

APPENDIX A

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

VOLUME II OF III

EGLIN BRAC 2005 PROGRAM

DRAFT EIS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND SYMBOLS

AFB	Air Force Base
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This appendix consists of three volumes. Appendix A, Volume I contains the *Final Eglin 2005 Public Scoping Summary Report*, a summary and overview of the public scoping process for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared for the Proposed Implementation of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 Decisions and Related Actions at Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), Florida, to include public scoping, agency correspondence, and public comments received during the public scoping process. Appendix A, Volume II presents information and materials associated with the Draft EIS public involvement process. Appendix A, Volume III presents public and agency comments received during the Draft EIS public commenting period and the Air Force response to these comments.

This section, Appendix A, Volume II, contains the following Eglin BRAC 2005 Program Draft EIS public involvement documentation:

Draft EIS Public Comment Process

- Federal Register Notice of Availability
- General Draft EIS Cover Letter
- Library Cover Letter
- Libraries Receiving Draft EIS
- Media Releases
- Newspaper Display Ad
- Display Ad Schedule
- Public Service Announcement
- Flyer
- Public Hearings Presentation
- Public Hearings Transcripts
- Public Hearings Media Coverage

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Notice of Availability

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE
(BRAC) 2005 DECISIONS AND RELATED ACTIONS AT EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE
(AFB), FL.

Department of Defense (DoD); Department of the Air Force

ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA) for the development of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 Decisions and related actions at Eglin AFB, FL.

AGENCY: United States Air Force (Air Force)

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 United States Code 4321, *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) parts 1500-1508), and Air Force policy and procedures (32 CFR part 989), the Air Force has made available for public review and comment a Draft EIS for the proposed implementation of the 2005 BRAC Commission's recommendations and related actions for Eglin AFB, FL.

The 2005 BRAC Commission identified establishment of a Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Initial Joint Training Site (IJTS), relocation of the Army 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) [7SFG(A)] from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and creation of Air Integrated Weapons and Armaments Research, Development and Acquisition, Test and Evaluation Center by relocating the Weapons and Armaments In-Service Engineering Research, Development and Acquisition, and Test and Evaluation from Hill AFB, UT and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency from Fort Belvoir, VA to Eglin AFB.

The JSF IJTS would be the initial training site for joint Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps JSF training organizations, as well as the United Kingdom, which is a full partner in this program. The training site would teach aviators and maintenance technicians how to properly operate and maintain 107 F-35 aircraft. As part of this action, F-35 basing, facility construction and renovation, on-site maintenance and use of training airspace are being analyzed. The 7SFG(A)'s principal mission includes planning and executing unconventional warfare, combating terrorism operations, direct action, special reconnaissance, and foreign internal defense. Their realignment to Eglin provides multi-service collocation, joint training synergy with Air Force Special Operations Command and places 7SFG(A) on training lands that match their wartime area of responsibility in Central and South America.

Approximately 4,600 personnel are associated with the beddown of both organizations. When including spouses and children, the estimated total of personnel coming to the Eglin AFB area would be 10,000 people.

As part of this action, the Air Force is considering various alternatives for facility construction and renovation, land range development, equipment storage and operation,

and land-based training/maneuvering to be analyzed in the EIS. The EIS may also include within its scope the potential environmental effects associated with socioeconomic, transportation, noise, cultural resources, water resources, wetlands, floodplains, air quality, land use, infrastructure, and biological resources.

A copy of the Draft EIS will be available for review beginning March 28, 2008.

- At the following libraries:
 - o Robert L.F. Sikes Public Library, 1445 Commerce Drive, Crestview, Florida 32539
 - o Niceville Public Library, 206 North Partin Drive, Niceville, Florida 32578
 - o Fort Walton Beach Library, 185 Miracle Strip Pkwy SE, Fort Walton Beach, Florida 32548
 - o Monroe County Library, 121 Pineville Rd, Monroeville, Alabama 36460
 - o Andalusia Public Library, 212 South Three Notch Street, Andalusia Alabama 36420

The Air Force will host public hearings at the following dates, times and locations:

