

Fact Sheet

Ordnance Removal Action Dolly Sods Wilderness Area, West Virginia

In August 1996, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will perform a Removal Action for ordnance that was discovered in the Dolly Sods Wilderness Area during an investigation in 1991. Ordnance found included 4.2", 81mm, and 60mm mortar rounds, and a 57mm projectile. During this removal action project, the Corps' contractor, Human Factors Applications, Inc., will detonate ordnance and remove the scrap along hiking trails and within camping areas.

Approximately 21 miles of recorded hiking trails will be cleared to a depth of one foot and 20 feet on each side. There are 101 recorded camping areas that will be cleared to a depth of 4 feet.

Safety is the Corps' greatest concern. Work areas will be closed to the public during the removal action. The contractors are highly skilled in their field and receive daily safety briefings. Their work and safety plans have been reviewed by the Corps to assure that the project is accomplished thoroughly and safely. Corps ordnance experts also perform periodic quality checks of the contractors work.

Background

Dolly Sods is located in Grant, Tucker and Randolph Counties, WV. The U.S. Forest Service operates the wilderness area, which contains 10,215 acres and is open to the public at all times. The area was used for military maneuvers during World War II by the Department of the Army. The site was selected for study based on the findings by the Huntington District Corps of Engineers that ordnance remained at the site due to the former use by the Army.

During WWII, about 2 million acres in the vicinity of Dolly Sods were used by the Thirteenth Army Corps of the Third Army for mountain training and maneuvers, including firing of artillery and mortars. This training continued from Oct. 15, 1943 to July 1, 1944. Records on all of the military operations are scarce, but it is known that the artillery fire targets near the Dolly Sods Wilderness Area included the southern face of Blackbird Knob and the eastern face of Cabin Mountain.

Defense Environmental Restoration

In 1986, Congress established the Defense Environmental Restoration program (DERP) under Public Laws 99-190 and 99-499. Under that program, there are two subprograms, the Installation Restoration Program (IRP), for active military sites, and the Formerly Used Defense Sites Program (FUDS), for sites formerly used by the Department of Defense. The FUDS program has three major activities:

- Remove hazardous and toxic waste;
- Demolish and remove unsafe buildings and debris;
- Remove ordnance and explosive waste.

The Huntsville Ordnance and Explosives Center, Army Corps of Engineers, is responsible for ordnance activities. The Huntsville team of engineers and other specialists study sites throughout the country to determine whether ordnance contamination exists. In cooperation with the local Corps District, public officials and interested citizens, the Center determines possible contamination, develops hazard remediation plans, and oversees project execution.

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