



# Guardian

America's First Choice for Environmental Restoration

A Publication of the Environmental Restoration Program

Travis Air Force Base, California

October 2013

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## Acronyms

**AFCEC:** The Air Force Civil Engineer Center is a 1600-person field operating agency responsible for providing responsive, flexible, full-spectrum installation engineering services.

**ROD:** A Record of Decision is a document that explains and legally commits a lead agency to the cleanup alternatives to be used at a site. The Travis AFB Groundwater ROD will be signed by representatives of the Air Force, U.S. EPA, and state environmental agencies.



(Photo by Lonnie Duke)

**Well Preps:** Drill rig operators prepare an extraction well for service by flushing out the fine-grained material from the well screen. Eventually, the well will be connected to an existing extraction well network, wired into an electronic control system, and brought on-line.

## The Five-Year Checkup

### A Second Set of Eyes Verifies Cleanup Program is on Track

By Glenn Anderson

Travis Environmental Project Manager

There are a lot of things that we can do to maintain good health. Eating nutrient-rich foods, getting at least 7 hours of sleep a night, and exercising a half hour or more a day are the common attributes of a healthy lifestyle. One attribute that is often ignored, especially among men, is the annual doctor visit.

Why is the doctor visit so important? Because doctors are trained to spot health problems while they are still in the early stages of development and to correct them while they are still manageable.

Because health care professionals have access to the latest medical tests and equipment that can identify problems before symptoms are noticed. And because most problems develop very slowly, and a doctor can see obvious problems that have been around for a long time and we have slowly adapted to them.

Similarly, it is important for an environmental cleanup program to periodically receive a "check-up" to verify that it is protecting human health and the environment. Known as a "Five-Year Review" (FYR), this evaluation is required by federal environmental law and is conducted whenever hazardous substances are pres-

See **FIVE-YEAR** page 3

Visit our Environmental Restoration Program web site at <http://www.travis.af.mil/enviro>



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The *Guardian* is published by the 60<sup>th</sup> Civil Engineer Squadron's Environmental Restoration Team. The newsletter is designed to inform and educate the public about the base's ongoing environmental cleanup program. Contents expressed herein are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force. Additional information about the program can be obtained from the public web site at <http://www.travis.af.mil/enviro>. Questions and comments about the program may be sent to this address:

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# Transformation Update

"Hi, I'm from the IST, and I am here to help!"

Normally, when a representative from a three-letter government agency (like the NSA or IRS) introduces themselves and offers their assistance in your life, your initial reaction might be to turn and run! But, as I described in the July Viewpoint, my team and I are the newest members of the Western Region Installation Support Team (or IST) under the Air Force Civil Engineer Center (AFCEC) in San Antonio. As members of the IST, we are ready to continue the cleanup work on Travis AFB and take on any new assignments.

Sometime prior to the end of this year, we'll be assigned to support the cleanup efforts at Beale AFB. A logical choice, given Beale's close proximity to Travis and our common California EPA regulatory agency. As our IST duties evolve and we become more proficient in our support role, we expect our workload will increase.

Of course, there is still a lot of work to do before our transition to AFCEC is complete. We are still moving documents and files into a new set of offices, and there are still a few base support issues that need to be resolved. However, our computers are connected to the Travis AFB network, and the phones have a dial tone, so for all intents and purposes, we are up and running.

Throughout this period of transition, we made sure that all important projects were kept on the front burner and received the attention they deserved. For example, we are working on a groundwater Record of Decision with our three environmental regulatory agency partners. Once we reach agreement on a few remaining legal comments, we will be sending out a draft final copy that, once signed by all parties, will complete the remedy selection process and allow us to build the infrastructure for the final groundwater cleanup actions. Something I've been promising for a long time. All I can say is that good things take time.

We were also staying active in the field by installing new extraction wells to speed up the cleanup of contaminated groundwater that remains outside the base boundary. To clean up groundwater on off-base prop-



## VIEWPOINT

Mark H. Smith  
Travis AFB Restoration  
Program Manager

erty, we have negotiated property easements with our base neighbors. Although our neighbors understand the need for this work and have been very accommodating, we do not want to overstay our welcome and encumber their land any longer than necessary. So, the final groundwater cleanup remedies are designed to reach cleanup levels quickly and a new contract awarded this year will allow us to remove all of our wells and piping from these properties before the easements expire.

