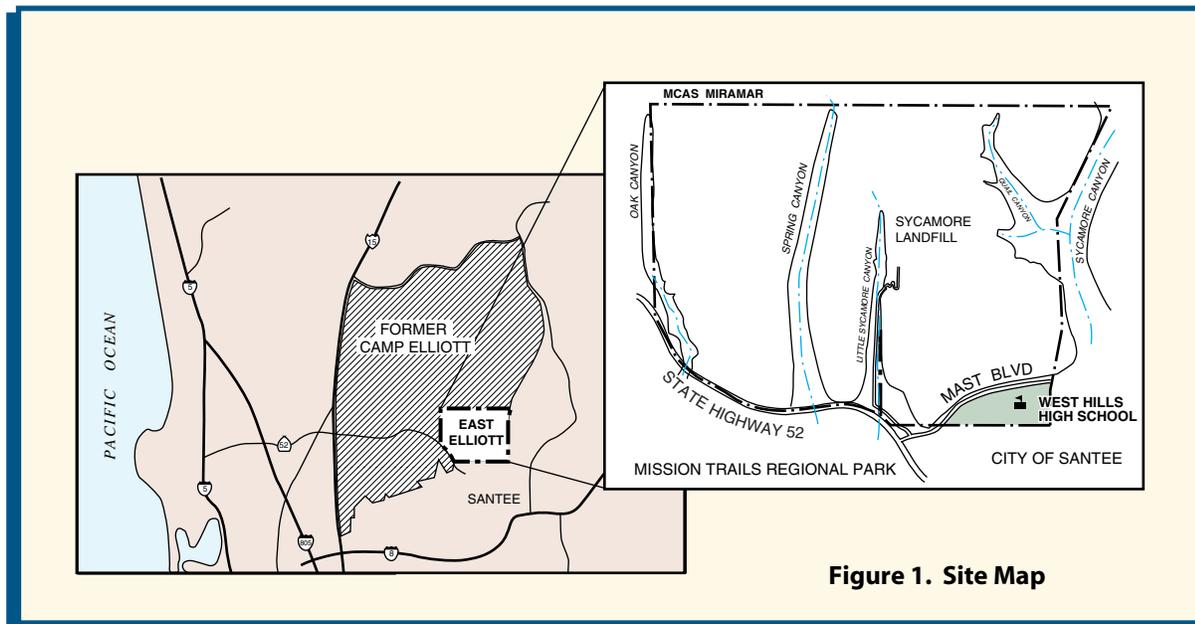


1998-1999 OE Removal Actions at East Elliott, San Diego, California

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is preparing a series of Community Updates to inform citizens of the status and findings of ordnance and explosives (OE) cleanup actions at East Elliott, located in San Diego County. East Elliott is a 3,200-acre (5-square mile) area that lies within the boundaries of the City of San Diego. The site is bordered by Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, the City of Santee, State Highway 52, and Mission Trails Regional Park (Figure 1).



Site Background

East Elliott comprises the southeast corner of the former U.S. Marine Corps Camp Elliott, a training facility that was active from 1917 (as Camp Kearney) to 1960 and once occupied 30,500 acres. During the 1940s and 1950s live-fire training involving tanks and artillery resulted in the presence of OE, including unexploded ordnance (UXO), within the area of East Elliott. This community update discusses removal actions that were conducted by USACE from 1998 to 1999 at East Elliott. A removal action is defined as a cleanup or removal of released hazardous substances from the environment. At East Elliott, OE (including UXO) was removed.

The information gathered during the OE removal action was released to the public in the Draft Removal Report (March 1999), prepared by Human Factors Associates, Inc., under contract to USACE. The information presented in the report was used in

the development of the Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA), a feasibility study to examine possible removal actions at East Elliott. The EE/CA, which was submitted in August 1999 after review by the California State Department of Toxic Substances Control, calls for removal actions for the majority of the areas within the East Elliott boundary.

GLOSSARY

Ordnance and Explosives (OE) - OE describes anything related to munitions designed to cause damage to personnel or material through explosive force, incendiary action, or toxic effects. OE may include intact munitions, or munitions fragments.

Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) - Ordnance and explosives that have been primed, fused, armed, or otherwise prepared for action, and have been fired, dropped, launched, projected, or placed in such a manner as to constitute a hazard to operations, installation, personnel, or material and remain unexploded by either malfunction, design, or other cause. UXO is a subset of OE.

East Elliott Today

The 3,200 acres that comprise East Elliott were sold to private individuals, developers, and the City of San Diego during the period 1963 to 1974. Current land use at East Elliott consists of undeveloped open space and the Sycamore Landfill, a 170-acre Class III privately-operated sanitary landfill. Open space within East Elliott consists of 165 individual parcels, many of which are privately-owned.

