The Former Galena FOL Environmental Update

Published to keep the Galena, Alaska, community informed of the Air Force's cleanup progress | Dec 12

Introducing the Air Force Civil Engineer Center

On Oct. 1, three Air Force civil engineering agencies merged to create a new field operating agency called the Air Force Civil Engineer Center, or AFCEC. The new agency combines resources and expertise from the Air Force Real Property Agency (AFRPA), the Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment (AFCEE) and the Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency (AFCESA) to help posture the Air Force for success in the areas of construction, energy, environment, housing, operations, planning, real property, and readiness and emergency management.

The change comes as part of the Air Force's Civil Engineering Transformation initiative to continue meeting mission requirements while operating amid budgetary constraints.

The Air Force remains committed to continuing environmental cleanup at the former Galena Forward Operating Location. Over the next several months, AFCEC will continue to keep you informed of the latest news regarding the progress made. It is important to note that none of the key players at Galena are changing, including BRAC Environmental Coordinator, AL Weilbacher.

"The name of the agency has changed, but you shouldn't notice any change in the way we do business at Galena," noted Weilbacher. "We will continue to deliver the same level of service you have come to expect from the Air Force over the past several years."

AFCEC director, Joe Sciabica, addresses his staff during the Oct. 1 ceremony in San Antonio,

For more information about the cleanup program at Galena, please visit the brand new Galena web page at http://www.afcec.af.mil/brac/galena/index.asp. AFCEC's Public Affairs team is also available to answer questions about the status of cleanup. They can be reached toll free at 1-866-725-7617 or by email at AFCEC.PA@us.af.mil.

Meet Gail Graban

Mr. Graban joins the Galena team as the BRAC05 Program Lead. In this capacity, he is responsible for ensuring the Air Force is working closely with communities impacted by the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure round to address their needs and concerns. Gail will work closely with AL Weilbacher to address cleanup, real estate and property transfer issues.

Gail is a retired Air Force Civil Engineering officer who began his civil service career in 2003 as Environmental Chief at Langley AFB, Va. He also served as Environmental Chief at Fort Jackson, S.C. and HQ Army Installation Management Command in Korea. Prior to that Gail worked in private industry most notably serving as Environmental Affairs Director for the second largest aluminum manufacturing facility in the United States.

Gail received a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Central Florida University, and a Master's degree in Industrial Engineering from Iowa State University. He is a professional engineer in California and West Virginia.

In his spare time, Gail enjoys spending time with his wife, Linda, and their three grown children and four grandchildren. He also likes to play tennis and keeps busy by exercising. Please join us in welcoming Gail to the Galena cleanup team.

Landfarm construction complete

This summer, the Air Force completed construction of the landfarm located at the former Campion runway and began treating the first batch of petroleum-contaminated soil in August. The Air Force's contractor had excavated soil from several areas on the former Galena FOL in 2011 and stockpiled it at the former Campion runway pending construction of the landfarm.

Air Force contractors work to shape the southwest corner of the landfarm. The new landfarm is capable of treating 2100 cubic yards of soil at once.

The process of landfarming involves adding water and nutrients (fertilizer) to the soil to enhance the natural biodegradation of fuels that have contaminated the soil. Once the fuel has degraded to acceptable levels, the soil will be transferred to the City of Galena landfill for use as landfill cover.

The landfarm can treat approximately 2100 cubic yards of soil at a time. Soil sampling conducted at the end of September and beginning of next summer will help the Air Force gauge how long the treatment process may take. Treatment time will be dependent on the type of fuel that has contaminated the soil and the initial concentrations.

Tar areas located south of main runway

This summer, Air Force contractors examined six tar patches measuring one to two feet in diameter south of the main runway at the former Galena FOL. The Air Force is also aware of tar accumulation north east of Northern Perimeter Road on the eastern side of the triangle in a heavily wooded area.

Tar was used to pave the runway in the 1940s and a subsequent runway expansion in 1944. When the Yukon River flooded in 1945, barrels of tar are believed to have collided and spilled along the banks of the river. The resulting tar pit formed after the drums were crushed and buried.

To better understand the origins of the tar, the Air Force met with local veterans previously stationed at Galena to hear their accounts. If you have any additional information about the tar, please contact AL Weilbacher at adolph.weilbacher@us.af.mil.

