



FACT SHEET – BRAC and Brownfields Sites

Susanville Indian Rancheria (SIR) Properties
Sierra Army Depot, Herlong, CA

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The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide interested stakeholders with an overview of relevant environmental topics and conditions with respect to the Susanville Indian Rancheria (SIR) BRAC and brownfields properties near Sierra Army Depot in Herlong, California.

What are brownfields?

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), “brownfield site” means real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.

What are the benefits of brownfields redevelopment?

- Links economic vitality with environmental protection
- Stimulates economy through investment and job creation
- Returns abandoned or underutilized properties to tax roles
- Improves community appearance
- Fosters sustainable and livable communities
- Encourages planned growth/discourages urban sprawl
- Preserves greenspace and farmland

What is a BRAC Site?

“BRAC” is an acronym that stands for Base Realignment and Closure Act. It is the congressionally authorized process that the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) used to reorganize its base structure to more efficiently and effectively support forces, increase operational readiness and facilitate new ways of doing business. The ownership of some closure properties has been transferred to tribes and states.

Background

As part of the 1995 BRAC Act, the Sierra Army Depot (SAID) located adjacent to Honey Lake in Lassen County, CA, midway between Reno, NV and Susanville, CA is undergoing transformation of mission and has released property for reuse. Specifically, 72 acres of Herlong Parcel was acquired by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and held in trust for ownership by Susanville Indian Rancheria (SIR). The property transfer includes sixty housing units, a general purpose building, and old fire training burn ground. In accordance with federal statutes, an environmental condition report was completed by DoD, with a ‘no further action finding’ for transferred properties. However, based on site conditions, land use, and resource utilization, additional investigation was determined necessary by SIR. Based on the presence of potential contaminants, the SIR BRAC properties may qualify as brownfields sites, which are eligible for state and federal funding to address cleanup concerns.

Description

Because groundwater resources are used as a source of drinking water by Herlong residents, thorough evaluations of the water and designated land areas are extremely important. Subsequent site inspections by SIR, along with a limited amount of soil and groundwater sampling/analysis, ascertained potential environmental impacts to resources. Therefore, further assessment and monitoring plans were recommended by environmental professionals tasked by SIR.



Herlong Susanville Indian Rancheria Property

Potential Contaminants of Concern

Chemical compounds of particular interest because of potential impacts to human health and ecological receptors include:

- Perchlorate in water sources
- Trichloroethylene (TCE) in water sources
- Metals (e.g., manganese, copper, iron, etc.) in water sources
- Petroleum hydrocarbons in old fire training burn site soil

Potential Areas of Further Study

Given the limited information and site-specific data available to SIR, opportunities for further environmental assessment might consider the following:

- Additional monitoring wells (e.g., location, construction, installation, development, etc.)
- Development of sampling and analysis locations and procedures
- Lead paint and asbestos evaluations of housing units and building
- Delineation and characterization of the Old Fire Training Burn Site contamination
- Further study of potential contaminants of concern

EPA Website Information

These sites contain information related to BRAC and Brownfields Properties.

- Cleanup - <http://www.epa.gov/ebtpages/cleanup.html>
- Brownfields - <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/index.html>
- BRAC - <http://www.epa.gov/fedfac/documents/appenda.htm>
- Perchlorate - <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/ccl/perchlorate/perchlorate.html>

About the Author

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