April 15, 2008, Tuesday 6 to 8 p.m.	Niceville High School 800 East John Sims Parkway Niceville, Florida
April 16, 2008, Wednesday 6 to 8 p.m.	Crestview Community Center 1446 Commerce Drive Crestview, Florida
April 17, 2008, Thursday 6 to 8 p.m.	Monroeville Water Tower Conference Center 181 East Claiborne Street Monroeville, Alabama

Hearing dates, times, and locations will be announced through the local media. Oral and written comments presented at the hearing, as well as written comments received by the Air Force during the public comment period and throughout the environmental impact analysis process, will be considered in the Final EIS. To ensure the Air Force has sufficient time to include public input in the preparation of the Final EIS, written comments from the public should be submitted to the address below by May 12, 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Please direct any written comments or requests for information to Mr. Mike Spaits, Eglin AFB Environmental Public Affairs, 96 CEG/CEV-PA, Eglin AFB, FL 32542-5000, (850) 882-2878, spaitsm@eglin.af.mil. Handicap assistance and translation service requests at the public hearings are available in advance through Mr. Spaits.

General Draft EIS Cover Letter



3 April 2008

RE: Environmental Impact Statement Public Review

Proposed Implementation of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 Decisions and Related Actions at Eglin AFB, Florida

To Whom It May Concern:

The Air Force, through the Environmental Protection Agency, published a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register in late March 2008 announcing the availability of the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Implementation of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 Decisions and Related Actions at Eglin AFB, FL*. The publication of the NOA began a 45-day public comment period.

For your reference, enclosed is a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The document is also available online at <http://www.eglin.af.mil/>.

If you have questions, please contact Mr. Michael Spaits, Environmental Public Affairs Officer, 96 CEG/CEV, at (850) 882-2878. Thank you for your assistance and support.

Sincerely,

SCIENCE APPLICATIONS INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Henry C. McLaurine".

Henry C. McLaurine
Project Manager

Enclosure

Science Applications International Corporation
1140 North Eglin Parkway | Shalimar, Florida 32579 | tel: 850.651.1053 | saic.com

Library Cover Letter



27 March 2008

Valparaiso Community Library
459 Valparaiso Parkway
Valparaiso, FL 32580

RE: Environmental Impact Statement Public Review

Proposed Implementation of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 Decisions and Related Actions at Eglin AFB, Florida

To Whom It May Concern:

The Air Force, through the Environmental Protection Agency, published a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register in late March 2008 announcing the availability of the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Implementation of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 Decisions and Related Actions at Eglin AFB, FL*. The publication of the NOA began a 45-day public comment period.

As a designated federal repository and/or local area public library, we, on behalf of Eglin AFB, are requesting that you make the Draft Environmental Impact Statement available at the library until close of business on 12 May 2008. The public notice advises the public that they can review the document at local libraries. After 12 May 2008, you may retain the document or discard it at your discretion.

If you have questions, please contact Mr. Michael Spaits, Environmental Public Affairs Officer, 96 CEG/CEV, at (850) 882-2878. Thank you for your assistance and support.

Sincerely,

SCIENCE APPLICATIONS INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Henry C. McLaurine", is written over a white background.

Henry C. McLaurine
Project Manager

Enclosure

Science Applications International Corporation
1140 North Eglin Parkway | Shalimar, Florida 32579 | tel: 850.651.1053 | saic.com

Libraries Receiving Draft EIS

LIBRARY MAILING – PUBLIC DRAFT BRAC EIS – MARCH 2008

Monroe County Library
121 Pineville Road
Monroeville, AL 36460

Andalusia Public Library
212 South Three Notch Street
Andalusia, AL 36420

ValParaiso Community Library
459 Valparaiso Parkway
Valparaiso, FL 32580

Robert F. Sikes Public Library
1445 Commerce Drive
Crestview, FL 35239

Niceville Public Library
206 North Partin Drive
Niceville, FL 32578

Fort Walton Beach Library
185 Miracle Strip Pkwy SE
Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548

Media Release

**U.S. AIR FORCE****UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**

96 CEG/CEVPA

Eglin AFB, FL 32542-5000

Tel. (850) 882-2878

MEDIA RELEASE

April 11, 2008

AIR FORCE EIS AVAILABLE TO PUBLIC

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The United States Air Force has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze the potential impacts for implementing the Eglin Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 decisions and related actions involving establishment of the Joint Strike Fighter Integrated Training Site and relocation of the Army 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) from Fort Bragg, N.C.

