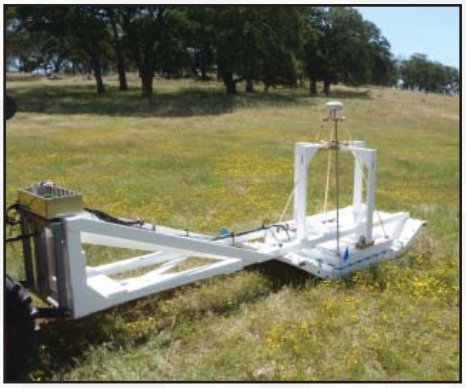
Innovative technology to aid in clean-up at Camp Ellis

Katie Newton, public affairs



USACE Huntsville Center

The Geometrics Metal Mapper is now being used at Corps' environmental clean-up projects to assist with advanced classification such as differentiating between ordnance and nonhazardous debris. The Metal Mapper will be used at the former Camp Ellis Military Reserve in Illinois during the remedial investigation this fall.

A new method of technology will aid in clean-up of the Former Camp Ellis Military Reserve in Fulton County, Ill. The innovative method, called Metal Mapper, will help geophysicists to locate and distinguish between ordnance and other metallic items more efficiently.The Geometrics Metal Mapper, is a commercially available sensor that the Corps is now using to collect data for advanced classification at environmental clean-up sites.

Advanced classification is used to differentiate between potentially hazardous munitions and other nonhazardous geology and debris that are detected. By avoiding scrap metal such as mufflers and metal cans geophysicists can spend their time concentrating on potential ordnance at the site.

"The intent of this technology is that it will actually take less time and effort to gather data because there won't be a need to dig as many anomalies as with the old technology," said Louisville District Project Manager Valerie Doss.

Additionally, the new classification system has the potential to support more cost-effective use of available resources.

"The majority of the cost for a munitions response site is attributed to digging holes," said Elise Goggin, geophysicist, Army Corps of Engineers Huntsville Center. "The ability to discriminate between ordnance and other metal means we will ultimately dig less and provide a reduction in project cost."

The Corps' Formerly Used Defense Site Program (FUDS) owns four metal mappers that will be used at several projects nationwide this year. "We are encouraging project teams to try to incorporate this technology if their site is appropriate," said Goggin.

"Camp Ellis is a suitable site because there is limited vegetation and the terrain can accommodate a vehicle to pull the equipment," said Goggin.

The metal mapper looks much like a sled and is moved across the ground by a utility vehicle. It will first be used on the ground at the Camp Ellis site in the fall of 2012 during the remedial investigation.

"We hope to be able to put this technology to use on many more of our Louisville District sites in the near future," said Doss. "This is a great step in the right direction toward cost-effective and timely clean-ups."

District employees give a day to Henryville, Ind., clean-up

Sarah Mattingly, public affairs

A group from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District, volunteered recently to assist with relief efforts in the tornado-ravaged town of Henryville, Ind. The group volunteered through Metro United Way, and each person used his or her annual leave to make time for the cause.

"It was an emotional day, but we were all really glad we did it," said Jason Root, resident engineer, Fort Knox Resident Office. "The outpouring of support was really good to see. I was very proud of my friends and co-workers that day."

Jason Root, Fort Knox Resident Office