

RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM  
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)

PROJECT FACT SHEET

16 OCTOBER 1996

HNC REVISION: 7 APRIL 1996

TAG REVIEW DATE: 15 MAY 1997

HNC REVISION: 9 JULY 1998

**1. SITE NAME:** El Centro Rocket Target Range No. 1 (#92)

**SITE NUMBER:** J09CA014600

**LOCATION:**

City: El Centro  
County: Imperial  
State: California

**PROJECT NUMBER:** J09CA014601

**CATEGORY:** OE

**INPR RAC:** 4

**ASR RAC:** 4

**TAG RAC:** 4

**2. POC'S:**

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**3. SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former El Centro Rocket Target #1 (92) (between 400 and 480 acres), located in Imperial County, CA, situated in Section 25, Township 14 South, Range 12 East, was acquired by the Eleventh Naval District in 1945 for use as a

practice rocket, bombing, and strafing target for Fleet Unit training.

**4. SITE HISTORY:** In 1945, the Eleventh Naval District acquired between approximately 400 and 480 acres of desert land to establish Rocket Target #1. The Navy acquired the site for use as a rocket, bombing, and strafing target for Fleet Unit training. The Commander of the 11th Naval District on April 23, 1945, changed the numbering system of all the El Centro targets. El Centro Target #1 became El Centro Target #92.

Approximately 80 of these 400 acres, the south **2** of the southwest **3** of Section 25, Township 14 South, Range 12 East, was acquired from a private individual. The remaining 320 acres, the east **2** of said Section 25, was acquired by temporary permit from the Department of Interior.

Historical records indicate that the Navy was interested in an additional 80 acres (north **2** of the southwest **3** of Section 25, Range 12 East, Township 14 South), but no information was available concerning whether a lease was ever acquired.

The Navy discontinued use of Target #92 on October 24, 1946. After disposal, the site remained uncultivated, undeveloped, rough desert land.

St. Louis District failed to procure specific documentation pertaining to the type of ordnance used on El Centro Rocket Target #1 (92). However, ordnance reported in the area (as stated in the INPR) included: one 50-caliber cartridge (live), multiple practice bomb remnants, multiple blasting caps/fuses (these were most likely the electrical cables/connectors for the 2.25" and/or 3.25" rockets) and a two-strand wire. During a February 1996 site visit to the former target, St. Louis personnel found a tail boom from a 25 lb. practice bomb, MK 76; a tail tube assembly from a 25 lb. MK 76; several scattered MK 76's; a 20mm dummy round; and an electrical cable for 2.25" and 3.25" rockets.

The single 20mm dummy round found had a MK 5 Mod 0 cartridge case and a MK 14 Mod 0 projectile. This exact dummy round could not be referenced in any of our publications. It bears the date stamp of 1973, suggesting more recent activity. Perhaps it was ejected from an aircraft or discarded by someone wishing to be rid of it. According to a knowledgeable weapons technician at the Air National Guard in St. Louis, the external gun pods, SUU-16 and SUU-23, as mounted on the F4-C Phantom jet in the late 1960's and into the 1970's, could eject spent cases or complete

rounds while in flight. Normally, the internal guns on modern jet aircraft, such as the M61/GAU-7 cannon store the brass in the conveyor/drum assembly of the weapon and do not eject the brass.

The Navy's A4 Skyhawk, which mounts twin M39 guns in its wing roots, could also shuck brass externally.

Two-prong electrical connectors and nozzle closures from either 2.25" or 3.25" rockets were also found at this site. These were probably practice or target rockets.

## 5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

### Area A:

Size Acres: 160  
Former Use: Practice Rocketry, Bombing and Strafing  
Present Use: Undeveloped rough desert land  
Probable End Use: Same  
Ordnance Presence: Confirmed  
Type: 25 lb. Mk 76 Practice Bombs, 2.25" or

### Area B: (Active Navy Bombing Area - Project Ineligible)

Size Acres: 240-320  
Former Use: Practice Rocketry, Bombing and Strafing  
Present Use: Navy Live Bombing Area  
Probable End Use: Same  
Ordnance Presence: Confirmed  
Type: 25 lb. Mk 76 Practice Bombs, 2.25" or

**6. CURRENT STATUS:** The Archives Search Report (ASR) was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, in September 1996.

**7. STRATEGY:** Area A: EE/CA (RAC 4)  
Area B: NOFA (Project Ineligible)

**8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS:** The Huntsville Center Technical Advisory Group (TAG) reviewed this ASR on 15 May 1997 and tabled it until the discrepancy of land ownership and site acreage could be clarified. It has since been determined that, regardless of ownership, the Navy continues to use the property as a Live Bombing Area and therefore Area B is ineligible for a DERP-FUDS project. The TAG determined that Area A should have an EE/CA performed.

There are discrepancies between the Navy and BLM regarding ownership of the former range. The BLM's Desert Access Guide #22

identifies the southwest **3** and the west **2** of the east **2** of Section 25 as being within the Navy's Live Bombing Area. However, Naval records do not show any ownership of the land.

Current ownership of the property remains unclear. Maps obtained at the Bureau of Land Management in El Centro show the former Naval rocket target property overlapping with current Naval bombing range property. However, the Naval Facilities Engineering Command in San Diego states that the BLM has jurisdiction over the entire former target area. The site visit conducted by the St. Louis District encompassed the entire 480 acres.

The single 20mm dummy round found on-site was considered to be an aberration, and was not included in the RAC score.

There are known Federally- and State-listed species occurring in the site area. An on-site inspection by the appropriate federal and state personnel may be necessary to verify the presence, absence or location of listed species, or natural communities.

**9. SCHEDULE SUMMARY:** EE/CA

**10. FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY:** For Official Use Only

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