A copy of the Draft EIS can be reviewed at the following libraries:

- 1.) Robert L. F. Sikes Public Library, 1445 Commerce Drive, Crestview, FL 32539
- 2.) Niceville Public Library, 206 North Partin Drive, Niceville, FL 32578
- 3.) Fort Walton Beach Library, 185 Miracle Strip Pkwy SE, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548
- 4.) Navarre Community Library, 1917 Holley-Navarre School Road, Navarre, Florida 32566
- 5.) ValParaiso Community Library, 459 Valparaiso Parkway, Valparaiso, Florida 32580
- 6.) Monroe County Library, 121 Pineville Road, Monroeville, Alabama 36460
- 7.) Andalusia Public library, 212 South Three Notch Street, Andalusia, Alabama 36420

The Air Force will hold three public hearings to provide the public information about this Draft EIS and ensure the public has a fair and equal opportunity to consider and comment on the document. Attendees will be encouraged to provide oral and written comments during the public hearings or to mail in written comments prior to the close of the public comment period, May 12, 2008.

-MORE-

Meeting locations, dates and times are provided below:

<i>Date:</i>	<i>Location:</i>
<p><i>Tuesday, April 15</i> 6 to 6:30 p.m.- Open House 6:30 to 7 p.m.- Air Force Presentation 7 to 8 p.m.- Public Testimony</p>	<p>Niceville High School 800 East John Sims Parkway Niceville, Florida</p>
<p><i>Wednesday, April 16</i> 6 to 6:30 p.m.- Open House 6:30 to 7 p.m.- Air Force Presentation 7 to 8 p.m.- Public Testimony</p>	<p>Crestview Community Center 1446 Commerce Drive Crestview, Florida</p>
<p><i>Thursday, April 17</i> 6 to 6:30 p.m.- Open House 6:30 to 7 p.m.- Air Force Presentation 7 to 8 p.m.- Public Testimony</p>	<p>Monroeville Water Tower Conference Center 181 East Claiborne Street Monroeville, AL 36460</p>

People wishing to mail comments or provide further input should submit them by **May 12, 2008** to:

Mr. Mike Spaits
96 CEG/CEVPA
Eglin AFB, FL 32542-5000
spaitsm@eglin.af.mil

For questions, contact Mr. Mike Spaits with Eglin AFB Environmental Public Affairs at (850) 882-2878.

Newspaper Display Ad



Eglin BRAC Program 2005



PUBLIC HEARINGS

You Are Invited!

The U.S. Air Force, through Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), Florida has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that analyzes potential environmental consequences associated with the implementation of the Eglin Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 decisions and related actions that involve establishing a training site and relocating the Army 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) from Fort Bragg, North Carolina to Eglin AFB, as well as establishing the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Initial Joint Training Site (IJTS).

Three public hearings are scheduled to provide the public information about this Draft EIS and ensure the public has a fair and equal opportunity to consider and comment on the document and the proposal. An Air Force presentation will occur at 6:30 p.m., 30 minutes after the start of each hearing. All interested individuals and organizations are encouraged to attend.

Public Hearing Schedule:
 6-6:30 p.m. — Open House
 6:30-7 p.m. — Air Force Presentation
 7 to 8 p.m. — Public Testimony

Tuesday, April 15, 2008 6 to 8 p.m.	Niceville High School 800 East John Sims Parkway Niceville, Florida
Wednesday, April 16, 2008 6 to 8 p.m.	Crestview Community Center 1446 Commerce Drive Crestview, Florida
Thursday, April 17, 2008 6 to 8 p.m.	Monroeville Water Tower Conference Center 181 East Claiborne Street Monroeville, Alabama

Please submit written comments before **May 12, 2008** to the address listed below.

