

RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
FEBRUARY 1996
TAG REVIEW DATE: 12 DECEMBER 1996

1. **SITE NAME:** Hobbs Practice Bombing Range No. 6

SITE NUMBER: K06NM043600

LOCATION:

City: Lovington
County: Lea
State: New Mexico

PROJECT NUMBER: K06NM043601

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 4

ASR RAC: 4

2. **POC's:**

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3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former Hobbs Practice Bombing Range No. 6 is positioned on 640 acres of land located approximately 28 miles northwest of the City of Hobbs and 7 miles northwest of Lovington, Lea County, NM. The site includes all the land of Section 8, Township 15 South (T 15S), Range 35 East (R35E). A pipeline transits the area immediately south of the site. The land is currently owned by the State of New Mexico and is currently leased under the State's public grazing program. Ready access is by vehicle to the southwest corner of the site on

a county section road and by foot diagonally to the center of the site.

The site is located in the Southern High Plains section of the Great Plains physiographic province. Terrain is relatively flat. There are a few streams. Vegetation is sparse with little sign of human habitation. The land does not appear to have any agricultural use. The site is characterized by gently sloping sandy plains. Maximum relief in the area is one hundred feet. The surface slopes gradually to the east with drainage to the east-southeast via surface runoff, and is in the headwaters of the Colorado River. Soils are well drained and susceptible to erosion. Due to the sandy nature of the soil, most rainfall infiltrates so that significant overland flow does not occur often. Flooding is unlikely.

4. SITE HISTORY: The site was used by the Army Air Forces from 1942 to 1944 as a practice bombing range for the training of pilots and bombardiers stationed at the former Hobbs Army Air Field (AAF), where an Army Air Forces Flying School was established on 3 July 1942. The site of Hobbs Practice Bombing Range (PBR) No. 6 was selected on 17 June 1942, was cleared for use on 30 July 1942, and was first used by troops from Hobbs AAF on 1 September 1942 for bombardier training. Between 1 September 1942 and 7 November 1942, the 959th, 961st, 962nd, 963rd and 964th Bombardier Training Squadrons dropped sand-filled practice bombs M38A2 on the range. Typical Army improvements to this type of site would have included a target, lighting, generator housing, fencing, and triangulation towers.

In November of 1942 the mission of Hobbs AAF changed from bombardier training to four-engine transition pilot training in the B-17 (heavy bombardment aircraft). The Advanced Flying School personnel learned that bombardier training was to be discontinued. Following this time, the range was used as a visual aid in the bomb target approach and pilot-crew training being conducted as part of the four-engine transition training. On 15 August 1944, the site was declared excess to the needs of the Air Forces and the lease to the site was subsequently canceled.

Specific real estate documents showing when the lease for the site was canceled were not found during the INPR or ASR process. A document was found showing that on 5 October 1942, the War Department acquired a right-of-way from the State of New Mexico for construction of this site.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

AREA A

Size, Acres: 640 acres

Former Use: Practice Bombing Range
Present Use: Owned by State of New Mexico, in the State's public grazing program, is currently leased but not actively used
Probable End Use: Same as present
Ordnance Presence: **Confirmed**
Type: Practice bombs; 100 lb.

6. CURRENT STATUS: CURRENT STATUS: The draft Archives Search Report for Hobbs Practice Bombing Range No. 6 was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, in February 1996.

7. STRATEGY:

Area A: EE/CA

8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS:

OE Presence: Concur with the recommendation for a very low-priority RAC 4 EE/CA due to the potential of spotting charges. The site survey, conducted on 28 November 1995, confirmed there is no evidence of conventional High Explosive OE contamination. The only ordnance-related metal debris encountered was from the M38-series 100 pound practice bombs. The archival research revealed sand filled practice bombs, M38A2, were dropped on the range. The small number of dilapidated bomb pieces located at the target are believed to present only a minimal hazard to the public. It is recommended that further action be conducted in conjunction with EE/CA(s) addressing all former Hobbs AAF PBR's that existed and were used for training in Lea County, New Mexico.

Location of Practice Bomb Debris: The Site Survey inspection Team found the practice bomb debris on the target where target rings were observed. They also found a pile of collected debris half way between the southwest corner of the site and the target area. The focus of further actions would be in these areas.

CWM: Based on the investigation of historical records reviewed, the results of the site survey and interviews, Chemical Warfare Materials were never stored, used, or disposed of at Hobbs PBR No. 6.

Natural Resources: There are known Federally- and State-listed species occurring in the site area. A listing is provided on page 3-4, para 3.5 in the ASR Findings. An on-site inspection by appropriate State and Federal personnel may be necessary to verify the presence, absence or location of listed species, or natural communities.

Historical Resources: No cultural or historical sites associated with this site are reported in the ASR. However, any intrusive measures taken within the area will require oversight by the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) and/or other like organizations.

Oil and Gas Drilling: The district should notify any company of the need for UXO avoidance because of the potential for spotting charges when oil and gas drilling is to be done.

Entry Permits: The Site Survey Team obtained a permit from the landowner to enter the property during their visit. A permit would probably be required for any further actions at the site. The POC for permits is in Appendix H, page H-11 of the ASR Findings.

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

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