

News

Driveable grass supports training at McCoy

A synthetic, concrete-like material is being used on North and South Post to improve access for vehicles/equipment used to support training at Fort McCoy and minimize damage to training areas.

Brooks Lundeen, the Land Rehabilitation and Maintenance (LRAM) coordinator for the Integrated Training Area Management (ITAM) program, said drivable grass material can be used to support equipment to facilitate training or emergency services to an area. The drivable grass areas are located strategically by Range 36 and by the Combined Arms Collective Training Facility to support training. Their main purpose is to provide landing zone/pick up zones for rotary aircraft at these locations.

“It’s a commercial product that I learned about at a conference,” Lundeen said. “It’s like having a concrete driveway without the bother of maintenance or some of the environmental concerns.”

Lundeen said the material is commonly used in housing developments. Drivable grass, defined by its manufacturer as a permeable, flexible and plantable concrete pavement system, is designed for use in areas where a permeable, and/or a vegetated surface is desired for aesthetic or sustainable reasons.

Installation of drivable grass is very labor intensive, Lundeen said.

The LRAM crew grubbed and cleared the sites and installed two-by-two-foot sections of the material separately in 2009.

The material was filled with top soil and left to sit over the winter. In 2010, it was planted with a variety of short grasses, such as June Grass, Sand Drop Seed or White Clover. The result is something that resembles



Brooks Lundeen, the Land Rehabilitation and Maintenance (LRAM) coordinator for the Integrated Training Area Management (ITAM) program, checks out a drivable grass pavement system, which is used to improve access for vehicles and equipment in Fort McCoy training areas. (Photo by Rob Schuette)

concrete squares built into grass, but without the need to maintain it, such as to seal coat it, or to use herbicides to control weed growth, he said. The material also promotes natural drainage, so it isn't as prone to cracking or causing any environmental concerns associated with storm water runoff.

Lundeen said the drivable grass areas at Fort McCoy have been mowed once a season and provide hard surfaces to support vehicles and equipment, such as those used for emergency purposes or training.

"It looks aesthetically pleasing and has held up quite well," Lundeen said. "We're looking to do more areas like this to support training."

The ITAM crew did the sites as do-it-yourself projects. Lundeen said unlike concrete the drivable grass material promotes grass growth so it blends into the landscape at ground level. If a medevac helicopter needed to make an emergency landing on the material it is easy to spot the area from the air, he said.



Driveable grass, pictured near the Urban Complex Training Site on North Post, provides improved access to vehicles and equipment, while helping to reduce environmental damage. (Photo by Rob Schuette)

[[Top of Page](#)]

[[The Real McCoy Online Home](#)]