

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

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NUISANCE ABATEMENT ORDER

ATTENTION: United States of America
Department of the Navy
Lt. Commander Christopher Floro in his official capacity as
Base Commander, Adak

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Adak Island, Alaska

No Exhibits attached.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE: THIS IS A NUISANCE ABATEMENT ORDER ISSUED UNDER AS 46.03.810. FAILURE TO COMPLY MAY RESULT IN A CIVIL ACTION FOR INJUNCTIVE RELIEF UNDER AS 46.03.765 OR IN AN ACTION FOR SANCTIONS.

FACTUAL BASIS: Adak Island contains an extensive network of military defensive positions placed during World War II. Included in the defensive positions are hundreds of miles of picket fences designed to slow down the advance of an enemy land assault. The picket fences consist of barbed wire entanglements strung between metal posts that are locally referred to as "Rommel Stakes". The Rommel Stakes are typically 0.75 inches in diameter, and range from about 18 inches in length to 48 inches in length. The top of the stakes are cut at a 45 degree angle to a sharp point. This is intended to cut, wound, or impale enemy troops. The shorter stakes typically protrude at ankle height and are obscured by tundra grasses much of the year.

The stakes are inserted securely into the ground by a twisting motion to anchor a corkscrew bottom length of several inches. Depending on the height of the stake it may have one, two, or three loops in its length for securing barbed wire. According to field manuals from World War II, picket fences can also contain anti-personnel mines to increase the time and difficulty in passage. Signal flares and trip wires were also associated with the establishment of a defensive scheme using Rommel Stakes. In some areas, the removal of existing picket fences and stakes will likely require a coordinated effort with unexploded ordnance technicians.

On Adak, the U.S. Navy has removed Rommel Stakes and barbed wire in areas that have required geophysical surveys. This is due to the fact that the metallic nature of these items interferes with geophysical signals for subsurface metallic objects. Pictures of the Rommel Stakes are included as Exhibit 1. Locations of remaining picket fences are described in the Foster Wheeler report attached as Exhibit 2.

The Rommel Stakes and the associated picket fences endanger the health of the community.

REQUIRED ACTION: The property owner and the Base Commander must remove the Rommel Stakes and associated picket fences from Adak and dispose of the solid waste in accordance with applicable law. Removal must be completed no later than December 1, 2000. You are requested to submit a removal plan no later than January 4, 2000.

If you have any questions about this Order, you may contact Jennifer Roberts, Environmental Manager at: Department of Environmental Conservation, 555 Cordova St., Anchorage, Alaska 99501, 269-7553.

Dated: August 6, 1999

Ron Klein

Ron Klein
Acting Program Manager
Contaminated Sites Remediation Program
Department of Environmental Conservation