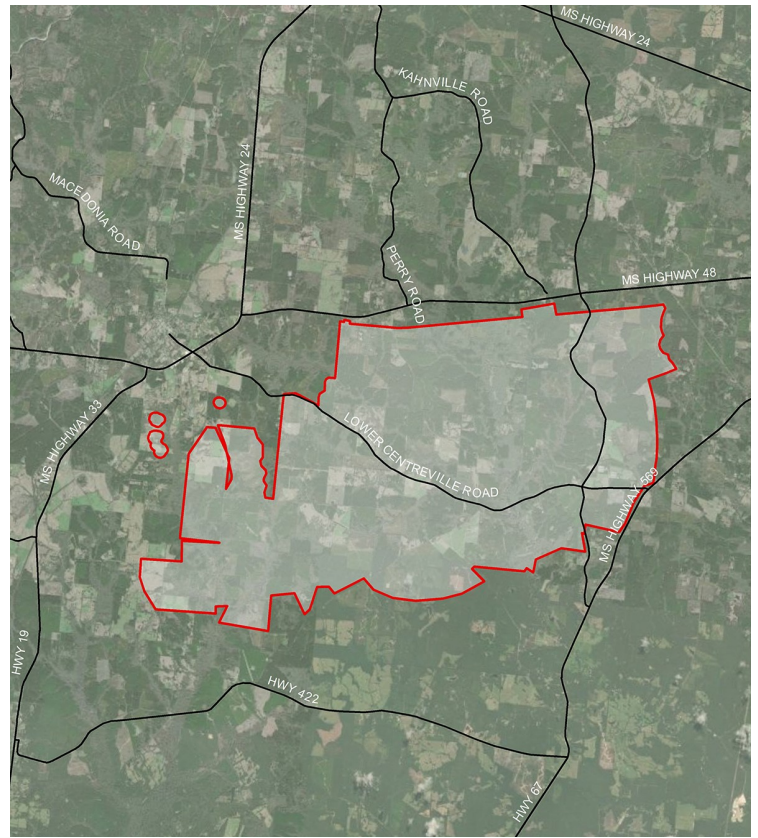
ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

Since the 1990s, the Corps has been concerned about and investigating the potential hazards that may remain at the former Camp Van Dorn as a result of the Army's prior use. In September 1997, two representatives from the Corps conducted a property visit to determine if a Time Critical Removal Action was warranted after a local landowner discovered a fragmentation grenade on his property. During the inspection, pieces of a spent hand grenade fuze and high explosive fragments from MKII grenades were observed on the surface, but no additional live ammunition was found. An Archive Search Report completed in 1998 identified and documented past munitions discoveries, historical ranges, and training areas at the former installation including artillery, grenade, and small arms ranges. The report also lists munitions used during training, which included various sizes of artillery projectiles,



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mortars, practice and HE rockets, practice and fragmentation grenades, and explosives. In 2007, the Corps conducted a Site Inspection and determined that over 27,000 acres of former ranges and training areas should be considered for further investigation. Before heading out to the field, the Corps conducted additional historical research in order to learn more about where munitions might be concentrated. With this information in tow, the Corps conducted a Remedial Investigation, which was finalized in 2018. Almost 200 miles of transects were investigated with a G-858 Magnetometer and intrusively investigated. The Corps found three potentially explosive items (two 37mm projectiles and one 2.36-inch rocket) and thousands of munitions debris, mostly in the form of small arms and semi-intact fragments. The Corps also took 75 surface soil samples where contamination was most likely and analyzed them for munitions-related metals and other chemicals. The results showed there were no explosives in the soil. Lead was detected in concentrations greater than background threshold values at only one sample site. Therefore, risks from lead associated with former military activities at Camp Van Dorn are not expected.



FUTURE

The Corps is in the process of drafting a Feasibility Study, a way to screen and evaluate the different options for munitions clean-up. After the preferred options have been properly vetted by the Corps, state, and public, remediation efforts will be solidified through a Decision Document, which is forecast to be completed by 2023. After this, the areas will be remediated by prioritization in coordination with stakeholders, right-of-entry authorizations, and available funding. It is estimated that Camp Van Dorn will enter Long Term Management in 2037 and be monitored indefinitely.

SAFETY FIRST: Remember the 3 Rs

Because of how the military used the site, there could potentially be buried munitions in portions of the former Van Dorn Army Training Camp. These could be dangerous and may not be easily recognizable. Never touch, move, or disturb something you think may be a munition. Remember the 3 Rs: Recognize, Retreat, Report.

Recognize: The item you found could be dangerous. **Retreat:** Do not touch it in any way, and leave the area.

Report: Call 911 immediately.



For More Information

Documents are available at the
Kevin Poole Van Cleave Memorial Library
141 W. Park St. N., Centreville, MS 39631
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