I have two remaining topics. First, I would like to introduce our new environmental Public Affairs (PA) officer. Mr. James Spellman is taking the PA duties from Ms. Merrie Schilter-Lowe and will attend the October Restoration Advisory Board meeting. We look forward to working with Jim on a number of upcoming projects; at the same time, it is never easy to say goodbye to a valued coworker. Merrie is an outstanding writer and environmental advocate. She helped to make our community involvement products, such as the Travis AFB Groundwater Proposed Plan, both technically accurate and easier to understand. We wish Merrie much success in her new assignment.

And finally, as I promised last quarter, a contractor has been selected by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to continue the environmental cleanup work on Travis AFB through 27 Oct 2021.

Competition for these large, multi-year contracts always brings out the best ideas among bidders, and we are confident that the new contractor has the resources, technical expertise, and 'vision' to exceed all requirements and promote the closure of as many sites as possible during their period of performance.

That's all for now. If you have any questions for your new IST, please send us a message via [enviropa@travis.af.mil](mailto:enviropa@travis.af.mil). We would love to hear from you.



## Five-Year

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ent at levels that potentially pose an unacceptable risk. In our case, Travis AFB is responsible for conducting the FYR, and the results are evaluated by the federal Environmental Protection Agency and two state environmental regulatory agencies.

This year, Travis AFB conducted its third FYR. The first review took place in 2003 and only looked at the interim groundwater cleanup. The second review was completed in 2008 and also looked at soil and sediment sites.


To ensure a complete and impartial review, an environmental contractor with experience with these types of reviews and with no previous involvement with the Travis AFB environmental restoration program was selected. The review team had access to all restoration documents and members

of the environmental restoration staff. The end result was an independent review that described both strengths and areas in need of improvement.

The timing of this FYR was unique, because it evaluated the performance of interim groundwater remedies at a time when the base is working with environmental regulatory agencies to select final groundwater remedies. So, in most cases, the remedy selection process will produce remedies that will go a long way toward improving cleanup performance and eliminating contaminant pathways.

So what did the third FYR find? It looked at all issues that were identified in the second review and added an assessment of vapor intrusion, a potential pathway that contaminants can take to reach people, plants and animals. Generally, this review found the soil and interim groundwater rem-

edies on Travis AFB to be protective of human health and the environment. Site LF007C has a solvent plume that is not captured, but a field effort to correct this is in progress. It considered the vapor intrusion pathway to have been adequately evaluated in existing offices and to not present a problem for base workers. It recommended steps to prevent future vapor intrusion issues and maintain groundwater remedies. It also provided an excellent benchmark upon which the selected groundwater remedies will be evaluated during future FYRs.

The Travis AFB Third FYR report is a public document, and public notices on its availability were recently published in the local Fairfield and Vacaville newspapers. If you are interested in reading this report, please send an email to [enviropa@travis.af.mil](mailto:enviropa@travis.af.mil) and ask for an electronic copy. 

# Scraping a Skeet Range

**By Glenn Anderson**

Travis Environmental Project Manager

Over the last ten years, Travis AFB has carried out large-scale soil cleanup actions and freed up large tracts of land for unrestricted base usage. Over the next ten years, the base hopes to take a second look at its remaining soil sites (which are smaller in size and currently under Land Use Controls to prevent contaminant exposure) and see which ones might be candidates for cleanup and closure.

However, there is one small soil site on the western side of the base that will undergo a limited cleanup action this year. The Old Skeet Range was a recreational facility that was active in the 1950's and early 1960's. The result of its short period of operation was the distribution of lead shot across one part of the site and of clay pigeon pieces across another part of the site. The clay pigeons were oil-based and contained polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), some of which are carcinogenic.

Unlike all other sites on Travis AFB, the Old Skeet Range is managed under the Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP), a program that is similar to the Environmental Restoration Program. The MMRP was established to address training ranges that contain unexploded ordnance, munitions and explosives of concern, and munitions constituents. Small arms ranges and skeet ranges were also placed on the list of eligible sites that could be cleaned up under this program.


