



## Environmental Cleanup Program

# FACT SHEET 4

Fort McClellan, Alabama

September 2000



### CERCLA at a glance

There are many required steps in an environmental cleanup under CERCLA. Briefly, these steps are:

#### Preliminary assessment

A historical record search to determine whether further investigation is warranted.

#### Site investigation

Physical inspection of site with limited soil and water sampling to determine whether further investigation is warranted.

#### Remedial investigation

Investigation into the type and extent of potential contamination through in-depth sampling of air, soils, surface water, groundwater, plants and animal life.

#### Feasibility study

Evaluation of potential cleanup alternatives and selection of a proposed remedy.

#### Proposed plan

Documentation of the feasible alternatives that were considered and the proposed remedy. The public may comment on the proposed plan.

#### Record of decision

Documentation of the selected remedy with the Army's response to any public comments.

#### Remedial design

Completion of the engineering design for the selected remedy.

#### Remedial action

Commencement and operation of the selected remedy.

#### Remedy

Remedies could include fences, clay covers, on-site treatment, monitoring, among many other actions that could be taken at locations of releases.

Fact sheets are published as needed to inform community members about the cleanup and closure of Fort McClellan, Alabama. Cleanup of sites throughout the post are being conducted under the regulatory process called the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (also known as Superfund). In September 1999 the current mission of Fort McClellan ended with the post being closed under Public Law 101-510, Base Realignment and Closure Act.

## The cleanup process at Fort McClellan

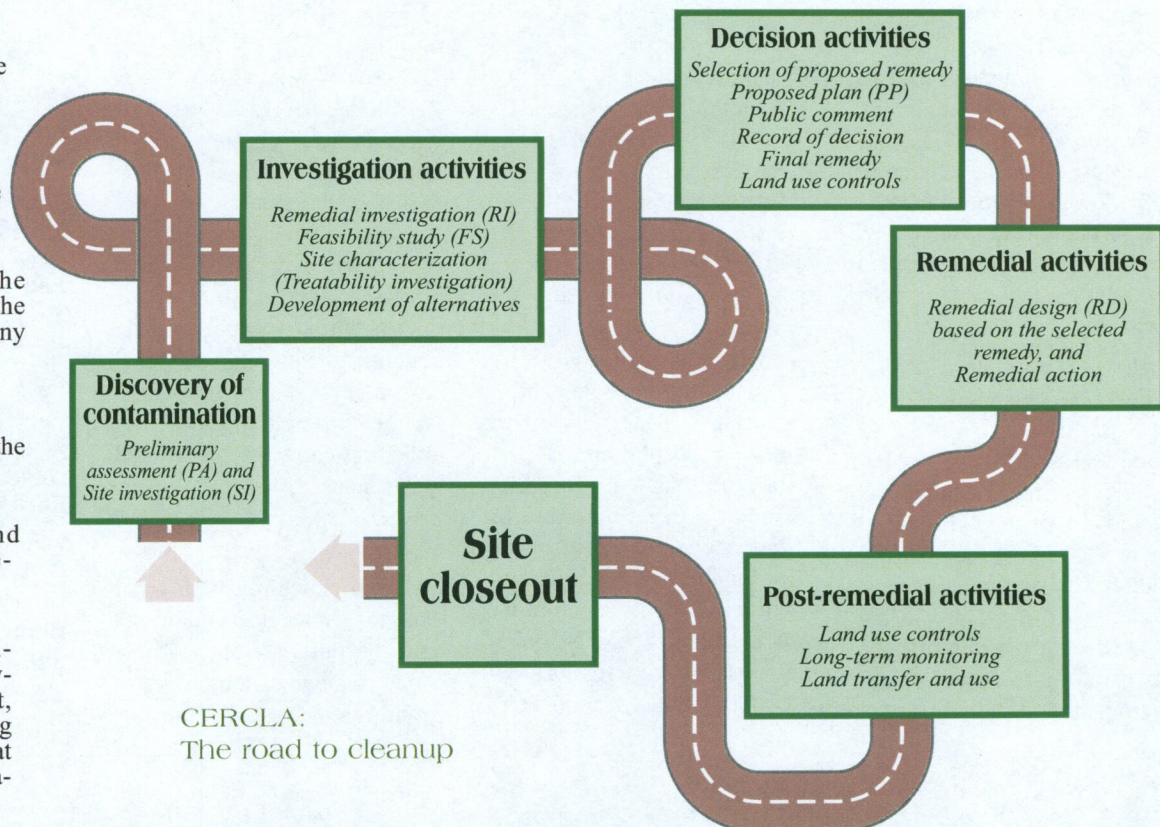
### CERCLA - the law

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) is the pre-eminent cleanup law in the country. Passed in 1980 and amended in 1986, CERCLA, commonly known as Superfund, created a special trust funded from tax dollars to impose cleanup and reporting requirements on the private sector. CERCLA's purpose is to identify, investigate and clean up hazardous waste sites that may pose a threat to human health or the environment. The Superfund Amend-

ments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA) incorporates and details the specific steps involved in cleanup activities.