For more information, please contact:

Mr. Mike Spaits
 96 CEG/CEV-PA
 Eglin AFB, FL 32542-5000
 Phone: 580-882-2878
 Fax: 850-882-6284
 Email: spaitsm@eglin.af.mil

Display Ad Schedule for Public Hearing

<i>Name of Paper</i>	<i>Date of Publication</i>
Northwest Florida Daily News	Sundays, 30 March and 13 April, 2008
Crestview News Bulletin	Saturday, 29 March, 2008
The Monroe Journal	Tuesdays, 1 and 10 April, 2008
The Bay Beacon	Wednesday, 9 April 2008
Mobile Press Register	Sunday, 30 March, 2008

Public Service Announcement



U.S. AIR FORCE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

96 CEG/CEV-PA

Eglin AFB, FL 32542-5000

Tel. (850) 882-2878

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

AIR FORCE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT AVAILABLE

The United States Air Force, through Eglin Air Force Base, is holding a series of public hearings to solicit comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which has been prepared to analyze the potential impacts for implementing the Eglin Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 decisions and related actions involving establishment of the Joint Strike Fighter Initial Joint Training Site and relocation of the Army 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) from Fort Bragg, N.C.

All members of the public are invited. Meetings will be held on Tuesday, April 15 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Niceville High School in Niceville, Florida, Wednesday, April 16 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Crestview Community Center in Crestview, Florida, and Thursday, April 17 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Water Tower Conference Center in Monroeville, Alabama.

For more information, please contact Mike Spaits, Eglin Air Force Base Environmental Public Affairs at 850-882-2878.

-30-

Flyer



Eglin BRAC Program 2005



Please Attend!

The U.S. Air Force, through Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement that analyzes potential environmental consequences associated with the implementation of the Eglin Base Realignment and Closure 2005 decisions and related actions that involve establishment of the Joint Strike Fighter Initial Joint Training Site and relocation of the U.S. Army 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) from Fort Bragg, North Carolina to Eglin AFB. To view or download the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, visit www.eglin.af.mil

Please attend a public hearing to:

- Learn about the Draft EIS
- Provide community-specific input
- Consider and comment on the document and the proposal

Public Hearing Schedule:

6:00 to 6:30 p.m - Open House
6:30 to 7:00 p.m - Air Force Presentation
7:00 to 8:00 p.m - Public Testimony

Public Hearing Dates and Locations:

Tuesday, April 15, 2008
Niceville High School, 800 E. John Sims Pkwy., Niceville, FL

Wednesday, April 16, 2008
Crestview Community Center, 1446 Commerce Dr., Crestview, FL

Thursday, April 17, 2008
Monroeville Water Tower Conference Center,
181 E. Claiborne St., Monroeville, AL




For More Information Contact:

Mr. Mike Spaits
96 CEG/CEV-PA
Eglin AFB, FL 32542-5000
Phone: 850-882-2878; Fax: 850-882-6284
Email: spaitsm@eglin.af.mil

Public Hearings Presentation

Headquarters U. S. Air Force

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U.S. AIR FORCE

**Eglin AFB
Base Realignment
and Closure (BRAC)
2005 Program**

Public Hearing

15, 16 & 17 April 2008



U.S. AIR FORCE

Agenda

- Open House
- Public Hearing Begins
 - Part 1
 - Welcome and Introductions
 - Air Force Briefing
 - 10 Minute Break
 - Part 2
 - Oral Testimony

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Overview

U.S. AIR FORCE

- The Environmental Process
- Your Participation in the Environmental Process
- Overview of the Eglin BRAC 2005 Actions
- Why Are We Here?
- Proposed Action and Alternatives Updates
- Summary of Environmental Findings
- Your Oral Testimony
- Adjourn

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Environmental Process

U.S. AIR FORCE

What is the purpose of the EIS?

- Evaluate alternatives for the following at Eglin AFB
 - Establishing the 7SFG(A) Cantonment Area
 - Accommodate training requirements for 7SFG(A)
 - Establishing the JSF IJTS Cantonment Area
 - Accommodate flight operations for JSF training requirements

What do the alternatives involve?