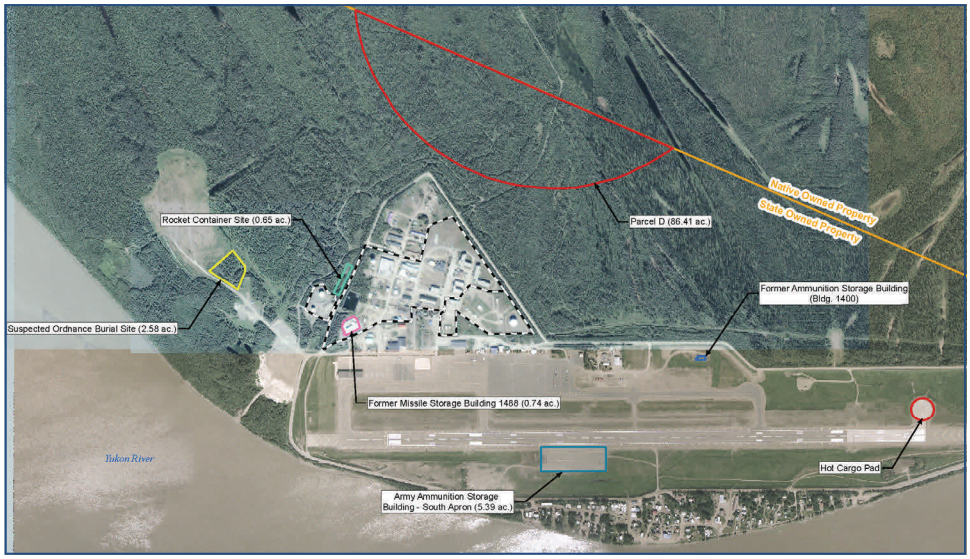
Example of tar patch examined in July 2012. The book, measuring 7.5 inches in height, was used to show relative scale.

Air Force launches MMRP investigation

With the goal of obtaining site closure of the Military Munitions Response Program sites, the Air Force identified seven potential locations through historical records reviews of the former Galena FOL that require further investigation. The map on the right identifies the specific areas for which the Air Force proposed further investigation.

To accomplish this, the Air Force needed to clear trees and vegetation at sites in wooded areas to allow access for the investigation activities. Local subcontractors completed the tree clearing by hand due to the extremely wet weather. They used geophysical survey equipment to detect magnetic objects which could potentially be munitions or unexploded ordnance. The Air Force was able to survey all sites by the end of the field season and is reviewing the information in order to determine which areas required further investigation next summer. Other activities scheduled for next summer include:

- Removing and disposing of the remaining rocket shipping containers north of Million Gallon Hill
- Conducting wipe tests for explosive residue at Former Missile Storage Area Bldg. 1488
- Digging up suspected munitions based on the review of the geophysical surveys to verify whether the magnetic objects are munitions-related or other debris
- Removing and disposing of any munitions that are found at the sites



PBR contract update

In August 2012, the Air Force released a Request for Proposal to 44 contractors for the performance-based remediation of all sites at the former Galena FOL. Proposals were due on October 5, 2012; however, none were received. “While this is a minor setback in the program, the Air Force has developed an alternate contracting strategy to ensure that environmental cleanup will continue next summer,” said Weilbacher. The Air Force remains committed to continuing the cleanup program at Galena.

The Air Force is also interviewing contractors to find out why they did not submit a proposal. This information will be used to revise the RFP so that contractors will be more likely to submit a proposal in the near future. The Air Force will update the community on the status of a revised PBR contract at the next Restoration Advisory Board meeting on April 17, 2013.

Projects planned for summer 2013

- Complete the soil removal work at Site SS016 near BLM within the airfield that could not be completed in 2011 due to a shortage of time and backfill
- Expand the landfarm at the former Campion runway to increase the treatment capacity for petroleum-contaminated soil
- Continue the MMRP investigations
- Continue operating the soil vapor extraction and bioventing systems at Million Gallon Hill and the POL Yard
- Continue operating and evaluating the bioreactor to determine if it is a reasonable technology for cleaning up other sites at Galena
- Collect additional soil and groundwater samples around the base to complete the investigations; once the investigations are completed, the Air Force can begin evaluating cleanup options for the sites

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Feedback, comments, and more information

☐ I would like more information about the environmental cleanup of the former Galena FOL.

☐ I would like more information about the Restoration Advisory Board for the former Galena FOL.

Please let us know how we are doing. Your comments and opinions are welcomed and assist the Air Force in providing the most accurate and up-to-date information regarding the cleanup for the former Galena FOL. Fill out this form and send it to the address listed below.

Name (Mr./Mrs./Ms.) _____

Organization _____

Street Address _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Additional Comments _____

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Detach and mail this section in a stamped envelope to: AFCEC/Public Affairs, 2261 Hughes Ave., Suite 155, JBSA Lackland, TX 78236-9853