

RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM  
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)  
PROJECT FACT SHEET  
APRIL 1998

HNC REVISION: 13 JULY 1998  
TAG REVIEW DATE: 29 JULY 1998

1. **SITE NAME:** Victorville Precision Bombing Range #19

**SITE NUMBER:** J09CA068500

**LOCATION:**

City: Joshua Tree  
County: San Bernardino  
State: California

**PROJECT NUMBER:** J09CA068500

**CATEGORY:** OE

**INPR RAC:** 4

**ASR RAC:** 3

**TAG RAC:** 3

2. **POC'S:**

**GEOGRAPHIC DISTRICT:**

Name: Debbie Castens  
Office: CESPL-PM  
Phone: 213-452-3990

**GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION:**

Name: Anthony L. Mei  
Office: CESPDM-PM-R  
Phone: 415-977-8247

**HEADQUARTERS:**

Name: Mohinder K. Saini  
Office: CEMP-RF  
Phone: 202-761-1594

**ASR/INPR TEAM LEADER:**

Name: Richard L. Pike  
Office: CEHNC-OE-DC  
Phone: 256-895-1559

**ASR SUPPORT DISTRICT:**

Name: Christopher Churney  
Office: CEMVR-ED-DO  
Phone: 309-782-1491

**ASR TECHNICAL REVIEWER:**

Name: Thomas M. Meekma  
Office: SIOAC-ESL  
Phone: 815-273-8739

3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former Victorville PBR #19 consisted of 640 acres located 7 miles north of Joshua Tree, San Bernardino County, California in the western half of section 26 and the eastern half of section 27 of T2N, R6E, S.B.B & M. The land is remote, completely undeveloped desert visited by off-road

vehicles. The eastern half (320 acres) of the site is owned by the Bureau of Land Management and several private owners (320 acres) own the western half. A small number of residences have been built north of the site.

The site is generally flat and gently slopes downward in a northeasterly direction. It is covered with light brush, and grass. Elevation ranges from 3,150 feet above sea level in the southwestern corner of the site to 3,000 feet at the northeastern corner, resulting in a grade of 2%. Mountains exist immediately to the west and southwest. There are no permanent surface water features within site boundaries. Depth to groundwater in the area is 150 to 250 feet.

The region has an arid desert climate characterized by long hot summers, warm winters, little rainfall, sunshine, and low humidity. In winter, the average daily temperature is 43.7° F and the average daily minimum is 29.3° F. The corresponding temperatures for summer are 79.6° F with a average daily maximum of 97.8° F. Temperature extremes have been 11° F 109° F. Total annual precipitation is 4.49 inches.

**4. SITE HISTORY:** The War Department acquired 640 acres for use as a practice bomb target (Victorville PBR #19) with the onset of WWII. In May 1943, 320 acres were transferred from the U.S. Department of the Interior to the War Department through Public Land Order 125. Another 320 acres was obtained by fee acquisition from Southern Pacific Land Company.

PBR #19 was one of 23 PBRs and 2 demolition bombing targets Victorville Army Air Field (AAF) acquired for bombardier cadet training during WWII. PBR #19 was used to support this training until September 1945. The military improvements on the site consisted of frame butts and appurtenances, fences and gates, and a bombing target located in the center of the site. The target was composed of asphalt strips five feet wide configured as three concentric circles with radii of 100, 200, and 300 feet. In addition, there were two strips of asphalt which transected the concentric circles at right angles to each other. The only DOD improvements still on the site are the weathered remains of the asphalt bombing target and white stones where the target center was located. Ordnance utilized at the site included M38A2, Mk15 and M85 100 pound practice bombs, as well as M47A2 chemical bombs (metal parts) configured as practice bombs.

On 10 May 1948, accountability for the site was assumed by the War Assets Administration. The site was declared dedudded and certified to be free and clear of explosives or explosives objects reasonably possible to detect during a clearance

conducted between 20 October 1947 and 24 January 1948. On 12 May 1949, jurisdiction over 320 acres (the western half of section 26) was transferred to the U. S. Department of the Interior through PLO 581. The eastern half of section 27, 320 acres, was transferred from the United States of America to Norman M. and Cora E. Imbertson by quitclaim deed dated 7 July 1949.

5. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

**AREA A**

Size, Acres:	160
Former Use:	Bomb Target Impact
Present Use:	Not used
Probable End Use:	Not used
Ordnance Presence:	<b>Confirmed</b>
Type:	100 lb practice bombs

**AREA B**

Size, Acres:	200
Former Use:	Buffer Zone
Present Use:	Not used
Probable End Use:	Not used
Ordnance Presence:	<b>Potential</b>
Type:	100 lb practice bombs

**AREA C**

Size, Acres:	280
Former Use:	Remaining Land
Present Use:	Not used
Probable End Use:	Not used
Ordnance Presence:	<b>None</b>
Type:	Not Applicable

6. **CURRENT STATUS:** The Archives Search Report (ASR) for Victorville Precision Bombing Range (PBR) #19 was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, in April 1998.

7. **STRATEGY:**

**AREA A:** RAC 3;EE/CA

**AREA B:** RAC 3;EE/CA

**AREA C:** RAC 5;NOFA

8. **ISSUES AND CONCERNS:** The Huntsville Center Technical Advisory Group met and discussed this ASR on 29 July 1998 and

concurrent with USAESCH Safety Comments and the ASR that the appropriate site strategy is **EE/CA, RAC 3** for **Areas A and B**, and **NOFA, RAC 5** for **Area C**. No energetic OE was discovered by the SI team. Practice bomb debris was only found by the SI team in **Area A, Bomb Target Impact**, where the bomb target was located, and which includes land extending  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile from the bomb target in the four primary directions. No practice bomb debris was found in **Area B, Buffer Zone**, which extends an  $\frac{1}{8}$  of a mile beyond Area A. **Area C, Remaining Land**, is the remaining land outside of Areas A and B. Site was surface and subsurface cleared of energetic OE prior to site closure. All scrap and non-hazardous material was left in place. No incidents involving OE have been reported to local authorities. A local resident is currently clearing the surface of all practice bomb debris to sell for scrap. **The ASR stated that NOFA should be considered for the entire site.**

**HNC Safety Comments:** Concurs with the RAC scores for each of the different areas and an overall RAC score of 3. He notes that the high score is due to probability and not severity. Also, the SI team warned a landowner of the hazards associated with the practice bombs, but he insists on collecting the bombs to sell as scrap.

**Clearances:** The Deduinding Report at F-15 of the ASR indicates that a thorough clearance of the site was conducted. The report states in detail how eleven bombing ranges, including PBR # 19, were deduinded by six laborers and the 9800<sup>th</sup> TSU-CE Detachment #14, Bomb and Shell Disposal Team during the period 20 October 1947 through 24 January 1948 with the expenditure of 7176 hours of labor. The area to be searched was surveyed and marked; a Project Engineer and Detachment Sergeant controlled the search crew; a total of 840 tons of scrap were noted on the ranges; immediate target areas were more heavily impacted and a large percentage of the bombs were buried or partially buried necessitating three passes of the crew and considerable excavating; bombs were exploded or completely demolished using a sufficient charge of Composition C-3; and after detonations, the surrounding area was checked to insure that there was total destruction of the OE. The report ended by saying that the land is free from explosive material for the purpose of grazing, mining and/or agricultural purposes.

**CWM:** The ASR does not address presence of CWM at the site.

**Other Projects:** None

**Precautions for Weather and Wildlife:** Personnel should be aware of the possible presence of dangerous wildlife such as mountain

diamondback and sidewinder snakes, desert hairy scorpions and tarantulas on project lands. Extremely high temperatures prevail most of the year. Optimum time for strenuous activity would be in the winter.

**Natural Resources:** The threatened desert tortoise occurs in the vicinity of the site. 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:** Other than one pending military site, no historical/cultural resources are recorded for this site. Any intrusive measures taken at the site will require oversight by the State Historical Preservation Office and/or other like organizations.

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

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