Camp Parks Reserve Forces Training Area, California

December 2020

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

Camp Parks RFTA encompasses 2,282 acres of land in the San Ramon Valley along the boundary between Alameda and Contra Costa counties in Dublin, California. The installation is located approximately 40 miles southeast of San Francisco, just northeast of the intersection of Interstates 680 and 580. The installation is bound by the Diablo Mountain Range to the northeast, Interstate 580 to the south, and the city of San Ramon to the northwest. Camp Parks RFTA is surrounded by residential land to the north, east, and west and industrial land to the south.

Operational Range Assessment Findings (12/2020)

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

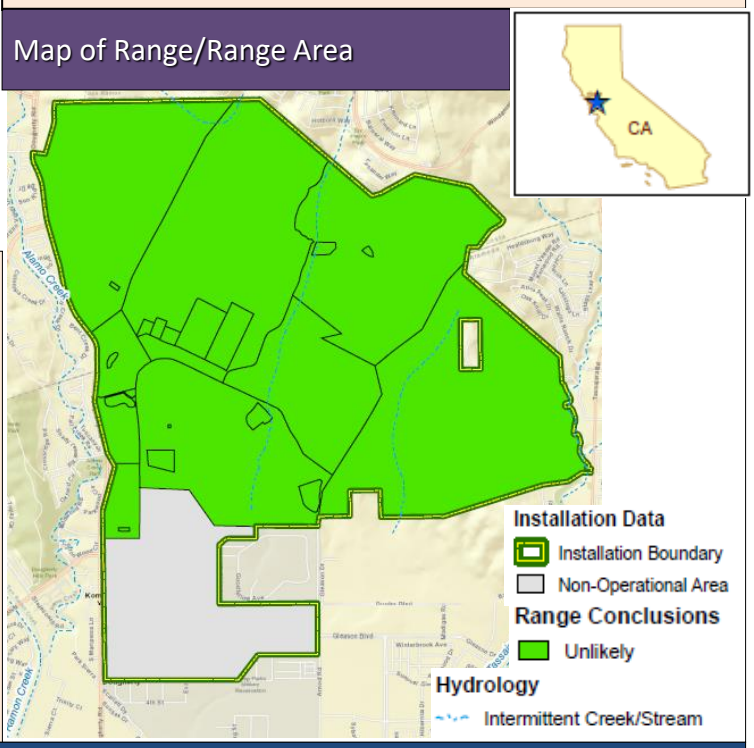
Next Steps

Camp Parks RFTA's operational ranges should be included in the FY23-27 cycle of ORAs to satisfy re-assessment requirements.

Installation Overview (continued)

The installation has an operational range footprint comprised of 32 ranges, totaling 1,938 acres, and a non-operational use area of 344 acres, which includes the cantonment area.

Map of Range/Range Area



Previous ORA Investigations

The initial 2008 qualitative assessment for Camp Parks RFTA consisted of collecting, evaluating, and presenting available data to establish if there is an interaction between the on-range sources of MCOC and off-range receptors (source/receptor interaction). During the Phase I assessment, Camp Parks RFTA had a total of 28 operational ranges, totaling 1,992.34 acres.

The Phase I identified limited or no military munitions use at 22 operational ranges including maneuver and training areas, non-dudded impact areas, a practice hand grenade accuracy course, and other non-live-fire ranges. Potential MCOC sources were identified at the live-fire small arms ranges and a light demolition area; however, potential migration pathways were inhibited by the arid climate and soil conditions in the area. All 28 ranges were categorized as being Unlikely to have potential MCOC migrate off-range and affect human or ecological receptors and were placed into a periodic review cycle.

The purpose of the Periodic Review for Camp Parks RFTA was to re-evaluate the 2008 Phase I and determine whether the sources, pathways, and receptor evaluation completed during the initial assessment remain valid.

