



# Report to **STAKEHOLDERS**

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## Munitions cleanup

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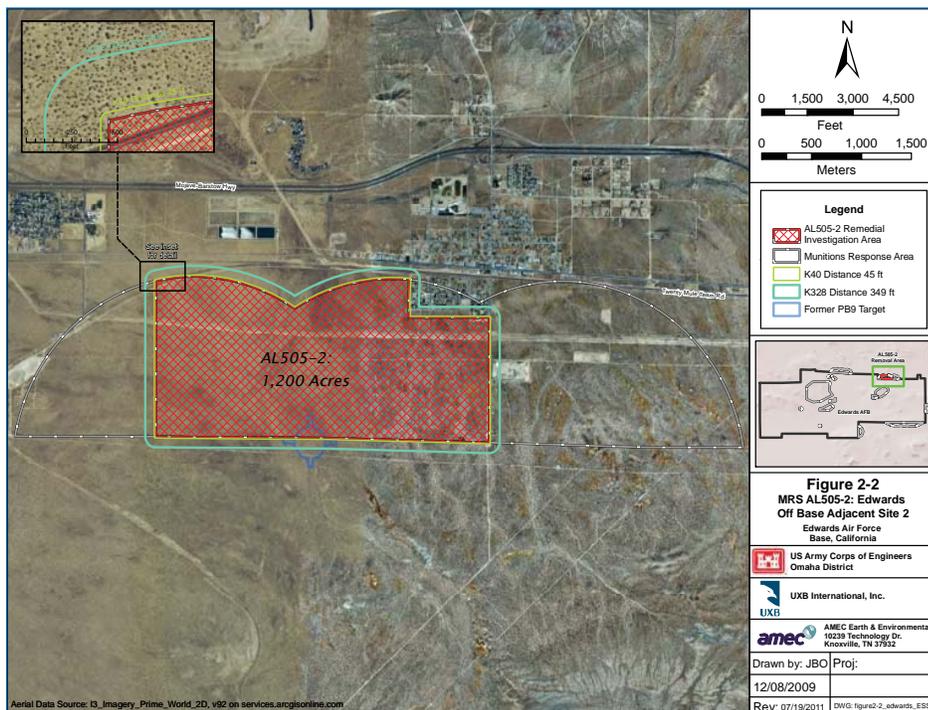
# Environmental Management cleans up 1940s munitions debris near Boron

**A**ir Force cleanup officials, in conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and UXB International, are recovering surface military munitions that were dropped more than seven decades ago, thanks to local landowners who border Edwards Air Force Base. Two of the three munitions areas have been identified as overshoot areas of practice bombing targets used during preparation for World War II.

“Because of the nature of the sites, we had to develop a stringent explosives site plan for a Department of Defense review and obtain buyoff from state and federal regulators because this program follows the *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act* process,” said Military Munitions Response Program manager Paul Schiff from the Edwards AFB Environmental Management office. “So, getting to this stage has been a long and arduous process. I think all the parties involved are relieved to finally see action on the munitions cleanup.”

Unexploded ordnance technicians began surface clearances in an off-base area known as AL505-2, which is located about 1/2 mile from Boron, Calif., south of a housing subdivision. Encompassing 1,200 acres, AL505-2 addresses failed attempts to hit a historic on-base target known as PB-9. Base officials expect to find most munitions debris in the southern portion of AL505-2, closer to the base’s boundary. It’s there that remnants of a 1940s white-stoned bull’s-eye target still remain.

“We’re finding a lot of cans and trash out toward the populated areas and more of the bomb parts closer to the base boundary,” said UXB International site project manager John Kierepka, a U.S. Marine veteran with more than 39 years of military Explosive Ordnance Disposal and civilian unexploded ordnance experience. “We’re nearly finished with the surface clearances [in AL505-2], and so far, everything we’ve collected appears to be practice ordnance—sand-filled bombs, a few 20-millimeter projectiles and some 50-caliber projectiles.”



**AREA MAP** — This map shows the AL505-2 area, where unexploded ordnance technicians conducted surface clearance. The town of Boron, Calif., is located just above the AL505-2 remedial investigation area.

In fact, much of the 5,300 pounds of munitions debris removed from the surface of AL505-2 has consisted of 100-pound practice bomb carcasses. Schiff noted the only item of concern the team discovered was an improvised explosive device that had to be removed by the local sheriff’s department. “We never expected to run across something like this; it was a very crude homemade bomb,” he said.

Another surprise has been the amount of civilian trash present within the area. So far, the removal team has cleared more than 7,600 pounds of nonmunitions-related metallic debris. And not every trash site is being cleaned up, according to Jeff Morin, an ordnance and explosives safety specialist with the USACE.

“UXB has a subcontractor who performs archaeological assessments of items found not to be munitions related,” he said. “When we come upon a site that could potentially be historical, we draw an imaginary perimeter around it and input the location into a Geographic Informa-

tion System so that it’s recorded. We also note new trash piles that appear after we’ve cleared an area.”

The purpose of marking trash piles and clearing the surface of metallic debris is to move into the next phase of munitions cleanup, the Remedial Investigation Phase, which will likely include geophysical mapping. Many munitions contain metallic material that can be detected by geophysical devices.

“We’re trying to clear the surface of all metallic debris so the government can come back and perform successful subsurface geophysical mapping, if proposed as part of the remedial investigation,” Kierepka said. “If we can’t remove a pile, then we need to mark it so that the pile is not mistaken for something hiding underneath the surface.”