- By BRAC law, alternatives address how, and not if, BRAC should be implemented at Eglin
- Reasonable alternatives
 - Must consider input during environmental impact analysis process
 - Need not be highly speculative
- “No Action Alternative”
 - BRAC will be implemented by law
 - No Action Alternative must be assessed as required by NEPA

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EIS Schedule

U.S. AIR FORCE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Milestone</u>
1 Aug 06	Notice of Intent Published in <i>Federal Register</i>
22, 24 Aug 06	Public Scoping Meetings
6, 7 Nov 07	Public Scoping Update Meetings
28 March 08	Release of Draft EIS to the Public
15-17 April 08	Draft EIS Public Hearings
12 May 08	End of Draft EIS 45-Day Public Comment Period
Aug 08	Release of Final EIS to the Public
Sep 08	Record of Decision Signed

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What Does BRAC Mean for Eglin?

U.S. AIR FORCE

- **Relocate 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) [7SFG(A)] from Ft. Bragg, NC**
 - Approximately 2,200 troops
 - Ground training
- **Establish Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Initial Joint Training Site (IJTS)**
 - Approximately 2,300 Military and civilian / contractor personnel
 - 107 Primary Assigned F-35 aircraft
 - Flight training

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7SFG(A) Cantonment Proposed Action

Requirements

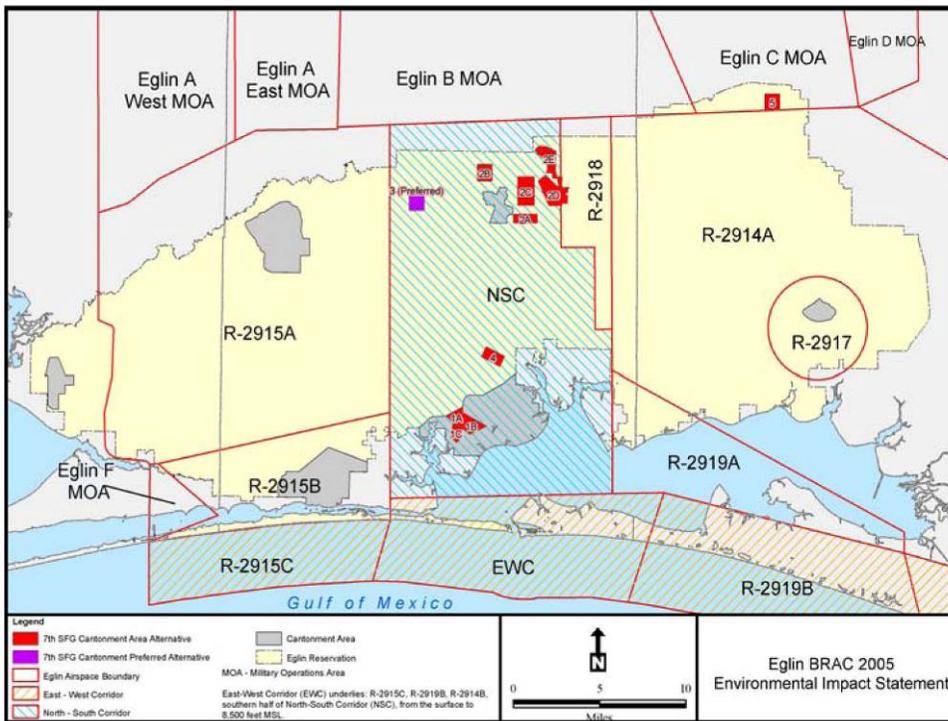
- Cantonment area of approximately 300 acres
- 33 facilities (approximately 1.5 million square feet) including barracks, motor pools, and other buildings
- Munitions storage area

Minimum requirements for candidate alternatives

- Adequate acreage for cantonment, security, and future expansion
- Location that provides
 - Deployment airlift requirements
 - Appropriate access to major transportation artery
 - Minimal impact to Eglin test mission
 - Appropriate ammunition storage and transport
 - No more than one hour transport timing to training ranges
 - Minimal environmental considerations and avoids unexploded ordnance areas

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7SFG(A) Training Proposed Action

