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Two million pounds of scrap metal removed from Fort Campbell training ranges

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With much of the 101st Airborne Division deployed to Iraq, Fort Campbell, Ky., Range Division took advantage of the relative lull to repair and replace target systems on the firing ranges.

Last September, Mike Mazuk with Fort Campbell's Range Division called Plyler McManus with Huntsville Center's Ordnance and Explosives Design Center with the challenge of removing ordnance and old armored vehicles from eight selected training ranges.

Work started in late December. By the end of March, more than two million pounds of scrap metal had been removed from the ranges.

"We cleaned up old targets and munitions residue out of the impact areas and cleaned ranges so that 1) we could get the metal out of the impact area and 2) put in new targets so that the Soldiers have something better to shoot at," Mazuk said.

The ranges varied in size from a few dozen acres to several thousand acres, Mazuk said. The primary ranges are oriented in such a way that they share a common downrange central impact area into which larger weapons such as artillery are fired. The larger ranges are configured where air and ground units can practice coordinated operations.

Having been shot at for years, or in some cases decades, some of the targets were unrecognizable. Concentrations of munitions debris and unexploded ordnance that had built up around the targets had to be removed before the targets could be scrapped.

"Seeing the variety of target vehicles during an October site visit was like touring a museum of Army vehicles," said Huntsville's project manager William Noel. "Many were recognizable, such as the M-60 tank, the M-113A armored personnel carrier and the 'Gamma Goat' supply hauler. Some were not so recognizable.

One vehicle was so shot-up that only the corners where armor panels were welded together still stood above the frame, so there was no way to score a 'hit' on it, Noel said. "Then there was the armored vehicle on Range 51 that looked like a massively overgrown armored personnel carrier with what appeared to be a recoilless rifle barrel atop



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