

Environmental Protection Programs

Overview

The Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) Environmental Management Office at Volk Field is responsible for insuring that every Hardwood Air-to-Ground Range and airfield activity complies with all applicable federal, state, and local environmental and cultural resource laws. The need exists to conduct training operations in an environmentally sound manner. Unit training and sound environmental practices are mutually compatible and neither are compromised to meet the needs of the other. A staff Natural Resource manager provides guidance on all types of flora and fauna issues including the base [deer hunts](#).

Mission

The mission of the CRTC Environmental Management Office is to ensure compliance in all areas of occupational health, safety and the environment, for the CRTC, Hardwood Range and the many agencies that use them.

History

The Department of Defense Installation Restoration Program (IRP) began the environmental programs at Volk Field in the early 1980's. This program was initiated to determine if past practices had adverse environmental affects. Increased emphasis on environmental programs started in 1986 when a natural resources specialist was employed to assist in managing the varied resources and wildlife found on Volk Field. In 1991 an environmental engineer was hired to ensure overall compliance. Since that time, the environmental management office has grown to include occupational health, industrial hygiene professionals and a medical technician, as well as a ground safety specialist.

Accomplishments

The accomplishments of the environmental management office have been varied and significant.

Studies and Plans: Beginning in 1984, record searches, personal interviews, and site investigations were performed to identify areas of Volk Field and Hardwood Range where past practices may have had adverse environmental impacts. Since then in-depth studies have been conducted with the ultimate goal of achieving an environmental "clean bill of health", which has been obtained through the following plans and programs. Several of these studies and plans were developed with the support of the Air National Guard Readiness Center in Washington, D.C. Some of these include: Air Emissions Inventories, Hazardous Waste Management, Spill Prevention and Countermeasures, and Pollution Prevention Plans. These plans resulted in the success of the following programs:

Underground Storage Tank Removal: Like most large complexes which had fuel oil heating and fuel dispensing systems, Volk Field had many Underground Storage Tanks (UST's). In 1988 a systematic program began for the complete removal of all USTs. Between 1988 and 1994, over 70 underground tanks were removed. Most were replaced by conversions to natural gas and liquid propane. The few areas which required fuel storage are now serviced by aboveground tanks. Both Volk Field and Hardwood Range are free from any USTs.

Archeological Research: Cultural and historic resources are an important part of tying the present to the past. Since 1988 several projects have focused on determining the cultural, historic, and archeological resources within the Volk Field and Hardwood Range complexes. The studies have resulted in the preservation of those resources significant to our history.

Hazardous Materials Programs: Volk Field, like most industrial activities, generates waste by-products, such as paints and solvents. In 1991, over 13,000 pounds of these by products were disposed of as Hazardous Wastes. Through planning, training and implementing waste minimization practices, wastes have decreased annually and from 1996 and beyond they are projected to be less than 4,000 pounds per year .

Poly-Chlorinated Bi-Phenyls (PCB's): PCBs have been used in electrical transformers for many years. Every piece of equipment potentially containing PCBs has been tested. By the end of 1993 any equipment which contained PCBs was removed and disposed of properly.

Endangered Species Programs: Volk Field and Hardwood Range exist in the area of Wisconsin where threatened and endangered species are known to thrive. Since 1994, while working in conjunction with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Wisconsin DNR, Volk Field has developed one of the most comprehensive programs in existence for the protection and management of the Karner Blue Butterfly and its habitat.

Waste Water Treatment: In 1995 a new Wastewater Treatment Facility was completed to effectively meet our needs. This \$1.6 million facility helps ensure cleaner waterways now and for the foreseeable future.

Summary

All of these activities, plans and studies increase our level of awareness and contribute to a cleaner and smarter way of conducting the business of "Training America's Finest."