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Corps plans Site Inspection of former Central Oregon Gunnery Range

Informational meeting scheduled July 17

PORTLAND, Ore. — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is evaluating Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) that had historically been used for military training. One of these sites is the Central Oregon Air to Air Gunnery Range Military Reservation (COGR), located in Lake County, near Lakeview, Ore.

The Corps will do this evaluation by conducting a Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP), Site Investigation (SI). The SI will be conducted in the next few months by a Corps contractor, Shaw Environmental. The work to be performed will include access to and a visual inspection of property that was part of the COGR. The inspection may also include soil and/or water sampling.

Corps project manager Mike Nelson said, “The SI will be used to determine what future work the Corps may do to clean-up possible munitions related components and chemical constituents used during training.” The Corps of Engineers investigates and evaluates sites contaminated with hazardous waste, radioactive waste, and/or ordnance according to with federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations.

In order to begin the SI the Corps will be contacting property owners of the COGR and request the owner to provide a signed Department of the Army Right of Entry (ROE) Investigation and Sampling.

Additionally, a public informational meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 17, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Lakeview Interagency Office, 1301 South G Street, Lakeview, Ore., to provide the public an overview of the MMRP, SI process and ROE request information.

In 1942, the U.S. Army acquired about 797,000 acres of land for use as an aerial gunnery range. The COGR was "designated as an urgent national defense need" (Burns Times Herald 1942). The former range is situated 48 miles southwest of Burns and 35 miles north of Lakeview, Ore. It is bounded by Highway 395 on the east, State Highway 31 on the south and west, and a Lake County road on the north. The site served as an aerial gunnery range to include air to air and air to ground training and it is possible that it may have been utilized to some extent for air-to-ground practice bombing training. A portion of the former COGR occupies the dry bed of Alkali Lake. The Army declared the property surplus in June of 1947.

More information will be available about the COGR on Portland District's website at <https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/pa/fuds>.

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