

**FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
ORIGINAL DATE: 21 JUNE 1996
TAG REVIEW DATE: 26 MARCH 1997**

1. SITE NAME: Yuma Proving Ground (Yuma Test Branch)

SITE NUMBER: J09AZ101500

LOCATION:

CITY: Yuma

COUNTY: Yuma County, AZ and Imperial County, CA

STATE: Arizona

PROJECT NUMBER: JOAZ101501

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 4

ASR RAC: 4

TAG RAC: 4

2. POC's:

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3. SITE DESCRIPTION:

a. The Yuma Proving Grounds (YPG) (Yuma Test Branch) was approximately 10 miles north-northeast of the city of Yuma along the Colorado River. The subject site is immediately west of the "active" YPG and encompasses the downstream floodway (Laguna Dam Reservoir) between the Imperial and Laguna Dams, also some additional land below the Laguna Dam. The site is partially in Yuma County, Arizona, and partially in Imperial County, California.

b. Prior to DoD usage and the earlier construction of the Laguna and Imperial Dams by the Bureau of Reclamation for water supply/irrigation purposes, the land was generally Colorado River flood plain and unimproved desert. Agricultural activity occurred in certain areas.

c. The site is primarily high banks, marshy land, lakes and outflow channels of the Laguna and Imperial Dams. The property is owned by the federal government and maintained by the Bureau of Reclamation. Their field office and yard are currently located in the western portion of the property. A Water Irrigation Department canal and related facilities are located to the north of the field office. The area lies within the floodway of the two dams and offers the opportunity for either public recreation or preservation purposes. Farming activity occurs in the southernmost portion of the FUDS.

4. SITE HISTORY:

a. The Yuma Test Branch site, which consisted of approximately 13,494 acres, was first activated in 1943 as an engineering facility responsible for testing boats, bridges, vehicles and well drilling equipment in a desert environment. Bridge testing activities conducted by heavy and light pontoon units under the command of the Headquarters, California-Arizona Maneuver (CAMA) at Camp Young, began prior to the establishment of the Yuma Test Branch site at an area below the Laguna Dam. By the time the Yuma Test Branch was officially established, bridge testing activities had been moved farther north to the Imperial Dam. Desert testing of vehicles and other mechanical equipment was accomplished on an area designated as the Sand Dunes, near El Centro, California.

b. The Yuma Test Branch was deactivated in 1949, but was reactivated as Yuma Test Station in 1951. The new mission of the Yuma Test Station was desert testing of combat and transport vehicles and climatic/engineering tests of weapons and ammunition. In 1962, Yuma Test Station was assigned to the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command and redesignated Yuma Proving Ground. Between 1955 and 1983, approximately 5,248 acres were declared excess and disposed of with a majority of the land being transferred to the Bureau of Reclamation. The remaining real estate comprising the original 13,494-acre Yuma Test Branch site remains under the control of the "active" YPG installation.

c. Part of the bridge testing activities at the Yuma Test Branch consisted of strafing tests. During strafing tests, aircraft flew over and strafed the various forms of bridges being tested at the site. A practice mine field was also situated on a 640-acre tract of the site. The purpose of the mine field was to develop a method of attacking mine fields through engineering means. The types of ammunition and explosives known to have been present at this site include: practice mines, TNT, ammonium nitrate, dynamite, .30, .45 and .50 caliber small arms.

d. During World War II, armored units from CAMA used portions of the site for maneuvers and river-crossing training in preparation for the North African Campaign. No records were located which indicated the types of ordnance used by CAMA or the precise areas where the ordnance was used; however, it is well documented that CAMA troops utilized all standard infantry and mechanized weapons and ammunition over the entire maneuver area.

e. During the 1950's, Yuma Test Station was assigned the mission of research and development, engineering and acceptance testing of artillery ammunition, small arms, recoilless rifles, mortars, grenades and mines. Engineering and acceptance testing also was performed on anti-aircraft weapons, ammunition and fuzes, with all live ammunition being fired at drone or towed targets. All forms of acceptance testing and firing were conducted from a specified firing line to specifically located impact areas located on what is still the "active" YPG installation.

f. Investigation of the historical documents did not indicate the use, testing or storage of CWM on the Yuma Test Branch site. According to historical records, Chemical Corps activities were conducted in areas on the "active" YPG. Facilities, including a toxic chemical laboratory, chemical storage area and chemical warfare range were built at YPG for environmental and surveillance tests of chemical agents and protective equipment during the 1950's.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Area A: Size, Acres: 640
Former Usage: Practice Mine Field
Present Usage: Recreational Area/Flood Plain
Probable End Usage: Same as Above
Ordnance Presence: Potential
Type: Mine, Anti-tank, Practice, M1, TNT, Ammonium Nitrate, Dynamite, and small arms.

Area B: Size, Acres: 4608
Former Usage: Test Branch
Present Usage: Bureau of Reclamation field office, irrigation canal, public recreation and farming
Probable End Usage: Same as Above
Ordnance Presence: None

6. CURRENT STATUS:

The Archives Search report for the Yuma Proving Grounds (Yuma Test Site) was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, in April 1996.

7. STRATEGY: Area A: EE/CA
Area B: NOFA

8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS:

a. Although it is considered a flood plain, it is also used as a recreational area and the TAG has determined that an EE/CA will be performed in Area A. TNT, Ammonium Nitrate and dynamite potential should not be a concern as Area A has been flooded numerous times since being returned to public use. NOFA is required for Area B.

b. There are known Federally-and State-listed species occurring in the site 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.

9. SCHEDULED SUMMARY: EE/CA

10. FUNDING /BUDGET SUMMARY: For Official Use Only