Requirements

- 7SFG(A) Training
 - 13 new range facilities
 - >6,000 acres of training area
 - Training Area Requirements
 - Wheeled vehicle use (Humvees, heavy trucks, etc.)
 - Fixed and rotary wing aircraft
 - Live / Inert ordnance use (small arms, large caliber)
 - Water operations

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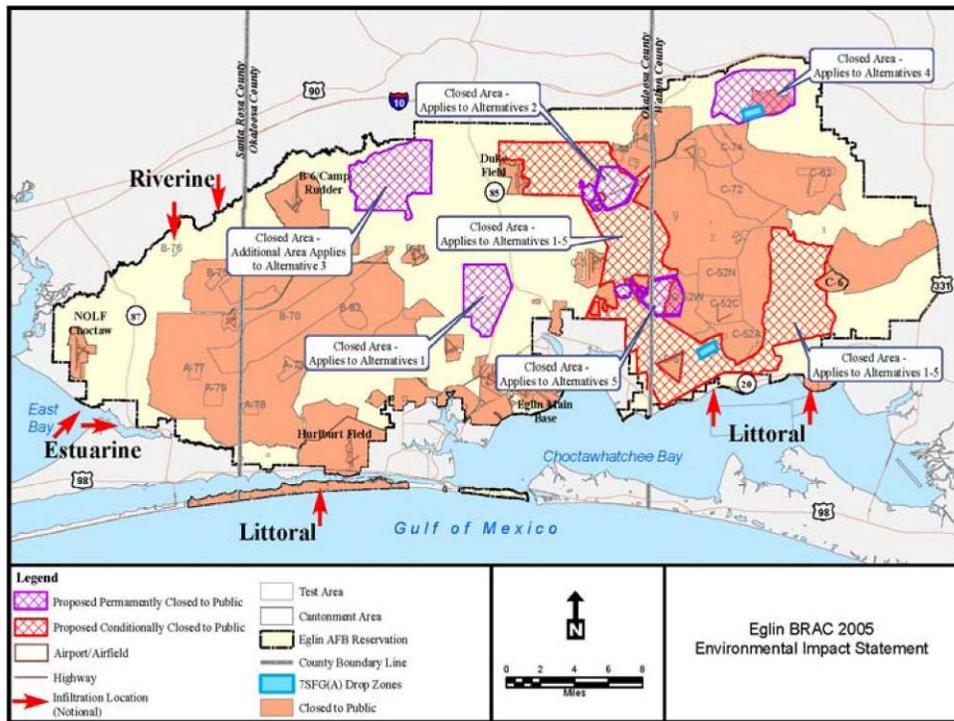
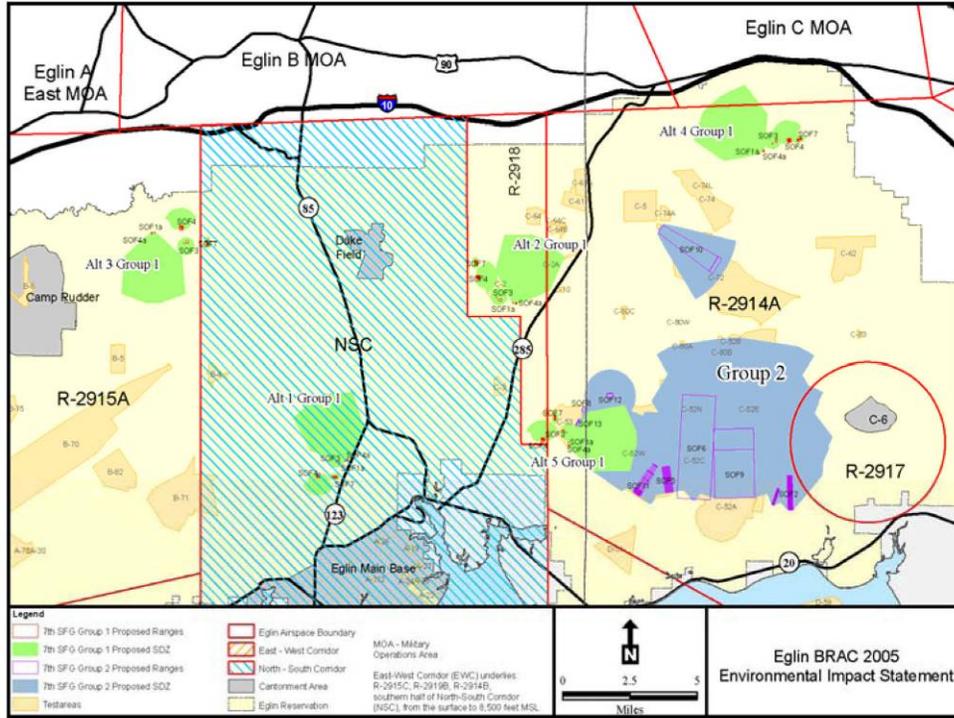
7SFG(A) Training Ranges

