



Black Rapids Training Site, Alaska

November 2022

Background

DoD uses and manages operational ranges to support national security objectives and maintain the high state of operational readiness essential to its mission requirements. The Department conducts non-regulatory, proactive, and comprehensive operational range assessments (ORAs) to support the long-term sustainability of these ranges while protecting human health and the environment. The purpose of an ORA is to determine if there is a release or substantial threat of a release of munitions constituents (MC) from an operational range to an off-range area that exceeds an applicable regulatory standard or creates a potential unacceptable risk to human health or the environment.

The Army ORA effort was developed to address DoD requirements detailed in DoD Directive 4715.11 (10 May 2004) and DoD Instruction 4715.14 (15 November 2018). The overall objective of the ORA is to assess operational ranges/range complexes to determine if an off-range MC release or substantial threat of an off-range MC release exists; if an off-range MC release exists, does it exceed an applicable regulatory reporting standard; and if an MC release or substantial threat of a release exists, determine whether it creates a potentially unacceptable risk to off-range human health or the environment. Army ORAs assess potential off-range migration of MC along surface water system and groundwater migration pathways.

Installation Overview

The Black Rapids Training Site encompasses approximately 2,791 acres, and is located 30 miles south of Delta Junction, Alaska, along the Delta River. Black Rapids Training Site has been used for arctic warfare, including arctic survival, navigation of land and waterways, military skiing, mountaineering, and river crossing operations since the 1960s. The structures present on the installation were built during

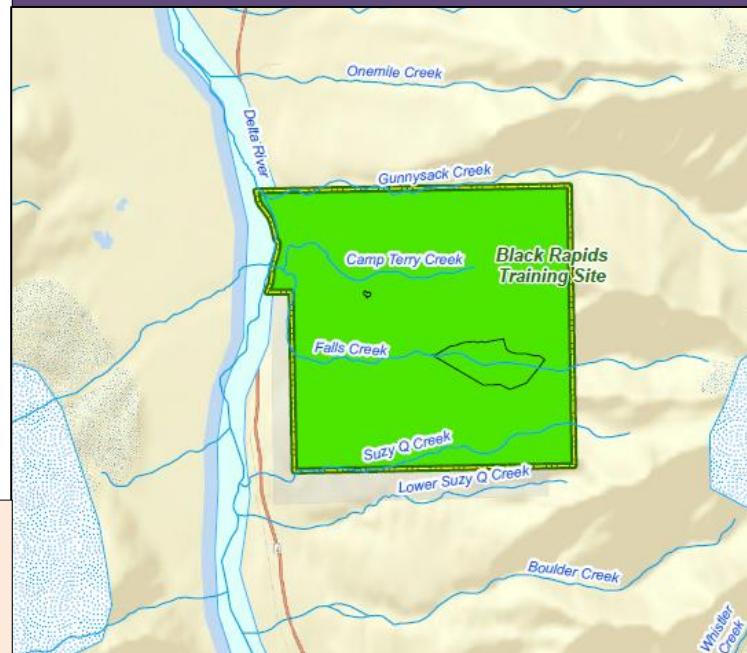
Operational Range Assessment Findings (11/2022).

Based on updated data, no off-range MC release or substantial threat of off-range MC release currently exists. Therefore, there is no risk to off-range receptors. The operational ranges remain categorized as Unlikely.

Next Steps

Black Rapid Training Site's operational ranges should be included in the FY23-27 cycle of ORAs to meet DoD Policy (DoDI 4715.14) re-assessment requirements.

Map of Range/Range Area



Installation Data

Installation Boundary

Range Conclusions

Unlikely

Hydrology

Perennial Creek/Stream

Glacier

Waterbody

the 1990s and are used as offices and barracks for installation personnel. The barracks can house 100 students and 30 cadre at one time. The installation contains a 12 lane Land Navigation Site that is point certified by both military and civilian survey teams. The training venues at Black Rapids Training Site include the Land Navigation Site, High Angle Marksmanship Range (HAMMR), Rock site with permanent protection, Small Arms Range (25-meters), ski lift, downhill runs, and 5- and 10-kilometer cross country trails.

Live-fire munitions are in use at Black Rapids Training Site at the HAMMR and the 25-meter Small Arms Range. At the HAMMR (11 acres), there are 3 firing points and 11 targets, with small caliber munitions fired from south to north; the HAMMR is only utilized during the summer months. The 25-meter Small Arms Range (1-acre) was constructed in 2008 and consists of an open area spanning east to west; the range is used for training with live-fire small caliber munitions (7.62-millimeter and smaller). The Maneuver Training Area (2,679 acres) is a non-live-fire training area with one landing zone and 14 training sites; the training sites include one rock climbing site, six bivouac sites, two thermal shelters, one check point, one rope bridge, one prussic site, one viewpoint, and one land navigation center point.

Previous Assessment Overview

During the Phase I assessment, Black Rapids Training Site included a total of one operational range, a maneuver training totaling 4,212.93 acres. The one operational range was categorized as Unlikely to have a source-pathway-receptor interaction and was placed into a periodic review cycle.

During the 2016 Periodic Review, the operational range count increased from one to three ranges; however, acreage decreased from 4,213 acres to 2,778 acres. The three ranges were determined Unlikely. One maneuver training range had no military munitions use and live-fire 25-meter range contained a limited source with no pathway present. The live-fire HAMMR contained a limited source; therefore, MCOC was not expected to migrate, despite the presence of Falls

Creek which flowed through the HAMMR, and eventually discharged into the Delta River. As such, the ranges were determined Unlikely and placed into a periodic review cycle.

Basic Assessment Overview

The Basic Assessment determined that the operational range count has remained the same since the Periodic Review. The maneuver training area is designated for non-live-fire training and is Unlikely to have a source-pathway-receptor interaction. The HAMMR is designated for small arms since being constructed in 2013; however, the range has not been used since 2015 and is considered a limited source. The 25-meter range is utilized for training involving live-fire small caliber munitions. Based on the evidence of munitions use, a source of MC was identified for the 25-meter range. However, no erosion was observed at the 25-meter range and no migration pathways were identified due to range configuration and well-vegetated berms. Due to the distance from the range to ecological and human receptors, a source-pathway-interaction is unlikely. As a result, the three operational ranges evaluated were categorized as Unlikely.

For more information on Black Rapids Training Site, contact USAG Alaska Public Affairs Office at (970) 353-6700. For more information on the DoD Operational Range Assessment Program visit <https://www.denix.osd.mil/orap/home/>