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RECURRING REVIEW
PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND
PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

**DOLLY SODS REGION,
FORMER WEST VIRGINIA MANEUVER AREA**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) solicits input from the community on the conclusions and recommendations resulting from a recent recurring review study. The study purpose is to ensure that an implemented 1997 to 1998 ordnance removal action in the Dolly Sods region continues to minimize explosives safety risks, and continues to be protective of human health, safety, and the environment.

The USACE has set a public comment period for the draft final recurring review report from June 2 to July 1, 2004 to encourage public participation in the process. The report is available for public review at the U.S. Forest Service Office, and the project public repository, which are located at:

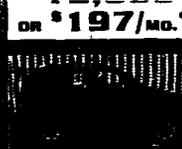
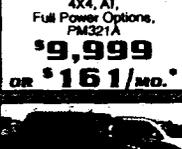
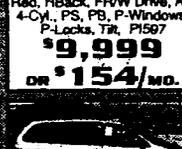
Monongahela National Forest Headquarters
200 Sycamore Street
Elkins, WV 26241

The report is also available by contacting the USACE Huntington District:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Attn: Erich Guy (CELRH-EC-CE)
502 Eighth Street
Huntington, WV 25701
Phone: 304-399-5283

The comment period includes one meeting, open to the general public, at which the USACE will present study findings, answer questions, and accept both oral and written comments. The public meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2004 at 7:00 p.m., and will be held at the conference center of the Blackwater Lodge, located in Blackwater Falls State Park, Davis, WV. Comments from the public will be summarized and responses provided in the responsiveness summary section of the final recurring review report. The report presents the USACE's conclusions and recommendations for further action at the site. To send written comments or obtain further information, contact:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Attn: Rick Meadows (CELRH-PM-P)
502 Eighth Street
Huntington, WV 25701

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Strategies for Public Awareness and Education Concerning Unexploded Ordnance Risk in the Former West Virginia Maneuver Area



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District
Environmental Restoration, Formerly Used Defense Sites
 Mail: 502 Eighth Street, Huntington, West Virginia 25701-2070
 Phone: 1-800-822-8413; Web: www.lrh.usace.army.mil/projects/fuds

Overview

Unique challenges are faced when unexploded ordnance (UXO) exists on land used by the public. With the increasing interest in outdoor activities like hiking and camping on land having risk due to UXO presence, we are challenged with properly informing the public of the risk while at the same time not scaring them to the point that they are afraid to enjoy the land for its intended uses. This presentation uses the Dolly Sods Region (DSR) of the former West Virginia Maneuver Area (WVMA) as a case study. Its purposes are to provide examples of some of the tools being developed and used by the project team, and to promote an exchange of ideas regarding traditional and innovative ways to educate the public about UXO-related risk without alarming them.

Dolly Sods Region: Description and History



Fig. 1. Dolly Sods Region overlaid on USGS (1996-99) Digital Orthophoto Quarter Quads.

- The 18,652 acre DSR of the former WVMA is located in the Monongahela National Forest of West Virginia (Fig. 1).
- During 1943-44, WWII military maneuver exercises and artillery/mortar practice were conducted in the DSR by the U.S. Department of the Army.
- Ordnance-related risk has been illustrated by a sporadic but continuous discovery of UXO in the DSR (Fig. 2).
- The DSR, with elevations between 2600 and 4100 feet, is well known for its rocky plains, upland bogs and sweeping vistas (Fig. 3). Between 45,000 and 76,000 people visit the DSR for recreation purposes annually.



Fig. 2. Typical shapes and sizes of UXO used and found in the DSR. Lengths of UXO in the DSR vary up to 23 inches.



Fig. 3. Typical scenic views at Dolly Sods: Red Creek (top) and Bear Rocks (bottom).

Recent U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Response Action and Recurring Review



Fig. 4. 1997-98 UXO location in DSR using magnetometry (top), and demolition of found 4.2" mortar (middle, bottom).



Fig. 5. Designated and maintained trails in the DSR cleared for ordnance during 1997-98.

- An ordnance removal action, focused on significant reduction of public risk, was completed in 1997-98 (Fig. 4).
- Designated trails (55.8 miles, 270.5 acres) and 178 inventoried campsites were cleared in the DSR (Fig. 5). 22 live and 19 inert mortars, and 1151.5 pounds of ordnance-related scrap were found and removed (Fig. 4).
- A complete removal of ordnance was not possible due to environmental damage, cost, and technology limitations. Therefore, periodic reviews of the site (Fig. 6) and education of individuals who use the DSR are necessary.
- The 2003-04 review (Fig. 6) concluded that the 1997-98 removal action is still protective of human health, safety, and the environment. Recommendations for improving institutional controls, increasing public awareness, and educating the community were made; such programs are being implemented to ensure continued public safety.



Fig. 6. Recurring review field assessment (top), and GPS and GIS application (middle, bottom).