7SFG(A) Training Ranges are divided into two types of ranges

- Group 1 ranges are comprised mostly of small caliber weapons
- Group 2 ranges are comprised mostly of larger caliber weapons
 - To minimize the creation of any new duded or UXO-contaminated areas, all Group 2 Ranges will be located on Test Areas C-52 and C-53
- Depending on the training missions, some range areas may be conditionally closed to public use for safety reasons during the 7SFG(A) ground maneuvers

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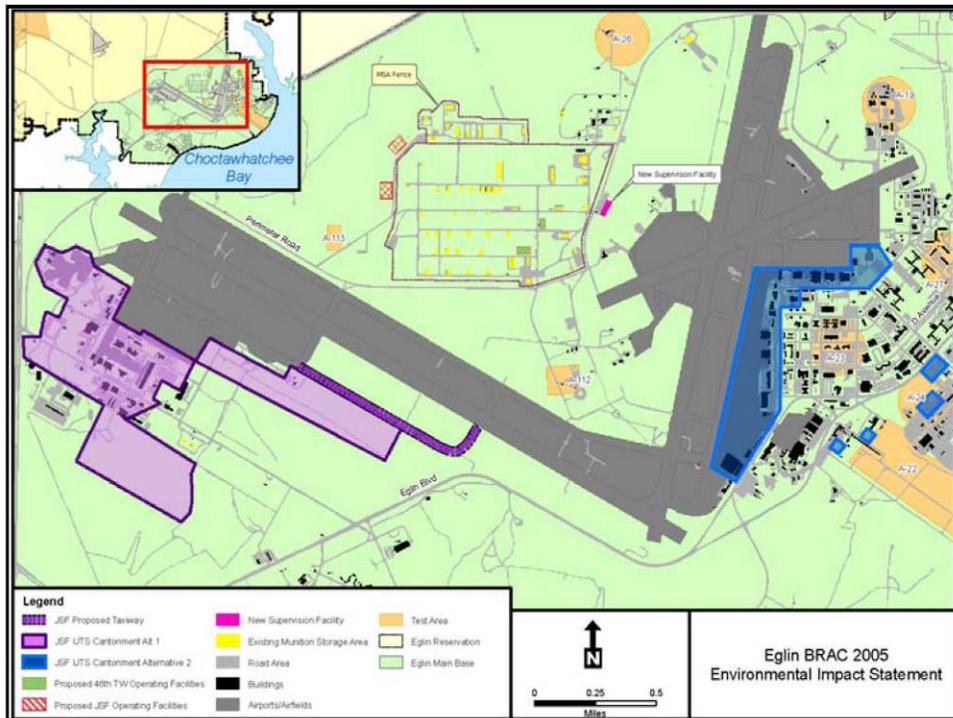


JSF ITS Cantonment Proposed Action

Requirements:

- Cantonment area (approximately 200 acres)
- 31 facilities (approximately 5.6 million square feet)
- 107 Primary Assigned F-35 Aircraft
- Munitions storage area

