

Special Project Adak Update

January
2000

United States Navy
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation



Community Meetings to be Held on Adak

A series of community informational meetings are being planned for the week of Jan. 24 through Jan. 27 on Adak.

In an effort to better address the needs and concerns of Adak community members regarding the closure of the Naval Air Facility Adak, a community meeting is being planned in concert with the Adak Community Council on Tuesday evening, Jan. 25. The exact time and location for this meeting is still to be determined, but will be announced via flyers to be posted in the Bob Reeves High School on Adak.

Representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency, The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, the

Navy, and other Restoration Advisory Board members who plan to travel to Adak the week of Jan. 24-27, 2000 will be available at both the community meeting and for informal discussions throughout the week. A general availability session is also planned for Monday, Jan. 24, to allow residents to view a presentation on ordnance issues and for an informal question and answer session.

Tuesday's meeting will be a formal briefing on several topics of community interest, including the Product Recovery System and progress report on ordnance issues.

A Restoration Advisory Board meeting is planned



RAB members listened to a presentation on ordnance screening at a November meeting.

for 6 p.m. Adak time Wednesday, Jan. 26, in the Commander's Conference Room at the Bob Reeves High School. Anchorage Restoration Advisory Board members will be able to participate via teleconference (7 p.m. Anchorage time) from the Anchorage Holiday Inn, 239 W. 4th Avenue, in Anchorage. Plans currently call for members of the ordnance technical team for Operable Unit B - a group consisting of government agency representatives, technical consultants, the Aleut Corporation, and the Aleutian Pribilof Island Association to conduct a briefing on progress being made in dealing with ordnance issues as part of

the RAB meeting.

The technical team will also be available to meet with interested community members during business hours throughout the week.

For more information about any of these meetings, please call 907-789-3098, or check with Lt. Commander Ted Posuniak's office on Adak.

Proposed Second Class City Informational Meeting

The State of Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development will be conducting a public informational meeting on the proposal to incorporate the City of Adak. That meeting is planned for 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 24, at the Bob Reeves High School Recreation Room.

For more information on this meeting - or to set up special modifications for individuals with disabilities - call or write the Local Boundary Commission staff, Municipal & Regional Assistance Division, Department of Community and Economic Development, 550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1770, Anchorage, Alaska 99501. (907-269-4557.)

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Q & A on Adak Ordnance Issues

The Navy, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, in response to community input, decided to address ordnance and unexploded ordnance issues separate from chemical and petroleum remediation activities on Adak.

"Operable Unit B" – or OU B – was created to allow ordnance issues to be addressed separately. At present the agencies are working to determine the likelihood, density and hazard severity of ordnance on Adak and to develop a workable plan to investigate and reduce danger associated with ordnance or unexploded ordnance.

What is ordnance?

There are a number of items identified as ordnance. The general category termed ordnance includes:



- Ammunition
- Small arms – through 16"
- Bullets, mortars and projectiles
- Bombs
- Chemical weapons
- Demolition materials
- Grenades
- Land mines
- Propellants
- Pyrotechnics
- Rockets and missiles
- Torpedoes

"Unexploded ordnance" includes items that are fused and fired, and not detonated. The highest danger for unexploded ordnance is from those items that are shock sensitive and nearest to the surface.

What is the history of ordnance at Adak?

About 90 percent of ordnance found on Adak is from WWII. Most of this ordnance is from combat training and readiness activities conducted from 1941 to 1944 and from ordnance related to the battle for the Aleutian Islands.



Post WWII, Adak was used as a Naval Base from 1959-1997. Except for small arms training, ordnance training was limited during this period to the Lake Andrew range areas. According to experts, the base was a strategic base during the Cold War, and most of the mission was not related to ordnance proficiency.

What information can be found on ordnance?

The technical team working on ordnance issues on Adak is looking at a wide variety of archival information and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Response records. Archival information includes: records, manifests, orders, interviews and a wide range of photographs.



In addition, over the past 45 years there have been several hundred Explosive Ordnance Disposal Responses – all for WWII-era ordnance that has been removed and disposed of by disposal teams.

In addition, field work to gather information on ordnance has been conducted in a variety of locations on Adak.

What are some key Adak ordnance and unexploded ordnance (UXO) issues being dealt with now?

There are few precedents for ordnance and unexploded ordnance cleanup in Arctic conditions. State and federal processes used for chemical cleanup (CERCLA or Superfund laws) do not address ordnance.



The Operable Unit B Project Team was formed in August, 1999, and includes the Navy, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Aleut/Pribilof Island Association and The Aleut Corporation. This team has been and continues to work to develop a clean-up process for ordnance specific to Adak.

Since August, frequent subcommittee meetings have been held to address physical terrain constraints, the archival record search, assessment of ordnance and unexploded ordnance areas, and to establish priorities for disposal.

How is the clean-up process being developed by the technical team for Adak?

The technical team's main goal in developing the clean-up process for Adak is to assure public safety and environmental conservation. The approach being used is a blend of CERCLA and Department of Defense methodology to assess

the hazards resulting from Adak ordnance.

This process must use both military knowledge of ordnance, Department of Defense cleanup standards and measurements similar to those in the CERCLA process.



How is public safety being addressed relative to ordnance?