While CERCLA funds are not used for cleanup of Department of Defense (DoD) or other federal facilities, the law mandates that these facilities follow guidelines and requirements consistent with CERCLA. Accordingly, the DoD has developed and implemented the Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP) to meet the requirements of CERCLA.

DERP provides for the identification, investigation and cleanup of hazardous wastes at DoD facilities. The focus is on cleanup of contamination associated with past activities to ensure that potential threats to public health and the environment are eliminated. Cleanup at Fort McClellan is being conducted under the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Environmental Restoration Program, one of the environmental programs under DERP. BRAC covers military facilities that have been or are being closed and addresses





closure-related issues, such as property transfer and reuse, in addition to environmental cleanup.

#### What are we cleaning up?

Our cleanup program has two parts: (1) areas where unexploded ordnance (UXO) may be present due to range firing activities and (2) sites where contaminants may have been released during Fort McClellan's normal operations. These operations may include motor pools where petroleum products were used, weapons-cleaning facilities where solvents were used and print shops, for instance. Both parts of the program are long-term and will require several more years before all actions are complete. Once response actions at sites are completed, the Army will make the sites immediately available for reuse. This allows the community to gain quick access to those properties that are declared clean.

Meanwhile, the Army will continue with the cleanup of other sites. The Army strives to support community redevelopment and will not require the Anniston/Calhoun County/Fort McClellan Development Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to wait while response actions at other sites are being cleaned up, unless safety dictates otherwise.

#### Where are we now?

Fort McClellan has reached the point in the process where actual cleanup of sites has begun. For example, cleanup has started on property located where the Consolidated Publishing Co., parent organization of *The Anniston Star*, plans to build its new offices and printing facilities. Also, cleanup has started in areas

where the eastern by-pass road will traverse the fort. We still are involved, however, in the extensive process of investigating sites to characterize the nature and extent of any contamination. Our focus has been to complete investigation and cleanup of sites that have been identified as critical to the community's reuse needs first. We have incorporated the community's priorities into our cleanup efforts by concentrating on sites defined for use by the JPA and through input directly from the Fort McClellan Restoration Advisory Board (RAB).

#### How long will the cleanup take?

Since the overriding purpose of a CERCLA-driven cleanup is protection of human health and the environment, the overall process can be lengthy. A number of time-consuming activities are required and driven by the desire to "get it right." For instance, some of the steps required to complete a cleanup include:

- Determining where to sample at a site
- Sampling field work
- Laboratory analysis and validation of samples
- Reports on findings
- Interpretation of the analysis and results by different agencies
- Review and approval cycles for multiple documents and decisions
- Evaluating remedies and putting the ones to work during cleanup and beyond that will minimize and/or prevent exposure to hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants.

In an effort to expedite the process and to achieve the earliest possible reuse for the property, the BRAC Cleanup Team

(BCT) is following the DoD's Fast-Track Cleanup approach to environmental restoration. Under the Fast-Track Cleanup, the BCT works with the local community to address cleanup priorities that accommodate local redevelopment needs. It is the Army's plan to complete all remedial actions before the year 2007.

#### Who's involved in the cleanup?

As with all environmental cleanups, there are multiple federal, state and local agencies and community groups involved. At Fort McClellan the BCT includes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management and the U.S. Army, with support from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and their contractors.

Additionally, the BCT works closely with the JPA, Fort McClellan's local redevelopment authority, to determine cleanup priorities and to integrate those priorities with property reuse plans for economic redevelopment. The BCT also works with the Fort McClellan RAB, whose role is to provide community input into cleanup and to advise the Army of the community's desires on cleanup.

Finally, the public is invited to comment on draft documents and to attend public meetings about environmental activities. Announcements about comment periods and meetings are printed in local newspapers.

#### How can you get involved?

Communication with local communities, reuse authorities and the public is the cornerstone of any cleanup program. In addition to publishing no-

#### Abbreviations used in this fact sheet

##### **CERCLA**

Comprehensive Environmental Restoration, Compensation, and Liability Act

##### **DoD**

Department of Defense

##### **DERP**

Defense Environmental Restoration Program

##### **BRAC**

Base Realignment and Closure

##### **BCT**

BRAC Cleanup Team

##### **UXO**

Unexploded ordnance

##### **JPA**

Anniston/Calhoun County/Fort McClellan Development Joint Powers Authority

##### **RAB**

Restoration Advisory Board

tices and holding public meetings, the Army issues periodic fact sheets and other informational materials as progress is made on investigation and cleanup.

Additionally, the Fort McClellan Restoration Advisory Board meets the third Monday each month to consider and advise the Army on the community's concerns and priorities regarding cleanup. The public is always welcome at these meetings, and meeting locations and times are announced in local newspapers.

To find out more about the Fort McClellan environmental cleanup you may contact Ron Levy, Fort McClellan's BRAC environmental coordinator, (256) 848-3539/3758, e-mail address: [levyr@mcclellan-emh2.army.mil](mailto:levyr@mcclellan-emh2.army.mil) or access the Fort McClellan website at <http://www.mcclellan.army.mil/>. At the website, go to **BRAC Environmental Office, Environmental Links** for a list of websites where you can learn more about CERCLA and DoD cleanup.

