

Badlands Bombing Range Newsletter

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Omaha District



May 2004

REMOVAL ACTION STATUS

The Badlands Bombing Range Newsletter is produced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District to present current information about environmental cleanup programs underway at the former Badlands Bombing Range (BBR). Many state, federal, and tribal agencies are involved in the project including the Oglala Sioux Tribe (OST) and its BBR Project Office, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Air Force, and the National Park Service.

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Removal work will begin this summer under Action Memorandums #2 and #3, which call for the clearance of 44 homesteads (110 acres) and 36 miles (130 acres) of access roads to these locations as well as the target areas on Cuny Table. The Badlands Bombing Range Project Office has right of entry from the Bureau of Indian Affairs for all tribal trust lands on the former bombing range. The contractor has contacted each homestead occupant and received a written or verbal acknowledgement of the work to be performed.

The procedures for safely performing the removal activities are as follows:

- Establish the location of the geophysical survey area around the homesteads, access roads and targets;
- Update and maintain the existing geographic information system database;
- Visually survey all geophysical survey grids for munitions and explosives of concern (MEC) and metal items on the ground surface, and subsequently remove and dispose of all identified items;
- Perform land-based magnetic and electromagnetic surveys over established geophysical survey areas and subsequently process and interpret the collected data;
- Gather geophysical data to re-locate anomalies for removal;
- Perform removal (intrusive investigations). This work will not be completed on the targets in 2004 and may carry over into 2005;
- Assess the presence or absence of MEC items, and dispose of any conventional MEC encountered; and
- Collect soil samples for explosive screening and analyses.

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Partners in Progress

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers • Oglala Sioux Tribe • National Park Service • U.S. Air Force

SAMPLING AT XU HILL

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will continue with its environmental investigations at the former Badlands Bombing Range this summer. The Corps has contracted with Parsons to perform sampling at XU Hill, located in Sector 2. (See map of XU Hill location located to the right.)

XU Hill is known to be one of the most highly targeted areas during the active period at the bombing range.

A work plan for this sampling event was finalized in February 2004. The plan calls for collecting 20 near-surface soil samples within a 3,500-foot radius of the XU Hill target. (See map of XU Hill Closeup at bottom right.)

Samples will be collected from the following locations:

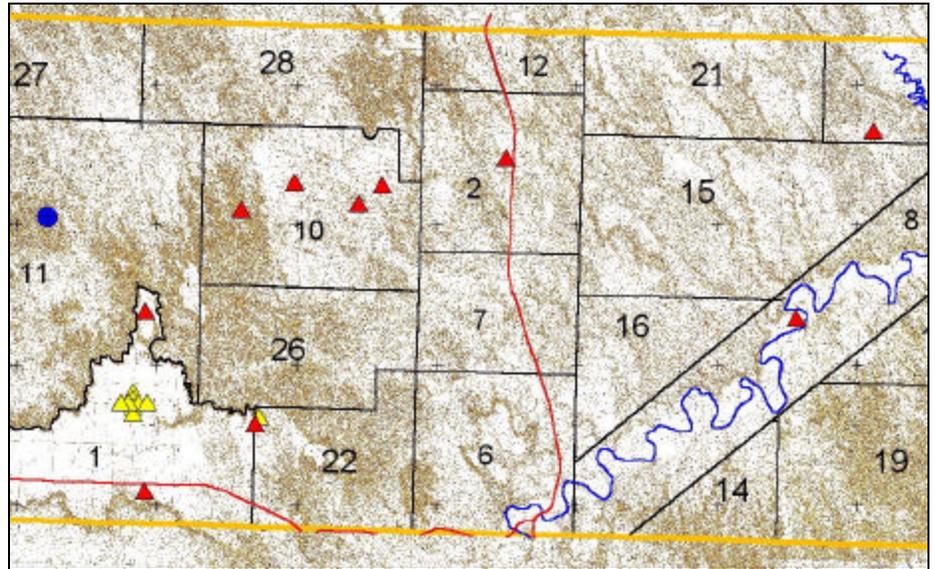
- 9 from areas where ordnance was previously found,
- 3 from points immediately adjacent to areas where ordnance was previously found,
- 5 from points in low-lying areas,
- 3 from wetland areas, and
- 5 for quality assurance and control.

There has been no chemical contamination found to date from Department of Defense-related activities.