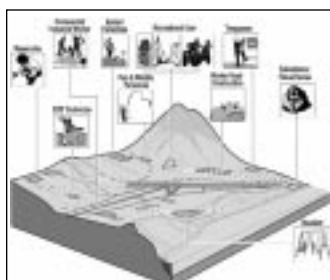
The OU B technical team is developing a series of screening procedures that address ordnance. The purpose of the screening is to classify areas of concern for either accelerated removal action, site inspection, further site characterization or no further action.

Concepts that underlay the Level 1 Screening Process are:

- Likelihood of contamination: the likelihood of contamination is primarily related to the activity and the original intent of using ordnance at a site.
- Density of ordnance contamination: the density of contamination in an area is related to the type of ordnance, the duration, and the intensity of ordnance activity that is assumed or documented to have occurred at a site.
- Hazard severity: hazard severity is the anticipated result of an unintended exposure to ordnance.
- Strength of evidence: strength of evidence reflects the certainty that archival and field evidence can be relied upon.

Who makes the decisions regarding ordnance and unexploded ordnance issues?

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Navy are working together to determine how to apply existing federal and state laws to Adak ordnance issues.



The agencies are using experts in a variety of fields to assist them. The Aleut Corporation, the Aleutian Pribilof Island Association and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also sit

on the technical team addressing ordnance issues.

Community and other stakeholder input into decisions takes place through the Restoration Advisory Board and through formal public comment. Ultimately a Record of Decision must be reached that will spell out how all ordnance sites will be addressed and how unexploded ordnance threats will be managed.

A New Face at the ADEC



Carr

In November, Tess Carr joined the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation as the department's new project manager for Adak contaminated sites cleanup. Tess comes from a background of environmental cleanup management with a private consulting company, Jacobs Engineering, in Anchorage. Prior to that, she worked for a North Slope oil production company, BP Exploration, with their environmental assessment department, on the North Slope and in Anchorage. Tess is from Alaska and has a master's degree in environmental anthropology. She attended college at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and McGill University in Canada.

Tentative Schedule and Proposed Agenda for Adak Community Meetings

Monday, January 24

7 PM – Informal availability session and ordnance presentation regarding Operable Unit B (OU B) questions and/or concerns.

7 PM – Public information meeting on Adak's petition to become a Second Class City.

Tuesday, January 25

Noon – Individual members of federal and state agencies, as well as technical support personnel will be available during the noon hour to meet with community members.

7 PM – Community Council Meeting; presentation on the Product Recovery System followed by availability session on additional items or concerns.

Wednesday, January 26

Noon – Individual members of the federal and state agencies, as well as technical support personnel, will be available during the noon hour to meet with community members.

6 PM – Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meeting, followed by availability session with community.

Where to Get Information – INFOLINE: 1-800-360-1561

University of Alaska Anchorage, Library
Reserve Room, 3211 Providence Dr.
907-786-1871 - M-F, 8 am to 5 pm,
Contact: Librarian

NAS Adak, Adak Island, Alaska,
Bob Reeves High School Library
M-F, 8 am to 5 pm,
Contact: Lt. Commander Ted Posuniak
907-592-8170

Administrative Record
Engineering Field Activity NW 19917 Seventh
Ave., NW, Poulso, WA 98370

www.adakupdate.com

Do You Know...

Do you know the history of land use on Adak?

The first inhabitants of Adak Island were the Aleuts. Remnants of Aleut settlements remain as archaeological sites on Adak today. Russians first visited the Aleutian islands in the early 1740s and were trading with the Aleuts by the 1750s. By 1830, Russian settlers had occupied Adak and relocated the Aleuts to Russian settlements in Kodiak, the Pribilof Islands and in Sitka.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has administered the Southern half of Adak Island as part of the National Wildlife Refuge system since 1913. The Northern portion of Adak was used for military purposes

during World War II as a staging area for military operations in the Aleutian Islands, including the campaign to drive Axis forces from Attu and Kiska Islands at the Western end of the Aleutian chain. Currently, the Navy owns the Northern half of Adak, as a result of a congressional land withdrawal from the Aleutian National Maritime Wildlife Refuge for military purposes.

When the military leaves the island, the land legally reverts to the United States Department of the Interior as Fish and Wildlife Service refuge lands. Although no land trade has occurred, a draft land transfer agreement proposes a trade between the Department of Interior and The Aleut Corporation

after the land reverts to the Department.

Do you know what the draft land transfer agreement proposes?

The current draft land transfer agreement involves the exchange of approximately 46,000 acres of Aleut-owned lands in a different location for an equivalent amount of former Navy owned land. The land exchanged must be suitable to serve as wildlife refuge land.

The land trade can only come after Federal legislation to remove the former military reservation from the wildlife refuge. This legislation has not passed Congress and the land transfer agreement has not been finalized.

Do you know that Adak residents have petitioned for Adak to become a city?

The Adak Community Council has petitioned for Adak to become incorporated as a Second Class City in Alaska. This petition must be reviewed and approved by the State of Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development's Local Boundary Commission. This process is currently underway. For more information, or to submit comments during the public comment period, you may contact the Local Boundary Commission staff, Municipal & Regional Assistance Division, Dept. of Community and Economic Development, 550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1770, Anchorage, AK 99501. (907-269-4557.)

Adak Update

**Engineering Field Activity, Northwest
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Poulsbo, WA 98370**