

**Information Sheet #2
Formerly Used Defense Site Program
Former Laredo Air Force Base
Webb County, Texas**

**Trenching Areas and Shotgun Ranges
February 1997**

SITE HISTORY

In 1942, the U.S. Government purchased lands and easements of approximately 2,085 acres northeast of the city of Laredo. From 1942 to 1947, the base was used by the Army as a flexible gunnery school. From 1952 to 1974, the base was used by the Air Force as a pilot training facility. The former Air Force base was declared excess on March 29, 1974. Approximately 309 acres were either deeded to or sold to other Federal, State, and county agencies, or to private firms. The remainder of the site was deeded to the City of Laredo, Texas. Currently, most of the former Air Force base is occupied by Laredo International Airport. The Corps of Engineers (COE) is conducting initial investigations at Laredo Airport property on environmental conditions related to activities of the U.S. Air Force.

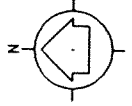
AREAS OF FOCUS

Historic Trenching Activities - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, under the Department of Defense Formerly Used Defense Site Program, is evaluating environmental conditions of former Army, Air Force, and other Department of Defense facilities throughout the United States. In its evaluation of the former Laredo Air Force Base, the Corps has examined historic aerial photographs. These photographs display what appears to be trenches in an area that is now used for residential and commercial properties. This area is located immediately west and northwest of the current airport (see map on back). Based on the photographs, the trenches appear similar to those used for landfills. The only information available on the contents of these trenches is from a geotechnical investigation phase report conducted by City officials prior to building an addition to Newman Elementary School. Investigations revealed the presence of refuse fill (clothes, mattresses, and other similar items) in the subsurface.

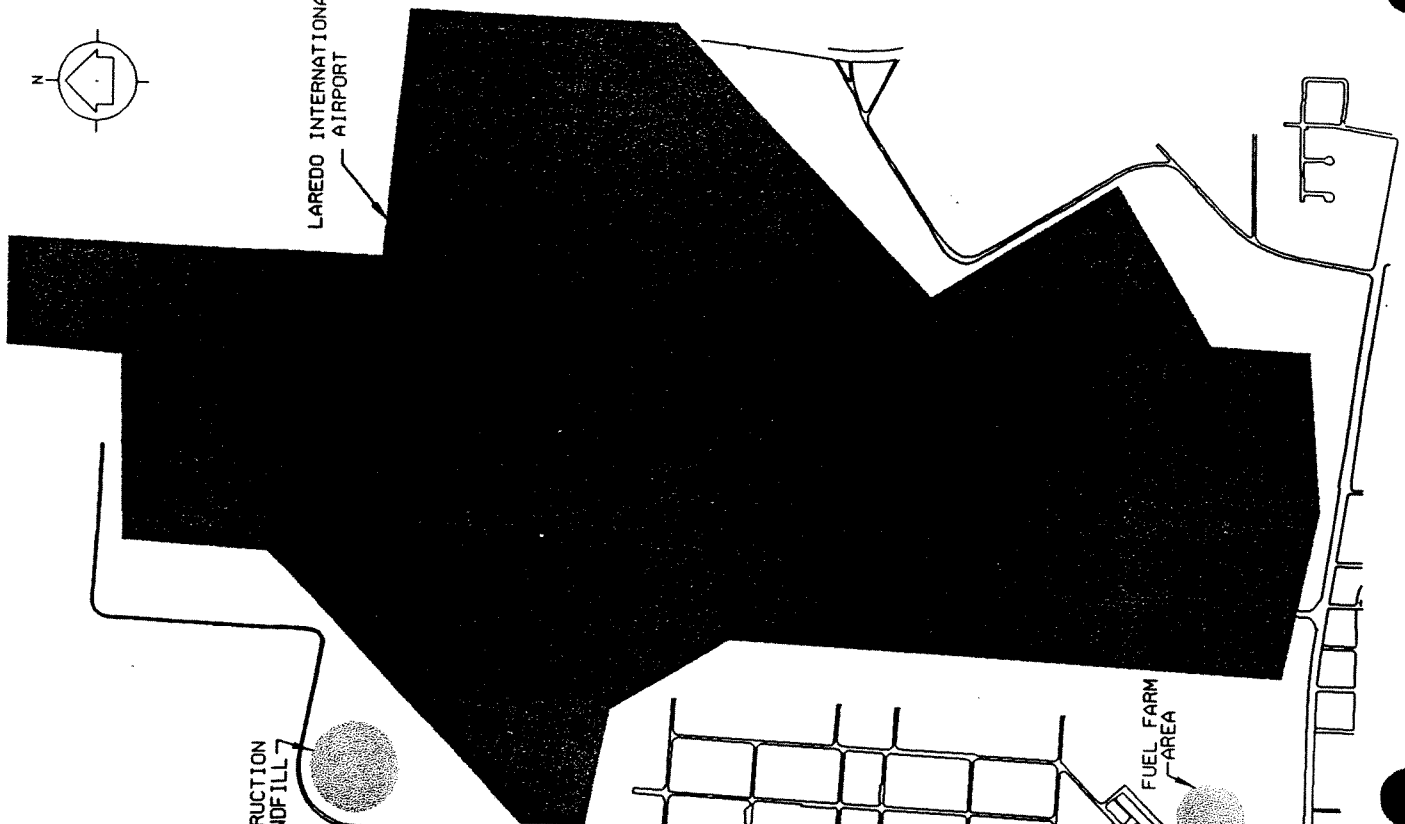
Former Shotgun Ranges - The Army Air Corps (predecessor to the U.S. Air Force) trained anti-aircraft gunners at the former base. To train personnel in aiming at flying objects, the Air Corps target practiced with shotguns similar to what is done in the sports of trap and skeet. Some areas were possibly used for skeet ranges by other parties after the former base property was deeded away in 1975. Areas used for shotgun ranges are now the location of residential and commercial properties. Much of the soils in the area have been disturbed since 1940; however, there is no information on how much lead shot and its residues, if any, remain in the soil.

