

# Mountain Home Air Force Range No. 3

## Location

- Mountain Home AFR No. 3, FUDS property number F10ID0142, is located approximately 11 miles south of Hot Springs, Idaho, in Sections 15, 16, 21, 22 and portions of Sections 18, 19, and 20 of Township 9 South, Range 6 East (Figure 1). The Mountain Home AFR No. 3 was also known as Mountain Home Precision Bombing Range No. 3.

## History

- The former Mountain Home AFR No. 3 initial consisted of 2,563.3 acres of land acquired by the War Department from the State of Idaho and Department of Interior for use as a precision bombing range in September 1943. The 6,000 ft diameter circular range was built and utilized by Mountain Home Army Airfield and was known as Precision Bombing Range No. 3. After creation of the U.S. Air Force in 1947, the range became known as Mountain Home AFR No. 3. The range was used until November 1953. The range was relinquished to the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management on 30 November 1956 (USACE).
- In December 1998, Mountain Home Air Force Base reacquired two parcels of the former Mountain Home AFR No. 3 (Section 21 (640 acres) and a one acre lot within Section 15), from the Bureau of Land Management for use as No-Drop 1 – Tactical Training Range. This reacquired land is not included as part of the FUDS property. Therefore, the initial property size of the former range listed in the MMRP Inventory is reduced from 2,563.3 acres to 1,919 acres (USACE, 2004).

## Historical Military Use

- After acquisition, the Bombardment Groups based at Mountain Home Army Airfield were allowed to practice bomb at this range. Aerial photography indicates the bombing range had a target center with concentric circles, with each circle approximately 200 feet diameter larger than the previous circle, out to the final 1,000-foot circle (USACE, 2004b).
- World War II (WWII) bombing ranges consisted of a circular area with a radius of 3,000 ft and consisted of a 649 acre area. The target was located at the center of this circular area (U.S. Army 1945). From studies completed in WWII, 99 percent of the bombs should be found within 3,000 feet for bombers flying at 25,000 feet or below and at speeds up to 250 mph. The same study implied a 2,000-foot radius should include 95 percent of the bombs under the same conditions (U.S. Army 1942).

- A 1945 historical document states the bombardiers training at Mountain Home Army Airfield were required to drop individual high altitude, individual low altitude and train release bombs in formation. The bombardiers training at Mountain Home Army Airfield were required to drop individual high altitude, individual low altitude and train release bombs in formation. The bombardiers were required to do individual formation and formation train bombing while navigators are required to drop five individual high, five individual high formation and two high altitude train bombs in formation.
- A letter from Headquarters 9<sup>th</sup> Air Base Group, dated 24 November 1953, refers to a 23 October 1946 inspection of the range for live or unexploded ordnance, which concluded with the statement that the range had not been used for any purpose which might result in its being contaminated by live bombs or other explosives since 23 October 1946 (9<sup>th</sup> Air Base Group, Headquarters 1953).

### **Project History**

- **Revised Inventory Project Report (USACE, 2003)**

A Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP) FUDS Draft Inventory Project Report (INPR) for the Mountain Home AFR No. 3 was completed in January 2003. The findings determined that the site had been formerly used by the DoD and was therefore eligible under the DERP program. A Risk Assessment Code (RAC) of 4 was assigned to the bombing range.

- **Preliminary Assessment Report (USACE, 2005)**

USACE completed a Preliminary Assessment Report (PAR) in September 2005 to assess the presence or absence of contamination from facility activities. The PAR included a visit to the site on August 24, 2004. The primary purpose of the site visit was to assess the presence of MEC through non-intrusive means. Interviews, historical research, and site reconnaissance determined:

- The U.S. Army Air Corps used conventional ordnance at Mountain Home AFR No. 3.
- Known munitions utilized on the former Mountain Home AFR No.3 consist of 100-lb Practice bombs (M38A2) and Spotting charges (M1A1).

No evidence for the use of chemical warfare materials storage or use at the range exists.