Another difference is that the Old Skeet Range is being cleaned up under a non-time-critical removal action (NTCRA) rather than a remedial action. It takes a long time to coordinate and obtain approval for a remedial action, which is one reason why MMRP managers decided to use NTCRAs for a few of the smaller cleanup actions to save time.

For contractual reasons, the cleanup of the PAHs and the lead will be conducted as two separate actions. The PAH cleanup will take place this year, and the lead cleanup will be scheduled at a later

date.

There are a number of documents that support the PAH cleanup at the Old Skeet Range. Cleanup alternatives were evaluated by an Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis, the decision to proceed with the NTCRA was documented in an Action Memorandum, and the details of how the NTCRA will be carried out were described in a Removal Action Work Plan. After the cleanup of the PAH-contaminated soil is complete, the results of the removal action will be documented in a removal action completion report.

Basically, the removal action involves the mobilization of the field team, several site preparation steps, the excavation of PAH-contaminated soil and its placement into trucks, the transport of the soil to an appropriate landfill, and site restoration. It is a relatively simple field effort, unless a large rain event (like the one we had last month) saturates the soil and makes it impossible to operate heavy equipment. In that case, the removal action would be postponed until the following summer construction season.

Now you know why we are keeping our fingers crossed for a dry autumn! 

From the Desk of Mr. Mark Smith

One of the strengths of our Environmental Restoration Program is the active participation of the Travis AFB Restoration Advisory Board, which is why it is with reluctance that we are forced to cancel the October 2013 RAB meeting. We actually had a full agenda, ranging from our progress on our Groundwater Record of Decision to the award of a new multi-year environmental Performance-based Contract. However, because of this month's furlough of government employees, we did not have enough time to properly prepare for and adequately provide public notices for this meeting. Also, as I type this, it is uncertain whether our environmental regulatory agency counterparts would be able to participate, reducing the value that these public meetings offer to the attendees. Although it cannot replace the face time that we enjoy at a RAB meeting, the January 2014 Guardian will discuss these agenda topics in detail and describe the impact of the furlough on our program.

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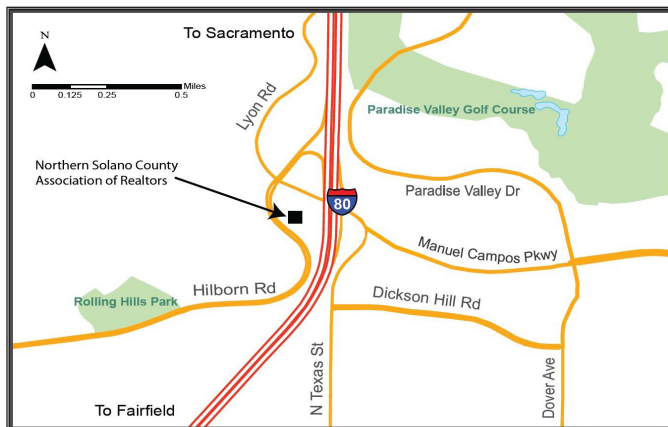


## Travis AFB Restoration Advisory Board Meeting

October 17, 2013  
7 p.m.

*Canceled*

Northern Solano County  
Association of Realtors  
3690 Hilborn Road  
Fairfield, CA



### LOCATION OF INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

#### Vacaville Public Library

1020 Ulatis Drive  
Vacaville, CA 95688

(707) 449-6290

**Monday-Thursday:** 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

**Friday-Saturday:** 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Sunday:** 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

#### Fairfield-Suisun Com. Library

1150 Kentucky Street  
Fairfield, CA 94533

(707) 421-6500

**Monday-Thursday:** 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

**Friday-Saturday:** 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Sunday:** 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

#### Mitchell Memorial Library

510 Travis Boulevard  
Travis AFB, CA 94535

(707) 424-3279

**Monday-Thursday:** 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

**Friday:** Closed

**Saturday:** 12 p.m. - 6 p.m.

**Sunday:** 12 p.m. - 6 p.m.

*If you would like more information or need special accommodations for the RAB meeting, please contact Mark Smith, (707) 424-3062. You can also view our web site at <http://www.travis.af.mil/enviro>*

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