The majority of East Elliott is undeveloped at present, and unrestricted access along its southern boundary makes it attractive for a variety of recreational uses, including hiking, mountain biking, jogging, motor biking, horseback riding, and off-road vehicle use. Rock climbers also use several clusters of large boulders located near the southeast corner of the site. Several dirt roads and trails are located along the ridges and canyons.



City of Santee as Seen From Eastern Border of East Elliott

OE Removal Actions at East Elliott: 1998 - 1999

OE was removed to a depth of 3 feet below the ground surface over a 53-acre area at the Sycamore Landfill between February and April, 1998, in support of landfill activities. Based on the 1996 site investigation, the maximum depth of OE encountered in the East Elliott area was 18 inches. Prior to initiating OE removal operations, the area was surveyed and a grid was laid out to track OE removal and UXO identification. Brush within the area was then thinned or removed to facilitate location and removal of OE. The ground surface was first visually inspected to locate OE. Clearance teams then used magnetometers to detect magnetic anomalies that would indicate the possible presence of OE in the subsurface or in areas of heavy vegetation. The locations of UXO found during this removal action is shown in Figure 2. Twenty-four UXO items and 64 pounds of harmless OE scrap were discovered during the removal action. All UXO items were either 37mm or 75mm rounds, including high-explosives rounds. The Draft Removal Report for this investigation recommended that OE construction support be provided during all expansion activities for the Sycamore Landfill.

Surface removal was conducted as a Time-Critical Removal Action in the eastern portion of East Elliott between July 1998 and February 1999. A Time-Critical Removal Action is intended to address an immediate safety hazard. During the 1996 OE investigation, the eastern portion of East Elliott (within an area

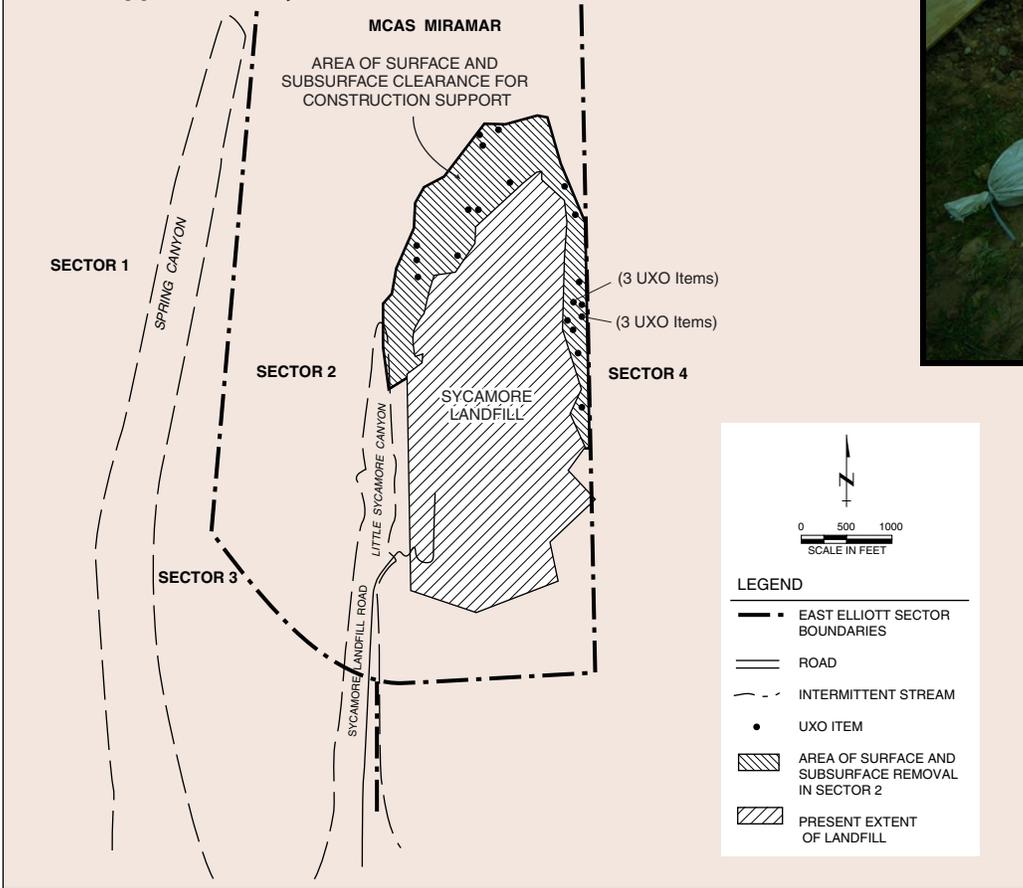
designated as Sector 4) was found to contain the largest concentration of UXO and OE scrap. Based on the OE density, on the proximity to local residents, and on the large number of recreational users in this area, a time-critical removal action was warranted due to the immediate threat of public exposure to OE with the risk of serious injury or death.

