

**RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
ORIGINAL DATE: 27 APRIL 1998
TAG REVIEW DATE: 12 JANUARY 1999**

1. **SITE NAME:** Kingman Air to Air Gunnery Range

SITE NUMBER: J09AZ041000

LOCATION:

City: Kingman
County: Mohave
State: Arizona

PROJECT NUMBER: J09AZ041001

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 4

ASR RAC: 4

TAG RAC: 5

2. **POC's:**

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3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The southern corner of the former Kingman Air to Air Gunnery Range is located approximately six miles north of the present city limits of the City of Kingman, Mohave County, Arizona. From this point, the former aerial practice gunnery range extended northward approximately 31 miles, generally following the Hualapai Valley. The Hualapai Indian Reservation

is located to the east of the site, Lake Mead National Recreational Area to the north, and the Cerbat Mountains to the west. The subject site is all located within Townships 23 through 28 North, Ranges 13 through 18 West. The southern boundary can be accessed by traveling north on Stockton Hill Road about 13 miles, or by traveling northeast on Route 66 to Antares Road about 17 miles. The land acquired for the range consisted of 360,560.53 acres of primarily undeveloped desert. The area was used for livestock grazing. The entire site remains primarily undeveloped. There are numerous dirt roads and a few ranch houses and private residences. The area supports cattle and sheep grazing.

4. SITE HISTORY: In early 1943, the Army Air Corps acquired over 360,000 acres of land northeast of Kingman, Arizona for use by Kingman Aerial Gunnery School to train gunners in air-to-air firing techniques. Five target flight lines and two auxiliary landing fields were established within this range. Initially, gunnery trainees fired at targets towed along these target flight lines. This technique did not provide a sufficient quality of training and other training techniques were tried. One of the first tried was to place a gun camera on the machine gun and instead of firing bullets the camera would record the gunners site picture whenever the trigger was pulled. In this situation, instead of aiming at a towed target sleeve, P-39 and P-63 aircraft were used as targets. Another technique tried involved the use of frangible bullets which were fired at specially armored versions of the P-39 and P-63s. This was called Operation PINBALL. Kingman Army Air Field was set up to handle two classes of about 200 students at any one time. During 1943, the policy was to have a class fire 1,200 rounds per student for one week on the Kingman Air to Air Gunnery Range (week five of the training cycle) and then move to Yucca and have them fire 1,000 rounds during the second week. On 15 November 1945, the property was declared surplus, and between 1946 and 1950 the various parcels were returned and leases cancelled.

Initially, the ammunition used on these ranges was .30 caliber. As the .50 caliber machine gun became available, the use of the .30 caliber was slowly phased out. The P-39 and P-63 aircraft, used as targets, were normally equipped with a 37mm cannon. When the aircraft was in use as a target, this cannon was supposed to be removed and a light replaced it which would signal the gunners when hits were scored on the aircraft. During the latter part of the period this range was operational, the policy was that the gun camera missions were flown on this range and the live fire missions were flown on the Yucca Air to Air Range. However, in the book Operation Pinball The USAAF's Secret Aerial Gunnery Program in WWII, by Ivan Hickman, the author stated, "We also enjoyed chucking 37 mm shells along the desert floor. We weren't

supposed to have any of that ammunition, but our armorers managed somehow." He was talking about the period when he operated a P-39 from Auxiliary Field 3. This shows that at least some limited amount of 37mm ammunition was used on the range.

No evidence of chemical warfare material use on the range has been discovered.

No formal documentation relating to the decontamination of Kingman Air to Air Gunnery Range site was located during the archives search.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Size, Acres:	Approximately 360,560
Former Use:	Air To Air Gunnery Range
Present Use:	Cattle grazing and some secluded residences
Probable End Use:	Same as above
Ordnance Presence:	Confirmed
Type:	.30 & .50 caliber
	Potential
Type:	37mm

6. CURRENT STATUS: The Archives Search Report (ASR) for the Kingman Air to Air Gunnery Range was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, in February 1998.

7. STRATEGY: NOFA (RAC 5)

8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS: The Huntsville Center Technical Advisory Group met and discussed this ASR on 12 January 1999 and determined NOFA for the entire site as the primary types of items expected to be found on this range are expended .30 and .50 caliber small arms ammunition. This FUDS is located in a very sparsely populated area and due to its immense size and desert-like characteristics, the potential of encountering hazardous 37mm residue is almost non-existent. As the author of this ASR has stated, "Although there remains some remote possibility of 37mm hazardous OE remaining on site, the risk potential to the public can only be categorized as low. Small caliber ammunition and debris (up to .50 cal) would be expected to be found randomly on and below the surface of the former Kingman Air to Air Gunnery Range. The archives research, interviews conducted by telephone and in person, consideration of features visible on aerial photography, and actual site visits support a conclusion that there could be isolated hazardous conventional OE (37mm) items on the former Kingman Air to Air Gunnery Range. A practical method of accomplishing site sampling and removal actions may not be

available, unless more definitive data on the locations of ground firing or contamination would become available." A revised RAC form, with a score of 5, is attached.

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

9. SCHEDULE SUMMARY: NOFA

10. FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY: N/A