

Site History

The former Boardman AFR was used primarily as a practice bombing and gunnery range. According to the Archives Search Report (ASR) (USACE, 1997) beginning in 1941 and continuing through 1943, the U.S. Army Air Corps acquired 95,985.51 acres through purchase of private land transfer of Department of the Interior (DOI) land for a practice bombing and gunnery range. Throughout the World War II years, it was used for bombing practice by the Walla Walla Army Air Base. After World War II, the Army Corps categorized the bombing range as surplus land and by 1946 discussion was held concerning authorizing livestock grazing on the inactive range. However in 1948, the lands were withdrawn from surplus and the Air Force used the range until 1960. Renamed the Boardman Precision Bombing Range, the range was configured with five targets and exclusion areas. The 57th Air Division, Fairchild Air Force Base, assumed responsibility, control and utilization of the Former Boardman, AFR between 1952 and 1957. Records indicate that a “20-millimeter (mm) target gunnery range,” with three mounted B-36 turrets, was added in 1952. The gunners fired at remote controlled aerial target drones under daylight and night conditions. Practice bombing was also occurring during this time. In 1958, the Air Force granted the Department of the Navy permission to use the bombing range site as a high altitude bombing range. Also, in 1960, the Umatilla Army Ordnance Depot was granted a permit to use two small areas for the destruction of unusable munitions and small arms ammunition tracer testing.

In 1960, the Air Force placed the former Boardman AFR in an “excess” category and transferred 37,320.31 acres to the DOI, 58,372.9 acres to the Navy, and 290 acres to the USACE. In 1963, following discussions between the Navy, the DOI, and the State of Oregon; an agreement was reached where the Navy would consolidate its needs to the eastern half of the original range and release the western half. This allowed for single contiguous land use by the Navy and Department of Interior (DOI). The Air Force then passed ownership on to the State of Oregon and other entities. The types of munitions used at the former Boardman AFR included 100-pound (lb) practice bombs, 2- and 4-lb incendiary bombs, 2.25-inch practice rockets, fragmentation bombs, and conventional small arms (.50-caliber or less) and 20-mm ball ammunition. Metals and explosives comprise the principal MC that may be present based on the types of munitions used at the former Boardman AFR.

Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study Process

The Army follows the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) process that is

Described in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the National Contingency Plan (NCP). The overall process is summarized below:

- **Scoping:** Review available information from past site use, clearance efforts, and planned future use of the site develop a comprehensive plan for investigating the nature and extent of munitions and hazard posed by munitions items that may remain at the site.
- **Community Relation:** Obtain input from stakeholders and document community relations activities in a community relations plan, and establish administration record
- **Remedial Investigation:** Conduct remedial investigation.
- **Feasibility Study:** Evaluate various remediation options and their based on criteria of protecting human health and the environment, compliance with environmental regulations, long and short term effectiveness, cost and community acceptance. The ultimate goal of the study is to achieve no further action. Land use controls may be implemented if no further action can be achieved.
- **Proposed Plan:** Describe the remedial alternatives and discuss the rationale supporting the preferred clean up alternative. There will be a 30 day public comment period and an opportunity for a public meeting.
- **Record of Decision:** Consideration of public comments, provide a summary of comments and responses and document the selected remedy. The selected remedial design/action will be implemented at a later time.

Field Investigation

- The field investigation will be focused on areas believed to be most likely to have munitions items remaining from past uses as a bombing range. State of the art metal detection instruments and investigation techniques will be used to locate potential munitions items on the surface of the ground as well as below the ground surface in these areas.. Any munitions items or associated hazardous materials will be disposed of in compliance with applicable regulations by USACE.

Proposed Schedule

Summer 2015

Finalize the Work Plan Documents

Fall 2015 to Winter 2016

Field Investigation

Spring 2017

RI/FS Reports

Summer 2017

Proposed Plan and Public Comment Period8

Winter 2018

Decision Documents