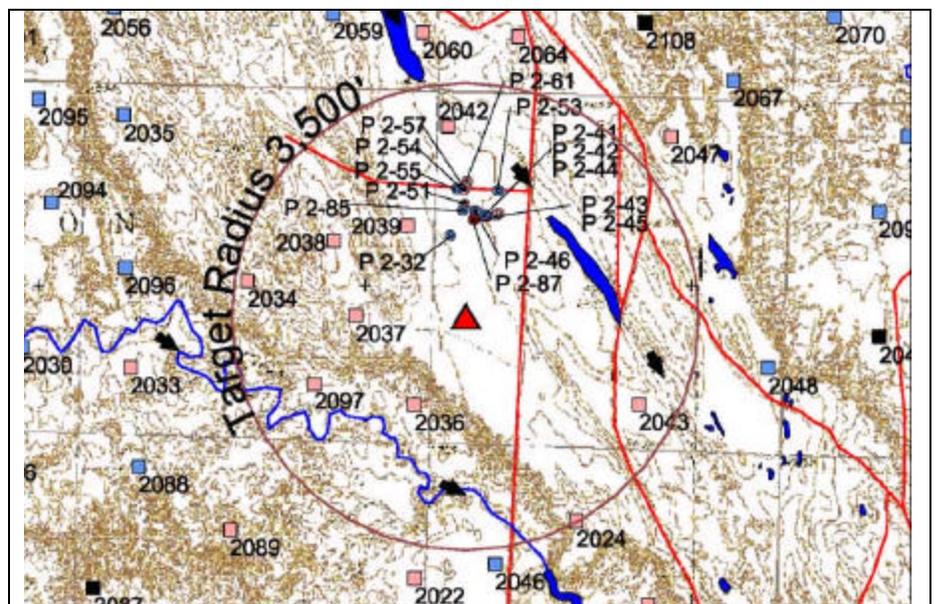
(Removal Action Status - continued from page 1)

While performing project activities, workers will be actively attempting to identify and protect environmental resources within each survey area. Every effort will be made to protect and preserve threatened and endangered species' habitats, wetlands, and cultural, paleontological and archaeological resources.

The Corps would like to remind all that the Gallego ('Stronghold') and Cuny Tables were some of the most heavily targeted areas on the range. For your personal safety, it is recommended that you avoid these areas. Should you come across any ordnance or munitions, please contact the BBR office at (605) 867-1271 as soon as possible.



The red triangle in Sector 2 shows the location of the XU Hill Target Area



Closeup of XU Hill Target Area

Thanks to all of the homeowners and agencies for allowing the Corps and its contractors entry onto their property. Cleanup of the Oglala Sioux tribal lands could not be accomplished without your support.

PROJECT OFFICE IN NEED OF FUNDING

In March 2004, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and representatives from the Badlands Bombing Range Project Office met to discuss funding options that would allow the office to continue operations for another year. The Cooperative Agreements that fund the office are reviewed annually with no guarantee of future funding by Congress. A review of the finances revealed that current funding would allow the office to stay open until at least August 2004 and possibly as late as December 2004.

The Project Office team may be utilized to support other agencies or organizations in the area. Both the Corps and the Project Office are actively searching for ways to keep the office open, as it plays an integral part in the environmental restoration of the former bombing range and ultimate return of the lands to the Tribe. The Corps hopes to keep a point of contact within the Tribe to keep all communication open and clear. If you have any suggestions, please call the project office at (605) 867 - 1271.

FUNDING FOR HIGH IMPACT AREA AND LAKOTA HERITAGE CENTER SLIPS TO 2007

Both the U.S. Air Force and the National Park Service announced at the March 2004 Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Meeting that programmed funding for its respective projects has slipped from 2005 to 2007.

The Air Force's project is the investigation and removal action at the High Impact Area, an area that was retained by the Air Force due to the high density of artillery shells and other anomalies. The work that remains includes continuing removal work and sampling for perchlorate, a chemical that was used as a propellant in rockets and missiles and may be present due to the former bombing activities. The future removal funding has been delayed. The sampling for this summer has been delayed due to a Department of Defense moratorium on this sampling. The programmed funding will be used to hire Native American Environmental (NAE) to walk the site for any MEC that may have surfaced in the last five years.

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NAE's Success Continues

One of the top goals of the Badlands Bombing Range Project Office for 2003 was to get Native American Environmental (NAE) up and running. The Project Office was pleased to announce at the March 2004 Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meeting in Porcupine Village that NAE is operating and fully staffed.

In May 2002, former employees of the Badlands Bombing Range Project set out to form a company that would utilize their unexploded ordnance (UXO) training and work experience to provide UXO, de-mining, environmental cleanup and restoration services.

NAE was incorporated in July 2002 and is an employee-owned company with 100 percent Native American ownership. Since then, NAE has worked on establishing business relationships with larger UXO firms and winning federal contracts.

NAE will be working with Parsons, a Corps contractor, this summer during the removal action around homesteads. NAE personnel will collect geophysical data and re-locate anomalies for removal for Parsons and its subcontractor, USA Environmental.

NAE is currently accepting resumes. Please call (605) 716-4888 for more information on job availability and requirements.

(Funding...Slips to 2007 - continued from page 3)

The National Park Service's project is designing and constructing a Lakota Heritage and Education Center. A preferred location on Red Shirt Table has been identified, but an environmental assessment needs to be completed before any actual work on the center could begin. The estimated cost to complete the center is \$26 million. This includes the necessary infrastructure, such as highway improvements, that will allow for the potential increase in tourism and commercialism that will come with the opening of the center.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

The next Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Meeting will be held
**Wednesday,
September 1, 2004**
at the Billy Mills Hall in
Pine Ridge, South Dakota.

WANT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE BBR PROJECT?

Visit one of the BBR Project document repositories:

Badlands Bombing Range Project Office in Pine Ridge, South Dakota

Oglala Lakota College in Kyle, South Dakota

Rapid City Public Library in Rapid City, South Dakota

Visit the BBR Project web site:

<http://www.nwo.usace.army.mil/html/pm-hc/badlands.htm>

Or contact:

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