

FINDING OF

NO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ACTIONS INDICATED

1. **SITE NAME: Former Aerial Gunnery Range No.4**

FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITE PROJECT NUMBER: J09NV1093

LOCATION:

City: Schurz
County: Mineral
State: Nevada

2. **POINTS OF CONTACT:**

Property owners at the time of the site visit:

Ms. Laurie Thom
Walker River Paiute Tribe
1022 Hospital Rd.
P.O. Box 220
Schurz, NV 89427

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Gerald E. Vincent
FUDES Program Manager
U.S. Army Engineer District, Sacramento Corps of Engineers
(916) 557-7452
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State of Nevada:

3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:**

Research shows that the Site has been defined as three areas. All of the areas are on the Walker River Indian Reservation in Mineral County, Nevada approximately 8 miles east of Schurz. The areas lie within two miles of each other. The areas and sources are defined as below.

Fallon Target Area 4: the southeast corner of Section 18, Township 13 North, Range 30 East with a 1,000 yd safety area.

Fallon Target Area Four (4) B.T. 20: the south ½ of Section 9 and the north ½ of Section 16, Township 13 North, Range 30 East. This land totals 640 acres as defined by NARA documents.

Aerial Gunnery Range #4: Concentric 300 ft and 1000 ft diameter circles centered at 38° 59.8' north 118° 38.0' west with two observation towers north of the target.

This site is located in Congressional District 1 and in Region IX of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

4. SITE HISTORY:

Prior to DoD use, the Site was part of the Walker River Reservation, owned by the Walker River Paiute Tribe since an executive order by President Woodrow Wilson on 15 March 1918. The DoD's first interest of the Site documented as Fallon Target Area 4 by the Paiute Tribe was on 5 December 1944, when a United States Navy (USN) Ensign met with the Walker River Tribal Council. The desired area of the Site was as the southeast corner of Section 18, Township 13 N, Range 30 E, with a 1,000 yard safety buffer. Previously this area was not normally used as a winter range for grazing cattle, but grazing cattle were in the near vicinity.

On 5 December 1944, the Walker River Tribal Council approved the USN request for a practice-bombing site on the Walker River Reservation. In a letter dated 15 December 1944, the Commandant of the USN assumes permission to use the 640-acre Site on the Walker River Reservation for dive-bombing purposes. Also in this letter, the USN searches for confirmation from the Walker River Tribal Council that it authorized the immediate construction and use of the Site. This letter confirms that the USN can begin construction and use of the Site on 16 January 1945. The construction at the Site was a Navy Type "D" dive-bombing target. The target consisted of 75 ft diameter circle constructed by driving wooden posts into the ground, and two observation towers located north of the target. The types of explosive ordnance used on the Site were miniature practice bombs, water filled practice bombs, and spotting charges.

The Site was used for approximately 1 year and on 8 January 1946 the USN listed No. 20 at Schurz as a "Target Available for Immediate Release". The land has undergone two cleanups since 1946. Documentation obtained from the 12th Naval District, dated August 1946, stated that the "target area [was] cleaned". NAS Fallon EOD performed the other cleanup in April 1991 with Mr. Wilbur Tom of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Approximately 100 lbs. of ordnance related scrap metal was removed. Approximately 40 MK 23 practice bombs and eight MK 38A2 practice bombs were recovered. The report from this cleanup concluded that the Site was not used for a long period of time nor were there any evidence of ordnance from years other than the 1940's and 1950's. It was also reported that there were no hazardous materials in the area and approximately 95% of all surface ordnance scrap was remaining. The report recommended that the remaining improvements from that target be removed (34 wooden posts arranged in a circle remained, and a 10 ft x 10 ft wooden platform in the center of the circle). The INPR mentioned that there was another cleanup of the Site in 1996, but no documentation to support that assertion was found.

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Since the termination of the lease between the USN and the Walker River Paiute Tribe, the land has been used by the Walker River Paiute Tribe as cattle grazing lands. The frequency of use by cattle ranchers is unknown. There are no areas of interest associated with post-DoD activities.

5. SITE INVESTIGATIONS/CURRENT STATUS:

A Site visit was performed by personnel from EM Assist and the USACE on 15 January 2004. No areas of concern were noted during the Site visit.

There was no evidence of storage tanks or drum storage on the Site found during the previous Site investigations or in historical records.

There was no evidence of hazardous substances and/or petroleum products used on the Site found during the previous Site investigations.

The types of practice bombs used in DoD activities were filled with either sand or water, with some containing a small spotting charge. There were no high explosives used during dive bomb training.

6. NDAI RECOMMENDATION:

The Former Aerial Gunnery Range #4 is recommended for No Department of Defense Actions Indicated at this time. During the records research, interviews, and site inspections conducted for this site, there were no hazards or potential environmental liabilities identified from the past use by the Department of Defense that would pose an immediate risk to the environment or public. No evident hazards were found during the site visit; therefore, no projects are recommended at this site.

7. NDAI CONCURRENCE:

Jerry Vincent
BRAC/FUDS Section Chief
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Sacramento District

Ms. Laurie Thom
Tribal Chairman
Walker River Paiute Tribe

Date

Date