

**RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
SEPTEMBER 1996
TAG REVIEW DATE: 29 MAY 1997**

1. **SITE NAME:** Wabaunsee Precision Bombing Range #2

SITE NUMBER: B07KS028700

LOCATION:

City: Alma
County: Wabaunsee
State: Kansas

PROJECT NUMBER: B07KS028701

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 4

ASR RAC: 4

TAG RAC: 4

2. **POC's:**

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ASR REVIEW POC:

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3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former Wabaunsee Precision Bombing Range (PBR) #2 consisted of approximately 5,120 acres situated about 30 miles west of Topeka, and 5 miles south of Alma, in Wabaunsee County, Kansas. The terrain is undulating, flat-topped hills in the Flint Hills region. It is unpopulated, fenced, prairie pasture land, covered with native bluestem prairie grasses and a few trees. The land is used for livestock grazing. The area of confirmed contamination is within North Hume Pasture of the Hess Ranch. The entire site is owned by eight owners/groups.

4. **SITE HISTORY:** Prior to acquisition in 1942, the land comprising the former Wabaunsee PBR #2 existed as rangeland for livestock and wildlife grazing. On 4 November 1942, Headquarters Second Air Force determined a military necessity existed for an air-to-ground gunnery range to serve Topeka Army Air Base, Topeka, Kansas.

Although 7,680 acres were originally authorized for acquisition, on 30 April 1943, it was determined that a military necessity no longer existed for 2,560 acres. This reduced the total to approximately 5,120 acres. The remaining land would consist of a 2 x 4 mile area that was to be converted to a precision bombing range instead of air-to-ground gunnery range. Wabaunsee PBR #2 was used from approximately late December 1942 to 23 September 1946 to support Topeka AAB and Smoky Hill AAF, Salina, Kansas as both an air-to-ground gunnery range for practice .50 caliber machine gun and a precision bombing range for 100-lb and 500-lb bombs. According to interviews conducted for the ASR, only practice bombs were used.

In September 1946, the leases were terminated and the land reverted to its original owners. The site was cleared and a certificate of clearance was issued on 9 May 1947.

The site of the former Wabaunsee PBR #2 is currently owned by private citizens and is used for livestock grazing.

5. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

AREA AA

Size, Acres:	18
Former Use:	Precision bomb target impact area
Present Use:	Livestock grazing
Probable End Use:	Livestock grazing
Ordnance Presence:	Confirmed
Type:	Practice bomb scrap; one .50 caliber cartridge case

AREA AB

Size, Acres: 372
Former Use: Buffer zone
Present Use: Livestock grazing
Probable End Use: Livestock grazing
Ordnance Presence: **Potential**
Type: Practice bombs: .50 cal. ammunition

AREA AC

Size, Acres: 4,730
Former Use: All remaining lands
Present Use: Rangeland, cattle grazing
Probable End Use: Rangeland, cattle grazing
Ordnance Presence: **Uncontaminated**

6. **CURRENT STATUS:** A draft ASR was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, in September 1996.

7. STRATEGY:

Area A: EE/CA
Area B: EE/CA
Area C: No Further Action (NOFA)

8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS:

500-lb bomb: In 1943 (*before site closure*), Mr. Wilmer Thowe and his father found a 500-lb bomb in their field east of the target. This location is well outside the site boundary. They loaded it on a wagon and hauled it to their barnyard where soldiers came and took out the explosive. The casing is still in a junk pile at the Thowe farm. See photos J-8 and J-9, Plate 5 and I-2. The ASR indicates that this is an isolated incident. All interviews, including an interview with Mr. Thowe, and records indicate that the **ONLY** bombs used at Wabaunsee PBR #2 were practice bombs. Looking at the information presented in the ASR, the TAG concurred with the ASR Team that this was very likely an isolated incident and did not recommend extending the EE/CA outside the site boundaries.

Landowners: Landowners have expressed sensitivity to potential OE remediation actions for this site.

Site Conditions: Bad roads and potential muddy conditions during a rainy season may hinder accessibility to site. Rattlesnakes are prevalent in this area.

Natural Resources: None of the currently threatened or endangered wildlife is known to be found in the former Wabaunsee PBR #2. The possibility always exists that a threatened or endangered species may migrate into the area. 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/Cultural Resources: According to the Cultural Resources Division, Archeology Office of the Kansas State Historical Society, there are no archeological or paleontological sites located within the boundaries of the former Wabaunsee PBR #2. However, prior to any future projects here, the Kansas State Historical Preservation Office should be contacted to determine if the project warrants formal environmental review.

9. SCHEDULE SUMMARY: EE/CA

10. FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY: For Official Use Only

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