

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region III
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Wednesday, February 4, 2009

From: Dominic Ventura

Subject: Continuation of Work
Elkton Farm Firehole
183 Zeitler Rd., Elkton, MD
Latitude: 39.6292184
Longitude: -75.8681150

POLREP No.:	71	Site #:	A3DH RV
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:	
Start Date:		Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:		Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

Work Mission Statement:

Safely and efficiently investigate and remove Munitions and Explosives of Concern (MEC); Materials Potentially Possessing an Explosive Hazard (MPPEH), Munitions Debris (MD) and explosively contaminated soil(TNT) from the Elkton Farms Firehole Site, as defined in EPA's geophysical study.

Background:

The Elkton Farm Firehole site is located two miles northwest of Elkton, Maryland near the intersection of Routes 40 and 279. The Firehole Site occupies approximately 55-acres of the 400-acre Elkton Farm and is located just south of Zeitler Road between Little Elk Creek and Laurel Run. The most recent use of the Site has been as a working farm. During the decade before and during World War II, the parcel had been the site of activity related to the manufacture of fireworks and munitions. Investigations performed in 2006 by the Army Corps of Engineers identified an area on the current Elkton Farm as the Firehole. The Firehole was documented as an area for the disposal of waste explosives material during and just after WWII. Ordinance related material was observed scattered on the ground throughout the site.

On April 24, 2007 EPA mobed to the site with its regional ERRS cleanup contractor, Guardian Environmental and its UXO subcontractor, USA Environmental to complete munitions of explosive concern identification, avoidance and disposal activities. On December 21, 2007 the site was demobed for the Christmas holiday. The site was remobed on January 28, 2008. On May 2, 2008 a trommel mechanical sifter was mobilized to the site. The Trommel is being used to separate MEC and MD from site soils. EPA entered into an AOC with the property owner on August 8, 2008 in which the property owner agreed to complete work as described in Appendix K of the Site Work Plan. The property owner's contractor began scraping grids on August 11, 2008 using a pan scraper. The OSC provided direction to the property owner on which grids were to be scraped and to which depth. The depth of scraping ranged from 8" – 16" based on magnetometer surveys and depending on how deep MEC and MD were found in each area. Scraped soils were staged on a predetermined area of the site pending trommel sifting. A total of 46 grids were scraped (11 were partial grids). Pan scraping activities as outlined in Appendix K of the Work and excavation of the fireholes are now complete. Sifting of scraped soils is now complete.

Current Activities

Contractors completed sifting of site soils. Clearing and QA/QC of grids in the areas surrounding where the Trommel sifter was previously located is ongoing. Poor weather and site conditions have slowed work progress. Contractors have begun demobing equipment and contractors as work tasks are completed. It is anticipated that field activities will be complete and the site fully demobed by the end of February 2009.

The following materials have been processed/recovered to date:

Total Grids Cleared Gov't QA: 170

Total MEC found: 351,916 (MEC items include detonators, grenade fuse, blasting caps, tracer elements, incendiary bomblets, flares etc. etc.)

Firehole MEC found: 14,322 (incl. 13,974 tracers)

Total MD found: 40,627 lbs

Scrap metal found: 22,356 lbs.

Total Phase II processed soils: 34,253 cy

Trommel Sifting Activities:

Trommel sifting operations were completed on January 22, 2009 and the Trommel was mobed off site on January 29, 2009. Of the approximately 252,029 MEC items recovered off the trommel since it was mobilized, 249,928 are tracers. In addition 56 fused 40mm and 112 fused 20mm artillery items were found via this sifting operation and placed in the on site explosive magazines. Trommel sifting operations are expected to be completed by the end of December 2008. QA/QC was performed on several grids that were previously covered with the unprocessed soil pile.

Grid Clearance and QA/QC Activities:

UXO Techs are currently clearing and conducting QA/QC of grids in the area of the site where the Trommel sifter was previously located. Approximately 3 grids remain that need to be cleared and pass QA/QC.

MEC Burn Activities:

On January 20 and 21, 2009 MEC stored on site in magazines which was not suitable for shipment off site was burned in buried concrete boxes. Some material was also detonated using explosives. The burning and detonation of MEC items was conducted to ensure that all explosive constituents in MEC were removed prior to shipment off site. These operations were conducted by trained UXO Techs.

Disposal Activities:

On December 16-18, 2008 approximately 160 tons of Soil containing low concentrations of TNT was transported off site for disposal as non-hazardous waste. Approximately 52 drums of MEC containing mainly tracers was also shipped off site for disposal as hazardous waste at an appropriate facility. Additional MEC and munitions debris will be disposed of prior to completion of site work.

Next Steps

- Dispose of remaining MEC and MD.
- Conduct burn of any remaining items stored in magazines.
- Remaining MEC items in magazines will be treated on site prior to shipment off site for disposal.
- Clearing and QA/QC of grids will be completed.
- Site will be demobed.
- Property owner will regrade site and re-vegetate as agreed upon in Appendix K of the Work Plan.

response.epa.gov/elktonfarmfirehole