



January 27, 2011

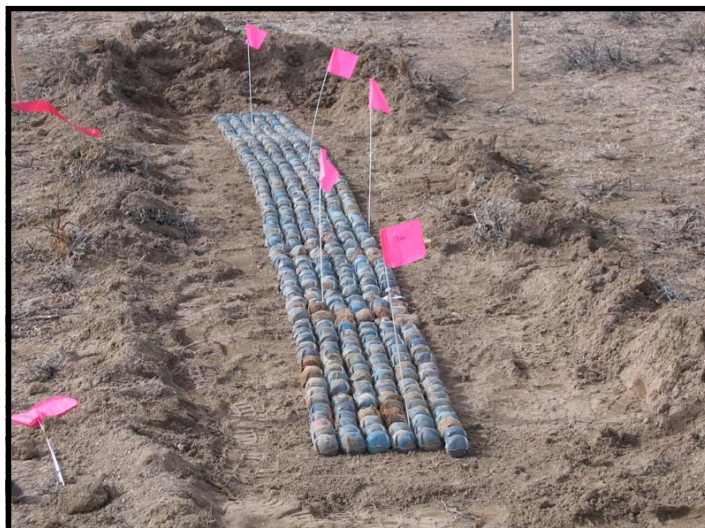
Nevada Site Office Environmental Management

# EM NEWS FLASH

## Recovery Act Means Cleanup at Nevada Military Test Areas

Cleanup operations at two military test locations on the Tonopah Test Range (TTR) in Nevada have recently been completed, moving the U.S. Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office closer to reaching its environmental restoration objectives.

Crews worked more than a year to complete the large-scale cleanup, made possible by [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#) funds—enduring extreme temperatures and remote conditions at TTR, which lies just north of the Nevada National Security Site (formerly the Nevada Test Site).



*Accumulation area for bomblets on TTR prior to demolition.  
Pink flags note every 100 bomblets.*

The scope of the first operation involved clearing seven target areas over approximately 1,600 acres, which were used by Sandia National Laboratories for testing between the mid 1960s and mid 1980s. Field crews from the Nevada Site Office environmental restoration contractor, Navarro-Intera, scoured the terrain using handheld metal detectors to locate baseball-sized bomblets or “submunitions” to a depth of one foot below the surface. The materials were

either retrieved immediately or tagged and removed at a later time. Upon collection of a sufficient number of bomblets, the materials were rendered safe by blasting them apart with explosives; they were then disposed in a landfill as inert munitions debris. The project spanned from July 2009 to July 2010.

Once submunitions were successfully cleared from the 1,600 acres, the Nevada Site Office was able to allocate unspent Recovery Act funds to complete a second TTR cleanup. Work to remove radioactively contaminated soil at four sites on TTR's South Antelope Lake had been suspended in 2007 due to the potential presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO). In July 2010, the Nevada Site Office authorized the UXO-trained Navarro-Intera team to resume and complete soil excavation activities, which resulted in all four sites being safely returned to their native states. The contaminated soil was packaged and transported to the Nevada National Security Site for disposal as low-level radioactive waste.

"The completion of this activity represents a significant success for [Environmental Restoration](#) at the Nevada Site Office," commented Federal Sub-Project Director, Kevin Cabble. "We are pleased Recovery Act money allowed it to happen, and are proud this dedicated crew made it happen safely and smoothly," he added.

The TTR cleanup sites are now considered "clean closed" and available for use. While this land is open for further testing by Sandia or the Air Force, new policies require groups to immediately remove testing materials to avoid the accumulation of debris that would require further cleanup.

To date, the Nevada Site Office has spent approximately \$4.5 million in Recovery Act funds on TTR cleanup operations. These activities are part of a larger, ongoing environmental restoration effort that involves characterization and/or remediation of [soils](#) and [industrial sites](#) across TTR and the Nevada National Security Site.

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