

**FINAL
DECISION DOCUMENT
FORMER MORTAR FIRING POINT, PARCEL 105Q-X, AND
FORMER DEFENDAM RANGE (EASTERN), PARCEL 225Q
FORT McCLELLAN, CALHOUN COUNTY, ALABAMA**

ISSUED BY: THE U. S. ARMY

APRIL 2007

**U.S. ARMY ANNOUNCES
DECISION DOCUMENT**

This Decision Document presents the determination that remedial action is unnecessary to protect human health and the environment at the Former Mortar Firing Point, Parcel 105Q-X, and Former Defendam Range (Eastern), Parcel 225Q, located at the former Fort McClellan (FTMC) in Calhoun County, Alabama. In addition, this Decision Document provides the site background information used as the basis for the no further action decision with regard to hazardous substances regulated under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). The site location at FTMC is shown on Figure 1.

This Decision Document is issued by the U.S. Army Transition Force at FTMC with involvement by the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Cleanup Team (BCT). The BCT consists of representatives from the U.S. Army, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 4, and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM). The BCT is responsible for planning and implementing environmental investigations at FTMC.

Based on the results of a site investigation (SI) completed at the Former Mortar Firing Point, Parcel 105Q-X, and Former Defendam Range (Eastern), Parcel 225Q, the U.S. Army will implement no further action at the site with regard to CERCLA-regulated hazardous substances. This decision was made by the U.S. Army with concurrence by the BCT.

This Decision Document summarizes site information presented in detail in background documents that are part of the administrative record for the Former Mortar Firing Point, Parcel 105Q-X, and Former Defendam Range (Eastern), Parcel 225Q. The background documents for Parcels 105Q-X and 225Q are listed on Page 2 and are available at the public repositories listed on Page 3.

**REGULATIONS GOVERNING
SITE**

The former FTMC is undergoing closure by the BRAC Commission under Public Laws 100-526 and 101-510. The 1990 Base Closure Act, Public Law 101-510, established the process by which U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) installations would be

closed or realigned. The BRAC Environmental Restoration Program requires investigation and cleanup of federal properties prior to transfer to the public domain. In addition, the Community Environmental Response Facilitation Act (CERFA), Public Law 102-426, requires federal agencies to identify real property on military installations scheduled for closure that can be transferred to the public for redevelopment or reuse. Consequently, the U.S. Army is conducting environmental studies of the impact of suspected contaminants at parcels at FTMC. The BRAC Environmental Restoration Program at FTMC follows the CERCLA process.

SITE BACKGROUND

The former FTMC is located in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains of northeastern Alabama near the cities of Anniston and Weaver in Calhoun County. FTMC consisted of three main areas: Main Post, Pelham Range, and Choccolocco Corridor, a 4,488-acre tract of land that was leased from the State of Alabama until May 1998. The Main Post, which occupied 18,929 acres, is bounded on the east by the Choccolocco Corridor, which previously connected the Main Post with the Talladega National

PRIMARY BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS FOR PARCELS 105Q-X AND 225Q

Environmental Science and Engineering, Inc. (ESE), 1998, *Environmental Baseline Survey, Fort McClellan, Alabama*, Final, January.

IT Corporation, 2000, *Human Health and Ecological Screening Values and PAH Background Summary Report, Fort McClellan, Calhoun County, Alabama*, Final, July.

Science Applications International Corporation, 1998, *Background Metals Survey Report, Fort McClellan, Alabama*, Final, July.

Shaw Environmental, Inc. (Shaw), 2006, *Site Investigation Report, Former Mortar Firing Point, Parcel 105Q-X, and Former Defend Range (Eastern), Parcel 225Q, Fort McClellan, Calhoun County, Alabama*, Final, November.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2001, *Archives Search Report Maps (Revision 1), Fort McClellan, Anniston, Alabama*, September.

Forest. Pelham Range, which occupies 22,245 acres, is located approximately 5 miles due west of the former Main Post and adjoins the Anniston Army Depot to the south.

The Former Mortar Firing Point, Parcel 105Q-X, and Former Defend Range (Eastern), Parcel 225Q, are located in the northeastern area of the FTMC Main Post (Figure 1). Including its extensive range safety fan, Parcel 225Q encompasses approximately 2,500 acres; however, the SI study area was limited to an area of approximately 40 acres consisting of the firing line and the possible impact area for the former range. Parcel 105Q-X is located just north of the firing line area of Parcel 225Q.

