

Bob Hudecheck
Wilderness/Backcountry Volunteer, 1996

ORDNANCE REMOVAL: JULY 5, 1996

On July 5, 1996 a "live" ordnance was detonated in the Dolly Sods North Area. The location of the site was approximately 1 1/2 - 2 miles in along the "jeep road", about 300 yards south were and old railroad grade intersects the trail at a T intersection near Bear Rocks Scenic Overlook. The jeep road is located around 300 feet from the Bear Rocks parking lot and is the major trail running west into this area. Around 2:30 p.m. two Army personnel and I detonated a 4.2 inch Hte M329 ordnance. There was a loud boom!! which was expected because the round was live. After making visitor contacts in the Dolly Sods Wilderness Area on July 6 & 7 I learned that the sound of the explosion was heard in the upper portions of the Red Creek drainage. Since this was the Fourth of July weekend visitors had thought that it was just a firework and were not alarmed. The resource damage was at a minimum due to the site location on a rocky well established road/old railroad grade. A crater 3 feet in diameter and about 1 foot deep was left after the demolition. I raked the debris which consisted of rock and soil back into the hole and the site is now unnoticeable. The area was also checked for the Cheat Mountain Salamander before demolition continued and none were found. Overall resource disturbance was at a minimum, area was naturalized and the only effect this operation could have to this location was the loud noise the explosion made. Since this area is also used for hunting, I do not believe this caused any problems.

Safety procedures for this operation are as follows. The minimal amount of people required to destroy the ordnance were used (2 Army personnel, 1 Forest Service Employee). Once the ordnance was located it was identified and the proper precautions and actions took place based on the knowledge of the Army personnel. Once the C-4 was secured to the ordnance and the charges set one officer went down the road the opposite direction about 300 yards to warn visitors (there were none), and the other officer and I walk up the road 400 yards to stay clear of scrap metal and to warn visitors. Before the demolition occurred we yelled "fire in the hole, fire in the hole" to send out a warning then the ordnance was destroyed.

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Fax Cover Sheet

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NOTES: *Here's the report that Bob Hudachek wrote on the UXO dispersal.*

Managing Ecosystems for Today and Tomorrow