



The Former Chanute AFB Environmental Update



November 2008

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Northern Excavation Area construction to resume in spring 2009

The Air Force's contractor is making progress on the excavation site of the former Chanute AFB, currently referred to as the Northern Excavation Area (NEA). The planning phase of the project is near completion; however, the work will not be performed until next spring due to the rapidly approaching winter season.

Additional funding for this project has been provided to allow for the hauling of soils from offsite to backfill the NEA site. The NEA contained miscellaneous debris that was consolidated into Landfills 2 and 3 during the interim remedial actions (IRA) that took place from 2000-2003, which resulted in the construction



The Northern Excavation Area (NEA) will resume construction activities in spring 2009

of impermeable caps on the landfills in accordance with the June 2000 Interim Record of Decision signed by the Air Force, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Illinois EPA.

Since the completion of those remedial actions, the NEA has remained an open excavation site. As a result, water has accumulated due to rainfall over the course of the past few years.

In order to continue the project, over 6 million gallons of water will be discharged from the NEA to Salt Fork Creek prior to backfilling the existing excavation.

It is estimated that approximately 50,000 cubic yards of soil will be required to backfill the excavation and restore the area back to its preexisting condition, allowing for proper surface drainage.

Introducing Lee Conesa, new AFCEE Project Manager; farewell Dr. Janice Blake

Lee Conesa, of the Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment (AFCEE), will be the new Project Manager of environmental remediation activities at the former Chanute AFB. Ms. Conesa has over 20 years of environmental program experience, including 8 years as an environmental regulator.

Ms. Conesa has previously worked for the Air Force Real Property Agency as a BRAC Environmental Coordinator, responsible for all Eastern Region bases. She will be taking over the responsibilities at Chanute, formerly held by Dr. Janice Blake of AFCEE.

Our sincere thanks are owed to Dr. Blake, who has been a driving force behind the tremendous progress of the remediation activities.

"The Illinois EPA has witnessed significant progress in the investigation and cleanup of the former base during Dr. Blake's tenure. We truly appreciate Janice's dedicated efforts, which will ultimately lead to a better environment for the people of Rantoul and the State of Illinois," said Mr. Christopher Hill, the Illinois EPA's project manager for Chanute.

Owen Thompson, U.S. EPA Region 5 Remedial Project Manager, praised her efforts stating, "(Dr. Blake) established a high level of trust with U.S. EPA because she has always been honest and above board. She has also been outstanding in her oversight of Air Force contractors. Dr. Blake will be missed on the Chanute project."

Air Force to remove asbestos-insulated pipes

Removal and disposal of approximately 6,000 total linear feet of piping in the southeast portion of the former Chanute AFB is projected to begin in November 2008. The Air Force has awarded a contract to perform the work, and planning for the project is currently underway.

The pipes connect Buildings 922, 923, and 927 to Building 988, which formerly housed a steam plant when the base was active. The steam piping system consists of two parallel pipes, each approximately 3,000 feet in length. Because these aboveground steam pipes were found to be insulated with deteriorated asbestos-containing material (ACM), all 6,000 feet of piping will be removed and safely disposed offsite.

"Because the property is under lease to the Village of Rantoul, there has been some discussion concerning responsibility of the piping, but the Air Force decided to proceed with the removal and cleanup to protect against potential exposure and human health concerns," said Paul Carroll, Air Force BRAC Environmental Coordinator.

After removal of the pipe system, an evaluation of the underlying soil will be conducted, followed by the excavation and offsite disposal of any asbestos contaminated soil lying below the pipes. Excavation of the underlying soil ensures no contaminants remain below the surface and pose no risk to the surrounding environment. Following the soil excavation, the trench will be replaced with clean soil during the backfill process, restoring the site to its original condition.



Approximately 6,000 linear feet of piping will be removed from the 900 Area of the former Chanute AFB.

Air Force Real Property Agency
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November 20 Restoration Advisory Board Meeting

Join us at the next RAB Meeting!

November 20, 2008 at 12:00 p.m.
Rantoul Business Center (Former Smith Hall)
601 S. Century Blvd., Suite 1106

Contact Information

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Feedback, Comments, and More Information

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I would like more information about the environmental cleanup of the former Chanute Air Force Base.

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I would like more information about the Restoration Advisory Board for the former Chanute Air Force Base.

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

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

Organization _____

Street address _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Additional Comments _____

Detach and mail this section in a stamped envelope to: AFRPA/Public Affairs, 143 Billy Mitchell Blvd., Suite 1, San Antonio, TX 78226-1816