The primary findings revealed by the information obtained during the Periodic Review are as follows:

- The live-fire ranges had been inactive since 2007 due to safety concerns and had contributed no additional source of MCOC since the Phase I.
- No demolition activities had been conducted at the light demolition range since 1993. As such, no additional source of MCOC had been contributed since the Phase I.
- Potential drainage from the non-dudded impact areas and adjacent maneuver training area flows into an on-range pond and does not leave the operational range area. All ranges and non-dudded impact areas are fully vegetated. Interviews and photo analysis confirm surface water and groundwater pathways remain Unlikely.

ORA Basic Assessment (2020)

Since the Periodic Review was completed, the operational range count has increased from 28 to 32. This change to the operational range count is a result of the combination of multiple maneuver training areas, the closing of two training areas, and the addition of eight other training sites. Camp Parks RFTA has an operational range area of 1,938 acres and 344 non-operational acres, which includes the cantonment. The decrease in operational acreage is due to a real property exchange that removed a portion of the maneuver training area on the northwest corner of the installation. This exchange also significantly reduced the size of the cantonment area.

In addition to the increase in operational ranges, some changes to the live-fire range complex were made:

- One live-fire range has been modernized and re-opened as a small arms qualification course
- A fully contained indoor range has been constructed within the footprint of a historical small arms range; the historical berm remains in place, but no firing occurs outside the indoor range.

Since the 2014 Periodic Review, additional source loading of small caliber munitions has occurred due to the re-opening of a small arms qualification course. The additional MCOC source loading from this range is similar to the historical munitions use evaluated in previous assessments. All other ranges in the live-fire range complex have remained inactive since 2007, apart from the new indoor range. No additional source loading occurs at this ranges because it is fully contained; the historical berm remains in place.

Additionally, it was confirmed that the light demolition area has remained inactive since 1993, with no intent to reopen. Potential historical sources of MCOC exist at the non-dudded impact area and an adjacent maneuver training area due to the overlapping footprints of a historical rifle range and a historical machine gun range. No additional source loading has occurred in these areas. There is limited to no military munitions use in the remaining 24 operational ranges.

ORA Basic Assessment (2020) (continued)

As stated in the 2014 Periodic Review and confirmed in this Basic Assessment, Camp Parks RFTA experiences low precipitation and high evapotranspiration rates. Shallow aquifers under the range area are confined by extensive upper and lower clay units, limiting infiltration from the operational ranges to groundwater pathways. Due to the arid conditions of the region, the primary drainage channels of the installation are ephemeral in nature, limiting the surface water migration pathway.

Furthermore, the small arms ranges are relatively flat and well vegetated with manicured grass. Each range has full vegetated back and side berms, which form partial enclosures around the ranges. The historical berm remains in place around the indoor range and erosion control measures were observed around the new building to minimize the transport of sediment during construction activities.

The non-live-fire training areas are largely vegetated with manicured grass and exhibit no evidence of erosion or channelized flow. Smoke grenades are commonly use in the MOUT Collective Training Facility where they are set off in half drums or concrete barrels, significantly limiting the risk of MCOC migration.

A 2012 Remedial Investigation included the collection of surface water, sediment, and groundwater samples which revealed the presence of lead and manganese above screening levels in the surface soils on the live-fire ranges. However, vertical migration is inhibited by the clay layers in the underlying soil. Surface water migration was discounted due to sampling of an ephemeral ponds that collects runoff from the live-fire ranges. These sites revealed no MCOC concentrations that pose an unacceptable risk to off-range human or ecological receptors.

Similar to the 2014 Periodic Review, limited or no source was identified at 24 of the 32 ranges and a source of MCOC was identified at the remaining 8 ranges. Where MCOC sources exist, migration pathways are inhibited by the arid climate and soil conditions in the region. Therefore, the source/receptor interaction is incomplete and the operational ranges at Camp Parks RFTA do not pose an unacceptable risk to off-range human or ecological receptors.

For more information on Camp Parks RFTA, contact Fort Hunter Liggett's Public Affairs Office at"
Usarmy.hunterliggett.imcom-central.list.fhl-pao@mail.mil
For more information on the DoD Operational Range Assessment Program visit https://www.denix.osd.mil/orap/home/