

**FINAL
OPERATIONAL RANGE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
PHASE I QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT REPORT
WILDCAT HILLS STATE RECREATION AREA LOCAL
TRAINING AREA
GERING, NEBRASKA**

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Prepared for:

UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, BALTIMORE DISTRICT
P.O. Box 1715
Baltimore, Maryland 21203

and

UNITED STATES ARMY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMAND
Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland 21010

Prepared by:

EARTH RESOURCES TECHNOLOGY, INC.
10810 Guilford Road, Suite 105
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701



ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ARID-GEO	Army Range Inventory Database-Geodatabase
CFMO	Construction and Facilities Management Office
CSM	Conceptual Site Model
DoD	Department of Defense
LTA	Local Training Area
LUA	Land Use Agreement
MCOC	Munitions Constituents of Concern
NEARNG	Nebraska Army National Guard
NGPC	Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
ORAP	Operational Range Assessment Program
U.S.	United States
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States (U.S.) Army is conducting qualitative assessments at operational ranges to meet the requirements of Department of Defense policy and to support the U.S. Army Sustainable Range Program. The operational range qualitative assessment (hereinafter referred to as Phase I Assessment) is the first phase of the U.S. Army Operational Range Assessment Program. This Phase I Assessment evaluates the operational range area at Wildcat Hills State Recreation Local Training Area (LTA), referred to as Wildcat Hills LTA, to assess whether further investigation is needed to determine if potential munitions constituents of concern (MCOC) are or could be migrating off-range at levels that may pose an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment. In conducting the Phase I Assessment, MCOC sources, potential off-range migration pathways, and potential off-range human and ecological receptors are evaluated as appropriate.

Wildcat Hills LTA lies in western Nebraska. According to the Army Range Inventory Database-Geodatabase from 2007, Wildcat Hills LTA encompasses approximately 853 acres; however, based on information obtained during the site visit, the boundary was updated on 21 November 2007 to encompass 666.57 acres. The training area lies predominantly in Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska, with a small, southern portion lying in Banner County, Nebraska. The closest city is Gering, eight miles north of the installation. The installation is not considered to lie in a city or township; however it uses Gering as its mailing address (Personal Communication 2008, NGPC Personnel). There are two ranges encompassing a total operational range area of 673.5 acres. One range is a light maneuver/training area encompassing 666.57 acres; the other is a miscellaneous training range encompassing 6.93 acres. The ranges overlap; hence, the sum of range areas is greater than the total installation acreage. Neither range is currently being used due to termination of the land use agreement (LUA).

Wildcat Hills LTA is used for training via LUA between the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) and the State of Nebraska Military Department. The operational ranges have not been used since 29 February 2006 due to termination of the LUA. As stated in the LUA, the only military munitions authorized for use at Wildcat Hills LTA were small caliber blanks; the units were to remove all brass casings when training was completed (Personal Communication 2008, NGPC Personnel). Because historic training activities involved blank munitions only, there is no potential source of MCOC. Therefore, potential off-range migration pathways and potential off-range human and ecological receptors were not evaluated, and the ranges at Wildcat Hills LTA are categorized as Unlikely. The Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG) has expressed interest in using Wildcat Hills LTA for training purposes in the future.

Installations with operational ranges where no munitions or only small caliber blanks have been utilized are categorized as Unlikely. That is, based on a review of available information, there is sufficient evidence to show that due to the lack of munitions use there are no known releases or source-receptor interactions that could present an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment. Ranges categorized as Unlikely are required to be re-evaluated at least every five years. Re-evaluation may occur sooner if significant changes (e.g., change in range operations or site conditions, regulatory changes) occur that affect determinations made during this Phase I Assessment.

Table ES-1 summarizes the Phase I Assessment findings.

Table ES-1: Summary of Findings and Conclusions for Wildcat Hills LTA

Category	Total Number of Ranges and Acreage	Source(s)	Pathways(s)	Human and Ecological Receptors	Conclusions
Unlikely	Two operational ranges; 673.5 acres	No source—no current or historical use of live-fire military munitions	Not evaluated (no source identified)		Re-evaluate during the five-year review.