Parcel 105Q-X. According to the *Final Environmental Baseline Survey, Fort McClellan, Alabama* (EBS), the Former Mortar Firing Point, Parcel 105Q-X, identified as a point with no acreage in the EBS, is located at French Hill

Quarry on the Main Post. Dates of operation and types of ordnance fired are not known (ESE, 1998). During the SI, two weapons suspected to be either 40-millimeter (mm) or 57mm guns were observed just north of the parcel. Two trenches, approximately 3- to 5-feet deep, were also observed just north of Parcel 105Q-X, in the area of the guns. A berm was present along the south side of the southernmost trench. Excavated cells, with possible M-16 rifle blank ammunition on the cell floors, were visible along the southeastern slope of the berm.

Additional information provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicates that this area was originally a chert or rock pit prior to the 1980s. In the early 1980s it was reclaimed with a strip-mining seed mixture. Presently, weeping love grass dominates the surface. During the late 1980s, the Alabama Army National Guard established a camp training area on this site to simulate a base camp

like those constructed in Vietnam. Several coils of barbed wire were strung around the camp. Bunkers and gun emplacements were located within the wires. However, most of the wire and some of the guns were removed at the time of Base closure in 1999. Reportedly, live-fire training exercises did not occur at this location during the 1980s and 1990s (Shaw, 2006).

Parcel 225Q. The Former Defend Range (Eastern), Parcel 225Q, appears on the 1946 Reservation Map near the northern post boundary and the western slope of the Choccolocco Mountains. The range orientation suggests that the direction of fire was to the south-southeast. According to the EBS, the layout of the firing line and the wide field-of-fire suggest that this was a machine-gun range. With the exception of the 1946 Reservation Map, no other information was available regarding the dates of use or ordnance used at this range (ESE, 1998).

**PUBLIC INFORMATION REPOSITORIES
FOR FORT McCLELLAN**

Anniston Calhoun County Public Library

Reference Section

Anniston, Alabama 36201

Point of Contact: Ms. Sunny Addison

Telephone: (256) 237-8501

Fax: (256) 238-0474

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sunday 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Houston Cole Library

9th Floor

Jacksonville State University

700 Pelham Road

Jacksonville, Alabama 36265

Point of Contact: Ms. Paula Barnett-Ellis (256) 782-5249

Hours of Operation: Monday – Thursday 7:30 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Friday 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 3:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.

During SI site reconnaissance conducted in January 2002, numerous physical features and training aids were observed at Parcel 225Q. An area of soil disturbance containing a crescent-shaped mound and a cable embedded in the ground were seen near the northeastern end of the former firing line. Near the center of the former firing line, an area of five mounds, approximately 3 to 5 feet high, and concrete slab pieces were observed. Five pits were noted just south of the five mounds.

In the eastern portion of the SI study area, 12 items identified by unexploded ordnance (UXO) personnel as 81mm mortars were found on the ground surface. The mortars appeared to be unfuzed and were suspected to be practice

mortars. Numerous vehicle-body parts, apparently used as targets, were observed west of the mortars along an intermittent stream that runs northwest through Parcel 225Q (Shaw, 2006).

**SCOPE AND ROLE OF
PARCEL**

Information developed from the EBS was used to group areas at FTMC into standardized parcel categories using DOD guidance. All parcels received a parcel designation for one of seven CERFA categories or a non-CERCLA qualifier designation, as appropriate. Parcels 105Q-X and 225Q were categorized as CERFA Category 1 Qualified parcels in the EBS. CERFA Category 1 Qualified parcels are areas that have no evidence of CERCLA-

regulated hazardous substance or petroleum product storage, release, or disposal, but do have other environmental or safety concerns (ESE, 1998). Parcels 105Q-X and 225Q were qualified for the potential presence of chemicals of concern (e.g., lead) as a result of historical range activities. Parcel 105Q-X was also qualified "X" for the potential presence of UXO.

With the issuance of this Decision Document, Parcels 105Q-X and 225Q will remain CERFA Category 1 Qualified parcels.

SITE INVESTIGATION

An SI was conducted at the Former Mortar Firing Point, Parcel 105Q-X, and Former Defendamm Range (Eastern), Parcel 225Q, to determine whether chemical

constituents are present at the site as a result of historical mission-related Army activities (Shaw, 2006). The SI consisted of the collection of 23 surface and depositional soil samples, 20 subsurface soil samples, 3 surface water samples, and 3 sediment samples. All samples were analyzed for potential range-related constituents, namely metals and explosive compounds; approximately 10 percent of the samples were analyzed for a broader list of constituents, including volatile organic compounds (VOC), semivolatile organic compounds (SVOC), pesticides, and herbicides. Sediment samples were analyzed for TOC and grain size.

