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Tekoi test range is a cold war era facility built in Utah's west desert near Dugway Proving Grounds. This facility was designated inspectable as part of the START treaty with the Soviet Union. This was a treaty to reduce the number of strategic ballistic missiles and heavy bombers and their nuclear warheads. Constructed by Hercules Inc. in 1976, this facility was designed to test high explosive and combustible materials for rocket fuel. Many of the buildings and bunkers are stuck in time. They haven't been touched since the place closed. Data reels, files, food and equipment remain just as they were left. Short tunnels lead to data centers in underground bunkers. these bunkers housed cold storage and data recording areas. once recording explosion and burn rate numbers now decaying antiquated equipment. The rocket test building, once rumbling with such sonic sound now rests silent withering away. The facility now owned by Orbital ATK sits unused in the desert decaying away. 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The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. Tekoi Rocket Test Range, or Tekoi, is a former solid fuel rocket motor test and calibration site operated by Hercules Aerospace near the Utah Test and Training Range in Utah's West Desert, approximately 80 miles (130 km) west of Salt Lake City, Utah. It is located on the Goshute's Skull Valley Indian Reservation. Hercules[] The Tekoi rocket testing facility was constructed in 1976 for machining, testing and calibration of solid rocket booster motors by Hercules Aerospace's Utah Aerospace Division; Hercules developed double base propellants. By 1990, Hercules used 35 acres of their 3500-acre lease held through the Bureau of Indian Affairs and employed 17 people on site. Hercules employed approximately 3000 people 75 miles away at their Baccus Works in Magna, Utah for solid fuel motor construction in 1990; by 1992, as the MGM-134 Midgetman contracts closed, the employment was reduced to about 1000. Hercules designed the Nike Ajax M5E1 steel-tubed solid fuel motor, used as the Nike Hercules XM-42 (first stage) package, which contained four of the M5E1 motors; approximately 25,000 Nike Hercules were produced. Hercules also designed the Orion rocket motors,[1] the MK12 (used for the RIM-67A) and MK70 (RIM-67C), and the MK11 Talos.[2][3][4][5][6] Hercules designed the Pershing II missile first and second-stage motors, then tested them at Tekoi in 1980. The engines used HTPB in the fuel casting, EPDM insulation, and Kevlar casings to save weight.[7] In 1986, Hercules designed and tested the second and third-stage solid fuel motors for the MGM-134 Midgetman at the site.[8] The motors used a graphite filament-wound case to reduce weight and NEPE fuel composition that was previously tested and flown on the Peacekeeper's SR120 second stage. Tekoi was a listed SLBM inspectable site for the START nuclear arms-reduction treaty with Russia, covering the Trident II SLBM.[9][10][11][12][13] Hercules Aerospace was purchased by Alliant Techsystems in 1995; Alliant tested the Delta III motor at Tekoi in the late 1990s.[14] In 2001, Alliant purchased Thiokol and transferred remaining testing to their Promontory, Utah facility; Alliant became Orbital ATK in 2015, which became Northrop Grumman Innovation Systems in 2018, which became the Northrop Grumman Space Systems Group in 2020. Solid rocket boosters are still tested and calibrated at Promontory. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty), active from 1987 to 2019, required the US to destroy the Pershing IA and II missiles. This was planned to occur at Tekoi by "static burning" the solid fuel motors, leading to objections by environmental groups in Utah. The destruction took place at Longhorn Army Ammunition Plant in Texas instead.[4][15][16] Hercules employed several Goshute tribal members as of the mid-1990s, and revenue from the Tekoi lease was about 90% of the tribe's income. Around 1995, approximately 30 members were living on the reservation and 119 enrolled in the tribe. The lease was not renewed in 1995 and the on-reservation tribal population dropped sharply by 1999; no money came from the lease, no tribal members worked there, and only about 15 members lived on the reservation. Tribe members accused their chairman of trying to raise the lease price by a multiple of 4 or 5, which caused the lease to not be renewed.[17][18] Return[] The land has been given back to the Skull Valley Indian Reservation.[19] The Utah Film Commission advertises Tekoi as a film location, stating "visitors can expect dilapidated bunkers, military watchtowers, sprawling barren landscapes, and razor wire fencing along the perimeter - all with a post-apocalyptic feel."[19] Deseret UAS had a lease to test on the site in 2019, testing and demonstrating hazmat response drones.[20][21][note 1]. Nuclear disposal[] The Goshute tribe had planned on allowing the Private Fuel Storage consortium to store 44,000 tons of high-level nuclear waste from over 100 nuclear reactors on the site in above-ground storage. The license from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, submitted in 1997, was approved in 2006. The tribe had received widespread opposition to the efforts, which were finally canceled in 2012.