FUTURE WORK

Trench Areas - The COE will conduct a geophysical survey that will aid in determining the presence, location, and characteristics of suspected debris in the trenches. Subsurface soil and



LAREDO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



CONSTRUCTION LANDFILL

FIRE TRAINING AREA

SHOTGUN RANGES

FUEL FARM AREA

GALE STREET

TRENCH INVESTIGATIONS

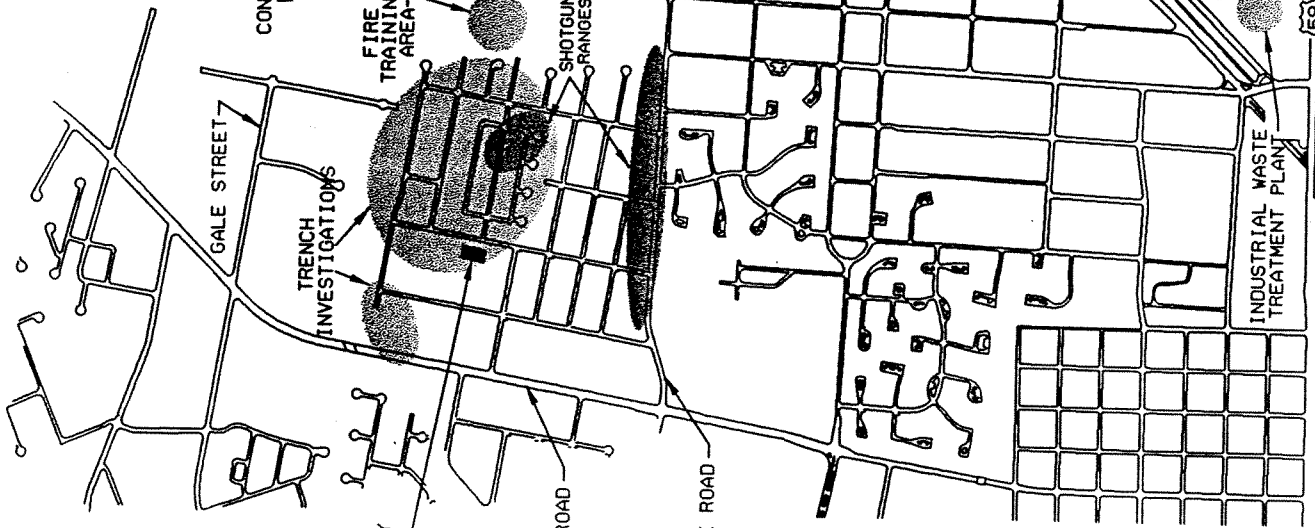
INDUSTRIAL WASTE TREATMENT PLANT

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NEWMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MCPHERSON ROAD

HILLSIDE ROAD



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groundwater samples will be taken near the trenches using a device that punches a small hole in the ground. All samples will be analyzed by a laboratory for constituents of potential concern. The COE will conduct sampling in a manner that will minimize disruptions to residential and commercial property. Most samples will be taken in city streets or on vacant property. The COE will obtain the property owner's permission through a right-of-entry permit before conducting any sampling activities on property. A work plan to investigate the trench areas will be developed by the COE and provided to the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) for their review and comment prior to any soil and groundwater investigations.

Shotgun Ranges - The COE will develop a work plan to investigate areas suspected of containing lead shot and its residues. Soil samples will be collected and analyzed for lead in a laboratory. The COE will conduct sampling in a manner that will minimize disruptions to residential and commercial property. The COE will obtain the property owner's permission through a right-of-entry permit before conducting any sampling activities on the property. The work plan to investigate soils suspected of containing lead will be submitted to the TNRCC for their review and comment prior to any soil investigations.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public participation in all aspects of the Department of Defense Formerly Used Defense Site Program is critical to the Corps mission of environmental restoration. Individuals and groups are encouraged to provide information, ask questions, and make comments about any Corps activities regarding the Former Laredo Air Force Base. Please direct your comments or questions to:

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