



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Formerly Used Defense Sites Program

Pinecastle Jeep Range

Orlando, Florida

Fact Sheet

August 2007

Current News

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is conducting an environmental investigation on a former World War II training facility previously known as Pinecastle Jeep Range in Orange County. The Odyssey Middle School was built in 2001 on part of the former target range used by the military for bombing practice and chemical demonstrations from 1944 through 1945. The Department of Defense leased this property until 1946 when it was declared surplus and returned to its owners.

As an interim measure to protect and ensure the safety of the school children, staff and parents of Odyssey Middle School, the Corps of Engineers will install a fence, with warning signs, to prevent access to the adjoining property. The Corps also will collect soil samples and test for DDT, a chemical used during the military demonstrations, and survey the school grounds using equipment to map locations where metal may exist below the ground surface. These actions will be completed before the start of the school year on Aug. 20.

Although it is unlikely any ordnance will be found on the surface, the Corps and its

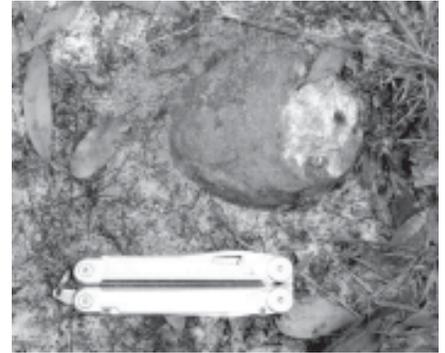
contractor, will conduct an ordnance sweep to identify and remove any visible ordnance. In addition, the Corps is providing educational information to parents, children and teachers about the 3Rs of ordnance: Recognize, Retreat and Report.

Environmental Investigation

The Corps of Engineers has completed an Archive Search Report/Preliminary Assessment for the former Pinecastle Jeep Range. This report documents research of historical records and aerial photographs to determine if any hazards may still exist from previous military activities. This report formed the basis for the Site Inspection. The draft Site Inspection Report has been submitted for review to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

During the site inspection, soil samples were collected at 16 sites to test for the presence of munitions or explosive materials. Three of the soil samples found traces of nitroglycerin, a chemical compound used in explosives.

The report identified the most heavily used areas for target practice which are near the school. The former Pinecastle Range is currently privately owned.



This is an example of ordnance used by the military during target practice.

On July 13, a private landowner called authorities to report ordnance found on his property. Explosive specialists arrived to detonate three fuzed practice bombs and one incendiary bomblet. This information and the Site Inspection Report was shared with government officials, school leaders and community members at a public availability session on July 24.

**For more information, contact:
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jacksonville District
Public Affairs Office**

**(904) 232-1576 or toll-free
1-800-291-9405**

www.saj.usace.army.mil

**Documents are located in the
Information Repository:**

**Orlando Main Public Library
101 E. Central Blvd.
Orlando, FL 32801
407-835-7323**

Safety Precautions

Safety is always the Corps' top priority. It is important to remember that even after 60 years, a piece of ordnance can explode if touched and can cause serious injury.

It is vitally important that anyone who discovers a potential ordnance item follow the simple "3 Rs" of safety:

- **Recognize** the item may be dangerous;
- **Retreat** and do not touch it;
- **Report** its location by calling 9-1-1 immediately.

A Piece of History

In 1943, the U.S. government leased 12,483 acres of land in Orlando (Orange County) for use as a gunnery and demonstration range for testing and training troops. The range was an off-post site of the Pinecastle Army Airfield. The facility included small arms firing, air tactics evaluations and training demonstrations of strafing, practice bombing, air-to-ground rocket firing and high explosive bombing.

The Pinecastle Jeep Range was used for visual demonstrations of equipment and tactics taught to Soldiers in the

classroom. Ordnance was dropped from aircraft on ground targets while Soldiers watched from bomb-proof observation shelters.

The Army conducted these demonstrations regularly during World War II from 1944 through October 1945. In 1946, Pinecastle Jeep Range was declared surplus property and all leases were terminated by December 1947.

The property is currently owned by local government and private individuals for residential use, a school, highway/expressway, a landfill and undeveloped pasture uses.

The boundaries of the former Pinecastle Jeep Range are outlined in red. Located approximately 5 miles east/northeast of the Orlando International Airport, the western portion of the former Pinecastle Range was used by the military primarily for target practice during WWII. The yellow circles indicate the target areas on the former Pinecastle Jeep Range. The blue circle indicates the former chemical demonstration area where water and DDT, a chemical once widely used to control insects, was sprayed.