[22] A 1999 report from Private Fuel Storage calculated the impact of an explosion from the largest solid-fuel rocket motor capable of being tested at Tekoi, being "1.2 million pounds of Class 1.1 explosive". It would create a 1 psi overpressure to 4782 feet and a 0.5 psi overpressure to 7970 feet. PFS also evaluated the risk of a rocket motor escaping the test stand, which was considered improbable given the design of the facility.[5][23] Balefill trash disposal[] In 2003, while the nuclear storage was still under consideration, the Goshutes began a balefill trash site (landfill). It was operated by CR Group, which was a cooperation of Ace Disposal and Metro Waste. It was in full operation by 2005.[24][25][26][27][28] Waste Management of Utah purchased the site from Metro Waste in 2008. Waste Management disclosed an EPA violation of a missing initial capacity report and permit application in March 2008; no penalty was assessed, given the circumstances.[29] Notes[] ↑ See also XTI TriFan 600. References[] External links[] Coordinates: 40°22′08″N 112°46′05″W / 40.369°N 112.768°W / 40.369; -112.768 Yellow blast shed at Tekoi. It rolls backward to expose a concrete block for deflecting the exhaust from a rocket motor during testing. In a remote part of the desert in Tooele County, about 80 miles southwest of Salt Lake City, stands an abandoned yellow shed that was once used to test rocket motors capable of delivering a retaliatory nuclear strike in the event of a Soviet missile attack. Like the anachronism that it is, politically and otherwise, the shed stands in stark contrast to the surrounding landscape. While not visible from the public road, it is off-limits to all but an intrepid few, and may still be under military surveillance. About the size of a large garage, and encircled by lightning rods, the shed and other structures look oddly out of place amid the sagebrush and cheat grass that surrounds them. Abandoned and virtually forgotten for decades, this is a derelict monument to nuclear proliferation and Cold War collaboration. Welcome to the Tekoi Rocket Test Range. Built by Hercules Inc. in 1976, Tekoi was a solid fuel rocket motor test and calibration site operated by Hercules Aerospace under contract by the US Military, and was operational throughout the 1980s and 90s. In the early 90s, Alliant Techsystems (ATK) purchased Hercules along with its Bacchus facility in Magna. Both Hercules and ATK were vital military suppliers of solid fuel rocket motors capable of delivering Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) from underground silos and nuclear submarines during the US/Soviet nuclear arms race, guaranteeing not only mutually-assured destruction of both countries in the event of a nuclear attack by the Russians, but total global annihilation. Despite the advanced technology that was being produced by Hercules and ATK, the shed itself was not a high-tech structure. Its corrugated steel walls and roof were on rails that allowed it to roll backward, exposing a large concrete block that deflected the blast from a stationary rocket motor without melting the shed. Located on Goshute tribal land in Skull Valley, about 10 miles north of the Army’s Dugway Proving Grounds (also known as Area 52), Tekoi is a relic of the US/Soviet disarmament agreement known as START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) which was signed in 1991 by George W. Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev. Because of Soviet involvement, the most peculiar aspect of the Tekoi site was the signage at the gate, which was in Russian. According to author Lea Rekow, “Russian signage on the perimeter of the facility is due to the fact that this site was designated as “inspectable” for Russian inspectors as part of the START Treaty (as were other sites in Utah that were used for the development and storage of submarine launched ballistic missiles, at Oasis, Hill AFB, and ATK at Magna).” Prefabricated houses at the site “were shipped from Russia for the Russian inspectors and were complete with Russian furnishings and electricity scrubbers,” ensuring that the Americans hadn’t planted listening devices in the walls for the purpose of eavesdropping on their Soviet counterparts. ATK’s lease expired in 1999, and control of the land fell to the Goshute Tribe. It remains mostly unchanged today except for the slow intrusion of desert vegetation and the ravages of time. Photo by David E. Jensen. In the words of one anonymous blogger in July 2010, “[When] the site was abandoned, they (ATK, I believe) left a lot intact. There is a gate with a small guard shack that marks the entrance, but no lock on the gate or any No Trespassing signs. There are about a dozen above ground buildings, and 5 or 6 bunkers. Everything was accessible except the guard shack — which still had name tags hanging on a bulletin board, and locks on a row of lockers.” As this author discovered, a concrete barricade now blocks the padlocked gate. This is unfortunate, because, in addition to the above-ground structures, there exists the probability of an underground portion of the facility just begging to be explored. Rocket production in Utah continues to this day, with much of the current testing being done at the Thiokol plant near Promontory. U RELATED CONTENT San Rafael Secrets: What Did Madame Marie Curie Do in the Middle of a Utah Desert? 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