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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers begins Former Erie Army Depot Ordnance Removal Project

PORT CLINTON, OH – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began their cleanup of munitions and explosives of concern and munitions debris from the beach area near the Former Erie Army Depot today. This surface removal action will reduce the risk to the public and the environment from these items that have washed up onto the beach from the former impact area in Lake Erie. This removal action is scheduled to take six to eight weeks and is being performed under a contract that has the potential for four removal actions on the beach within a two-year period.

Unexploded Ordnance experts will use hand held ordnance detection devices to search the area. Should an item be detected, the area will be excavated by hand to the extent necessary to fully identify, remove, and destroy any munitions and explosives. Any explosive ordnance found during this removal will be destroyed in place or in designated areas by detonation. These detonations will take place on Thursday afternoons. This overall effort is being fully coordinated with officials from the Corps, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the Ohio National Guard, and the affected property owners.

During a removal action earlier this spring, 1,342 munitions and explosives of concern items were located along 1.3 miles of the beach area. Two unfired 90 mm, M71 projectiles that were determined to contain high explosive were destroyed by intentional detonation. A total of 15,000 pounds of munitions debris was removed and recycled from the project.

Residents are reminded to remember the three Rs of unexploded ordnance safety - recognize, retreat and report. In the unlikely event they encounter any type of old suspected military related metal objects, they should never touch or attempt to move the item but should note its location, safely retreat from the area and report it to local law enforcement or call 911.

More information about this clean-up project, including the schedule and project updates, may be found at www.lrb.usace.army.mil/derpfuds/ead.html or by contacting the Army Corps of Engineers at 800 833-6390.