



Clark County pursues an agreement with the U.S. Army to cover cleanup costs at Camp Bonneville, east of Vancouver, in order to make the site a future park.

Military Wasteland

Former base near Vancouver still not ready for park use

BY CARI HACHMANN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A deadline recently passed for Clark County and the Army to reach a funding agreement that will resume the multi-million dollar clean-up of Camp Bonneville, a former military training base east of Vancouver.

The state has plans to re-use a portion of the property for a regional park once clean-up is complete in many years to come. However, negotiations with the

Army have stalled due to the property's history of ownership transfers, funding disputes, and underestimated costs of further contamination found on the site.

Established in 1909 as a drill field and rifle range for the Vancouver Barracks, the 3,840 acre property six miles north of Camas was used as a military training camp until the U.S. Army closed the facility in 1995.

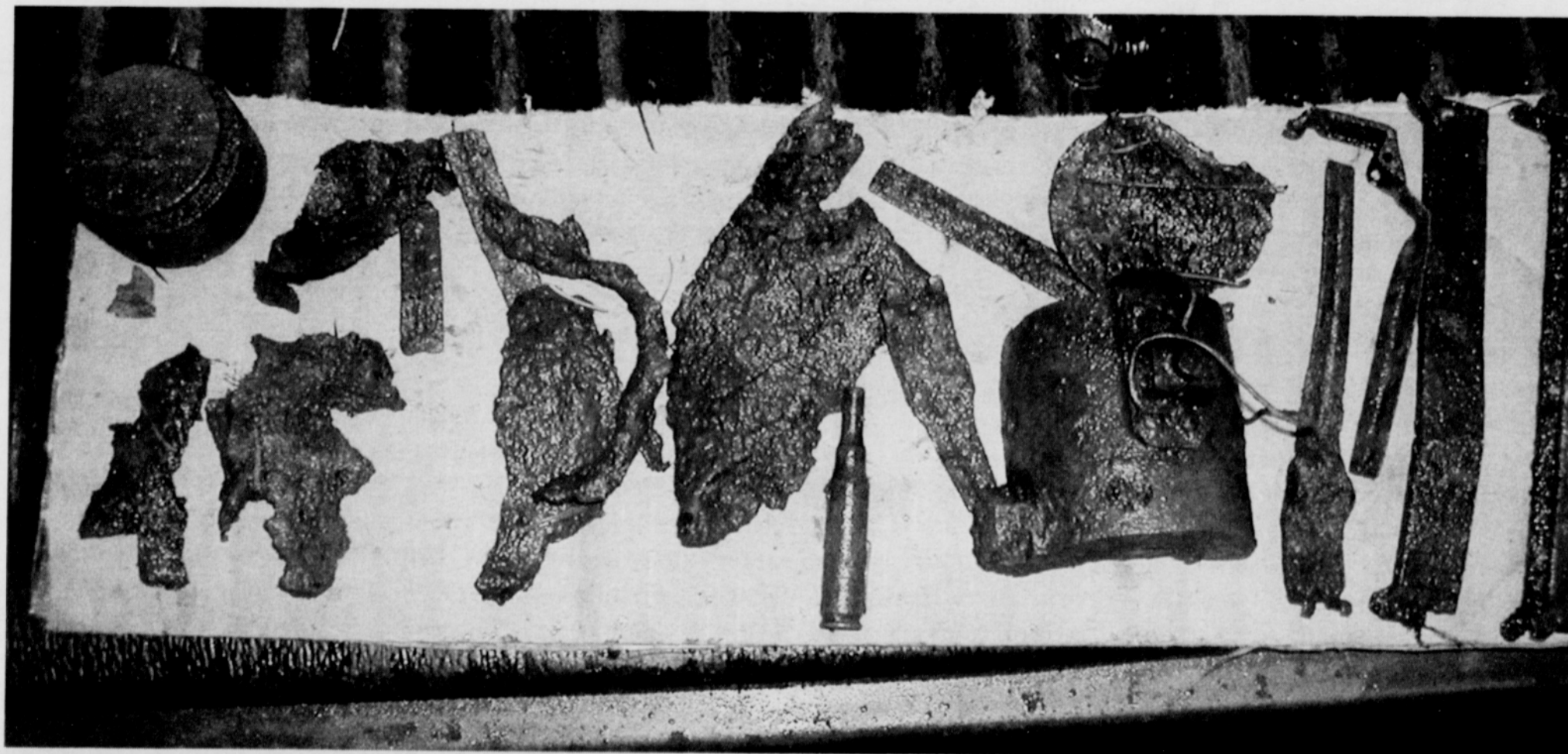
Once closed, the Base Realignment and Closure Team

(BRAC) began a planning process for re-use of the property with oversight from the Department of Ecology, Clark County, the EPA until 2003, and funding from the Army.

In 2006, the Army transferred 3,020 acres of the property to Clark County to finish the job left incomplete.

The same year, the Army provided \$28.6 million in a fixed-price contract under the Environmental Services Cooperative Agreement, for clean-up. The

For over 85 years, the Army used the Camp Bonneville east of Vancouver as a military training base, and despite millions in federal funding and years of clean-up attempts, the site remains rampant with environmental pollution and munitions of explosive concern.



Pieces of ordnance make up some of the scrap munitions uncovered from Camp Bonneville.

county then hired Bonneville Conservation, Restoration, and Renewal and two subcontractors, to take ownership and clean the property.

The clean-up effort halted in 2009 after contractors found more than 700 "munitions of explosive concern," a significantly greater number than the Army had reported in earlier assessments.

Other contaminants found were unexploded ordinances, explosive compounds, lead, petroleum products, pesticides, buried chemical warfare, and unknown levels of ammonium perchlorate and RDX leaking from landfills into the groundwa-

continued ▼ on page 6