Metals and a limited number of VOCs and pesticides were detected in site media. SVOCs, explosives, and herbicides were not detected in any of the samples. To determine the presence or absence of contamination, the analytical results were compared to human health site-specific screening levels (SSSL) and ecological screening values (ESV) for FTMC (IT Corporation, 2000). The SSSLs and ESVs were developed as part of human health and ecological risk evaluations associated with investigations performed under the BRAC Environmental Restoration Program at FTMC. Additionally, metals concentrations exceeding SSSLs and ESVs were compared to FTMC background values (Science Applications International Corporation, 1998). Site metals data were further evaluated using statistical and geochemical methods to determine if the metals detected in site samples were naturally occurring

or if they contained a component of contamination. A preliminary ecological risk assessment (PERA) was also performed to further evaluate potential risks to ecological receptors.

Constituents detected at concentrations exceeding SSSLs and background values were identified as chemicals of potential concern (COPC) in site media. COPCs were limited to three metals (aluminum, chromium, and manganese) in surface soil and seven metals (aluminum, antimony, chromium, iron, manganese, thallium, and vanadium) in subsurface soil. However, the statistical and geochemical evaluation determined that these metals were present at naturally occurring levels. Therefore, the SI concluded that these metals were not expected to pose a site-related threat to human health. Detected concentrations of VOCs and pesticides in site media were all below SSSLs.

The PERA did not identify any constituents of potential ecological concern (COPEC) in surface soil, surface water, and sediment. Exposures to subsurface soil were considered unlikely for potential ecological receptors at this site. The rationale for not selecting any COPECs was based on the comparison of detected constituent concentrations to established ESVs for FTMC, the results of the statistical and geochemical evaluation, and consideration of additional lines of evidence.

SITE REMEDIAL ACTIONS

Remedial actions were not conducted at the Former Mortar

Firing Point, Parcel 105Q-X, and Former Defendang Range (Eastern), Parcel 225Q.

DECLARATION

Remedial alternatives were not developed for Parcels 105Q-X and 225Q because remedial action for CERCLA-regulated hazardous substances is unnecessary at this site. The no-action alternative protects human health and the environment, complies with relevant federal and state regulations, and has no cost. This remedy will not leave in place hazardous substances at concentrations that require limiting future site use or that require land-use control restrictions. The site is released for unrestricted land reuse with regard to CERCLA-regulated hazardous substances. The U.S. Army will not take any further action to investigate, remediate, or monitor the Former Mortar Firing Point, Parcel 105Q-X, and Former Defendang Range (Eastern), Parcel 225Q.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Any questions or comments concerning this Decision Document or other documents in the administrative record can be directed to:

Mr. Scott Bolton
Fort McClellan Site Manager
Tel: (256) 848-3847

e-mail: scott.j.bolton@us.army.mil

ACRONYMS

ADEM	Alabama Department of Environmental Management
BCT	BRAC Cleanup Team
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CERFA	Community Environmental Response Facilitation Act
COPC	chemical of potential concern
COPEC	constituent of potential ecological concern
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
EBS	environmental baseline survey
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESE	Environmental Science and Engineering, Inc.
ESV	ecological screening value
FTMC	Fort McClellan
mm	millimeter
PERA	preliminary ecological risk assessment
Shaw	Shaw Environmental, Inc.
SI	site investigation
SSSL	site-specific screening level
SVOC	semivolatile organic compound
UXO	unexploded ordnance
VOC	volatile organic compound

Prepared under direction of:

Lee D. Coker
Environmental Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District
Mobile, Alabama

Date

Reviewed by:

Scott J. Bolton
Site Manager
Fort McClellan, Alabama

Date

Approved by:

Thomas E. Lederle
Chief, Industrial Conveyance Branch
Army BRAC Division

Date

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- LEGEND**
- — UNIMPROVED ROAD
 - — PAVED ROAD AND PARKING
 - ▭ PARCEL BOUNDARY
 - ▨ AREA OF INVESTIGATION
 - — SURFACE DRAINAGE / CREEK

FIGURE 1
 SITE LOCATION MAP
 FORMER MORTAR FIRING POINT
 PARCEL 105Q-X
 FORMER DEFENDAM RANGE
 (EASTERN), PARCEL 225Q

U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
 MOBILE DISTRICT
 FORT McCLELLAN
 CALHOUN COUNTY, ALABAMA
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