



# Gulkana Glacier 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.

## Range Overview

Gulkana Glacier Training Site encompasses 17,832 acres within the Alaska Range (near Isabel Pass), midway between Glennallen, Alaska and Delta Junction, Alaska. The Richardson Highway runs along the southwestern boundary of the installation. A Memorandum of Agreement between the State of Alaska and the Department of the Army signed in 1986 authorizes the use of the area as a glacial

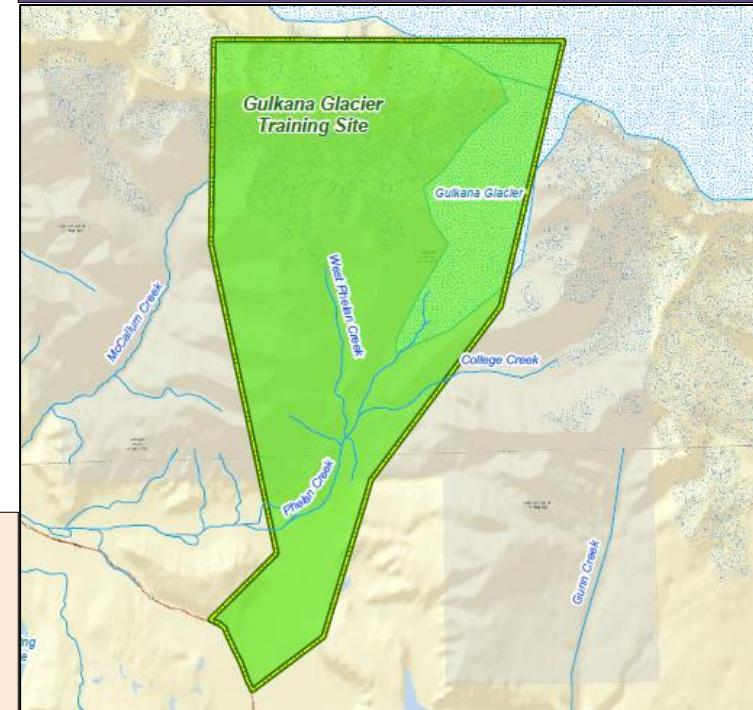
## Operational Range Assessment Findings (11/2022)

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

Gulkana Glacier Training Site's operational range 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

maneuver/training area for light forces. Additionally, Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) students have the opportunity to participate in Northern Warfare Training at Donnelly Training Area, which culminates in a three-day field exercise that takes place at Gulkana Glacier Training Site. The majority of training exercises occur on the northern ridge.

Gulkana Glacier Training Site has been used periodically since 1961 as a training site for global dismounted maneuvers consisting of glacial travel, glacial warfare, ice climbing, and rescue techniques. The single operational range at Gulkana Glacier Training Site has never been used for training involving military munitions. Smoke and flare are permitted for use in emergency situations. As such, there are no potential sources of MCOC at Gulkana Glacier Training Site.

#### Previous Assessment Overview

The initial 2008 qualitative assessment for Gulkana Glacier Training Site 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, Gulkana Glacier Training Site included a total of one operational range totaling 40.9 acres authorized as a maneuver/training area for light forces. The range was categorized as Unlikely to have a source/receptor interaction because no live-fire munitions had ever been used on the site.

During the 2015 Periodic Review no additional munitions use had occurred since the Phase I, and no changes to potential migration pathways were identified. As a result, the range at Gulkana Glacier Training Site was categorized as Unlikely.

#### ORA Basic Assessment (2022)

The evaluation of updated data gathered during the Basic Assessment indicate that the one operational range at Gulkana Glacier Training Site remains Unlikely to have potential MCOC migrate off-range and adversely affect human or ecological receptors. Currently, the installation is used periodically as a training site for glacial dismounted maneuvers consisting of glacial travel, ice climbing, rescue techniques, and glacial warfare. Additionally, no live-fire training activities have been conducted at the installation. This information is consistent with the CSMs developed and the conclusions reached during previous ORAs conducted at the site in 2008 and 2015.

For more information on Gulkana Glacier 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/>