Prior to initiating OE removal operations, the area was surveyed, a grid system was established to facilitate location and removal of OE. The ground surface was then visually inspected for OE. Magnetometers were used to detect evidence of OE obscured by brush and heavy grass. Surface removal was not conducted in areas of heavy brush (150 acres, or 15% of Sector 4). Twenty-four UXO items and 1,250 pounds of OE scrap were discovered during the removal action. The locations of these UXO items, which were mainly 37mm and 75mm HE rounds, are shown in Figure 3. The report for these activities recommended that subsurface removal be conducted in the southern portion of Sector 4 based on the amount of OE suspected of being present beneath the ground surface and the number of people visiting in the sector. The findings and recommendations in the Draft Removal Report were used in the development of the recommendations presented in the EE/CA. The EE/CA was submitted to the public in August 1999 and will be discussed in Community Update 4, which will be released in October 1999.



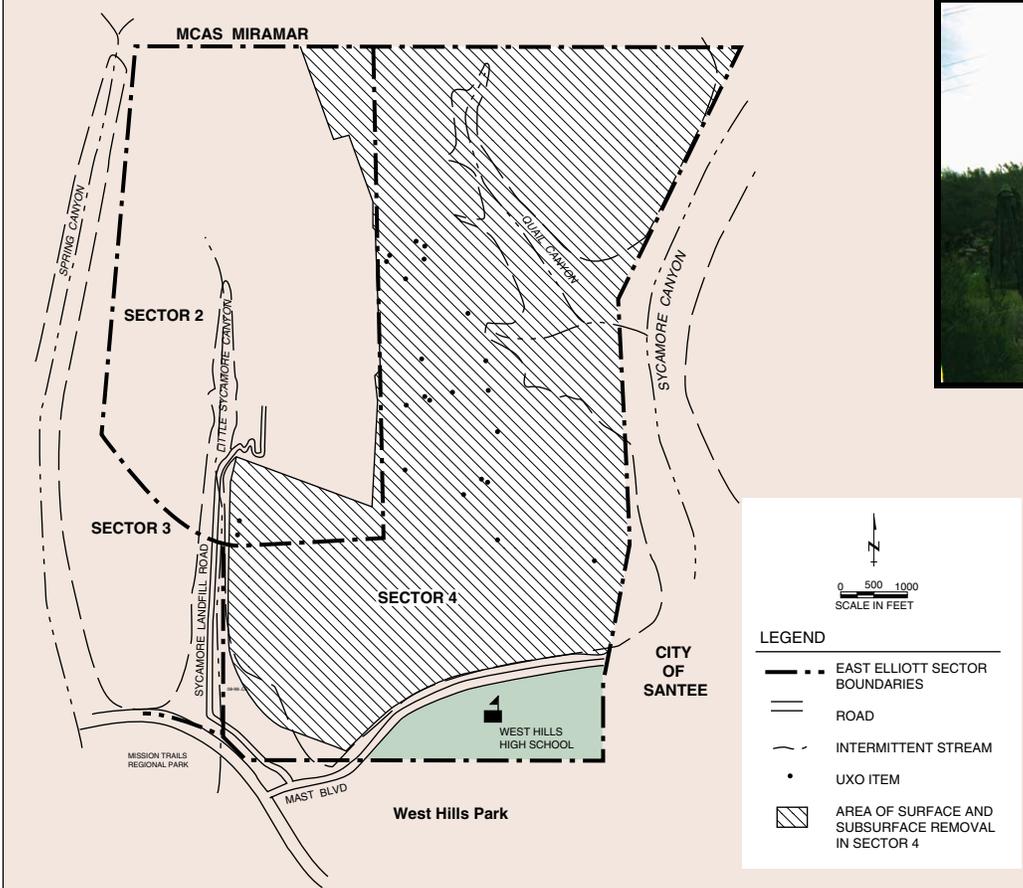
OE Found at East Elliott

Figure 2. Locations of UXO Encountered During 1998 Construction Support at the Sycamore Landfill



Preparing to Detonate UXO

Figure 3. Locations of UXO Encountered During the 1998-1999 Time Critical Removal Action in Sector 4



Clearance Operations

If You Encounter Ordnance at East Elliott ...

UXO items capable of causing injury or death have been discovered at East Elliott. UXO removal actions conducted by USACE have reduced, but may not have completely eliminated, the presence of UXO at East Elliott. If you encounter ordnance (munitions) or buried metal objects at East Elliott, do not attempt to touch, disturb, or move them. Call the San Diego Emergency Services at 911.



37mm and 75mm Shells Found at East Elliott

Information Repositories

To gain a more thorough understanding of the history of East Elliott and the activities associated with the proposed OE removal activities, the public is encouraged to review relevant documents maintained in the information repositories for East Elliott at the following locations:

San Diego City Library, Tierrasanta Branch

4978 La Cuenta Drive
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 573-1384

San Diego County Library, Santee Branch

9225 Carlton Hills Blvd.
Santee, CA 92071
(619) 448-1863

For More Information

For more information on USACE's removal actions at East Elliott, please contact:

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