That’s not to say that any remaining trash piles aren’t thoroughly inspected for munitions debris. Before the team moves into a new grid, UXB International and USACE quality control/assurance specialists plant ‘seeds’—dummy munitions. If the

removal team fails to locate all of the 'seeds' within a grid, the team must search the grid again.

"The seeding process benefits us two-fold," Morin said. "It ensures an exhaustive search of the surface and a careful inspection of each item to distinguish between munitions debris and regular trash."

After AL505-2, the team will move to on-base Area AL504 near the Air Force Research Laboratory, home of a mock battleship used in the 1930s. The clearances will finish in another off-base area adjacent to the southeastern boundary of the base (AL505-4). The AL505-4 area consists of land owned by the Bureau of Land Management and addresses any missed shots at historic on-base target PB-5. Surface clearance of all three areas is expected to be complete in October.

More information about the MMRP may be found in the October 2010 issue of *Report to Stakeholders*. To access this issue, visit <https://eafb.mojavedata.gov/SitePages/Home.aspx> and search through the "Report to Stakeholders" section.

## May Restoration Advisory Board Meeting Highlights

**A**fter the introduction of NASA Dryden's new public representative, Jessy Gray, board members received a briefing about the 5-year review of remedies in place at South Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) on May 17 at the California City, Calif., Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meeting. Restoration program manager Patrice Hallman explained the purpose of the 5-year review is to evaluate whether current remedies at Sites 37, 120, 133 and 321 are working as intended and remain protective of human health and the environment. The 5-year review report of South AFRL is expected to be complete in September, at which time the Air Force will announce the report's availability to the public.

Environmental restoration chief Ai Duong provided an overview of the Air Force's performance-based remediation (PBR) initiative expected to reach Edwards by fiscal year 2014. Designed to reduce cost and cleanup time, PBR will eliminate multiple contracts for separate cleanup projects and replace it with one contract responsible for cleaning up the entire base. Air Force officials, along with state and federal regulators, must decide on restoration objectives for each of the base's 460 remediation sites. The PBR contractor will be expected to meet those cleanup objectives for a fixed price. More in-depth information about PBR can be found in the March 2012 issue of *Report to Stakeholders*.

Gary Hatch, Public Affairs, informed the board that three public representatives declined to renew their terms of service. The respective organizations have been contacted to verify if the organization has a replacement or would like the Air Force to advertise the vacancy. In addition, an application for the Base Housing vacancy is currently being processed. For more information about the RAB or to see what vacancies are available, visit [www.facebook.com/RAB.Edwards](http://www.facebook.com/RAB.Edwards).



**TOURING** — Students from Arvin High School stand in front of an SR-71, which is located at the Air Force Flight Test Center Museum at Edwards AFB. Ken Meyers, a science teacher at Arvin plans a yearly field trip to the base. The students toured restoration and conservation sites.

# Report to STAKEHOLDERS

*Report to Stakeholders* is a publication of Edwards Air Force Base, 412th Test Wing, Civil Engineer Division, Environmental Management. Its purpose is to inform and educate the public, base workers and residents about continuing environmental and safety efforts on base. It currently has a circulation of 6,000, including about 2,000 subscribers.

Contents of the *Report to Stakeholders* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

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Any comments or questions about the contents of the *Report to Stakeholders* may be directed to: Gary Hatch, 412 TW/PA, 305 E. Popson Ave., Edwards AFB, CA 93524, (661) 277-8707.

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## WHAT'S ON THE COVER?



Mock battleship debris — Military munitions items containing potentially explosive material were prepped for a controlled detonation that took place at Edwards in June. These items were collected from AL504, near the Air Force Research Laboratory.

# Where to find more INFORMATION



Published data and documents relating to Environmental Management are available for public review at three information repositories. They are updated when new documents are released. Here is a list of our current information repositories:

### Edwards Air Force Base Library

5 W. Yeager Blvd.  
Edwards AFB, Calif.  
(661) 275-2665  
Hours of operation: Mon-Thu 9:30 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Fri 9:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
Sat-Sun 10:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.

### Kern County Public Library

**Wanda Kirk Branch**  
3611 Rosamond Blvd.  
Rosamond, Calif.  
(661) 256-3236  
Hours of operation: Wed 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Fri-Sat 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

### Los Angeles County Public Library

601 W. Lancaster Blvd.  
Lancaster, Calif.  
(661) 948-5029  
Hours of operation: Mon-Wed 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.  
Thu-Fri 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Sat 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For questions about information in the repositories, you may contact Gary Hatch, Public Affairs chief of Current Operations, at (661) 277-4127 or by e-mail at [412tw.pae@edwards.af.mil](mailto:412tw.pae@edwards.af.mil).

For general information about Edwards or other documents of public interest, you may visit the following link:  
[www.edwards.af.mil/library/environment](http://www.edwards.af.mil/library/environment).

# Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Information

The RAB is made up of appointed representatives from communities in and around Edwards Air Force Base, regulators from federal and state agencies and base officials. The board's purpose is to provide a forum for two-way communication among base restoration officials, regulators and the community representatives regarding the cleanup of contamination from past military activities.

The board meets quarterly, rotating meeting locations in communities surrounding the base. The public is welcome to attend. Those who have questions

or concerns about cleanup activities at Edwards may contact any RAB member or Gary Hatch, Public Affairs chief of Current Operations, at (661) 277-8707.

## NEXT QUARTERLY MEETING

Date: November

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Location: Boron

Venue to be determined

## RAB Members

### OFF-BASE COMMUNITIES

#### Boron

Vacant

#### California City

Vacant

#### Lancaster

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#### Housing

Vacant

#### Main Base Air Base Wing

Vacant

#### Main Base Test Wing

Vacant

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#### North Base

Vacant

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