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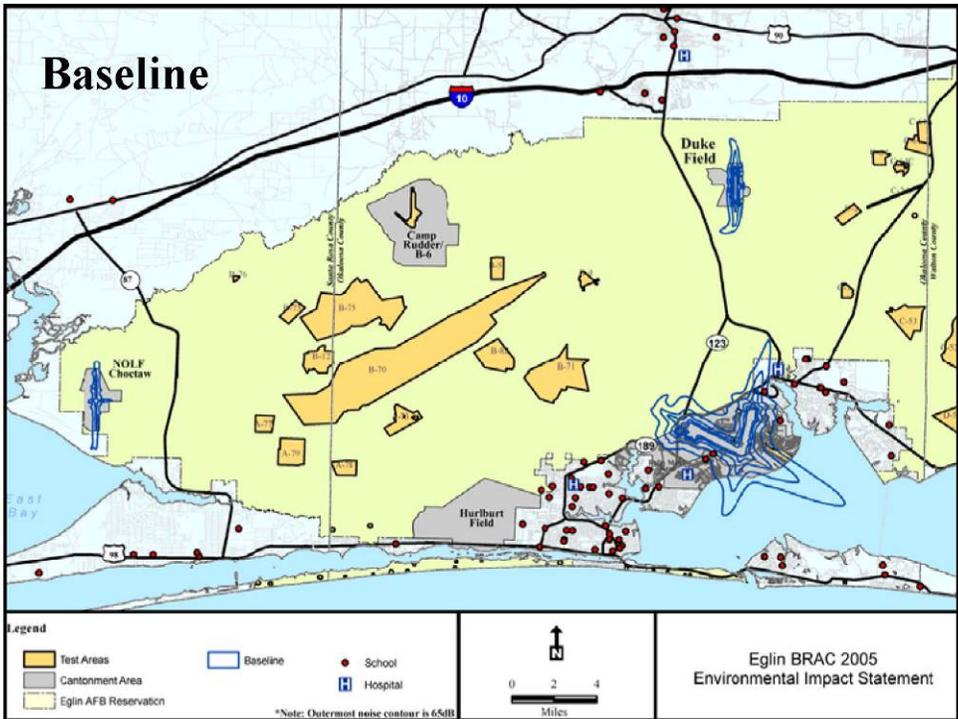


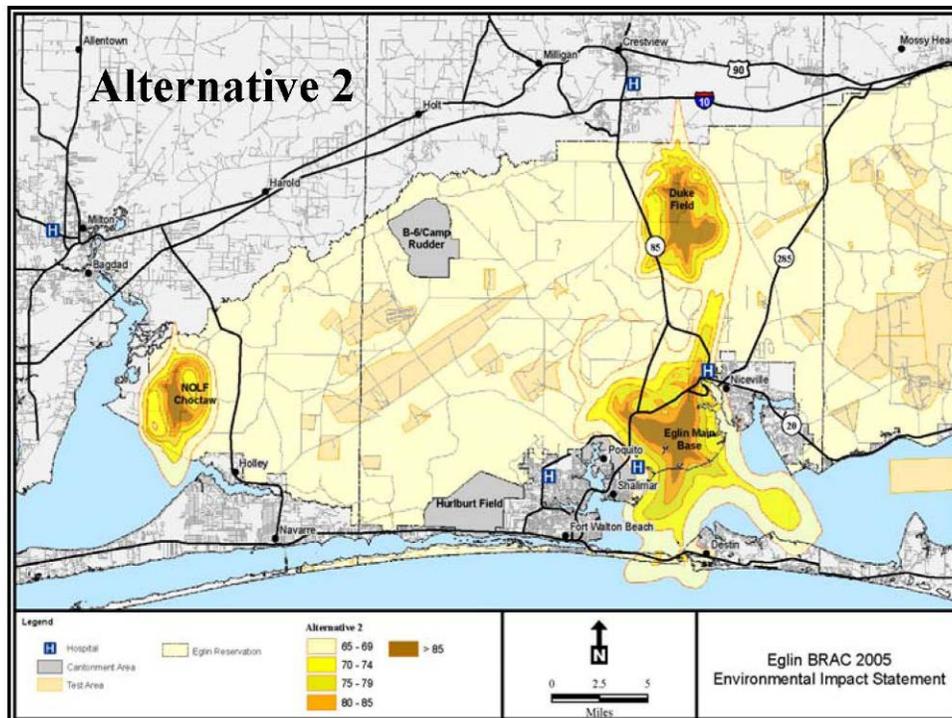
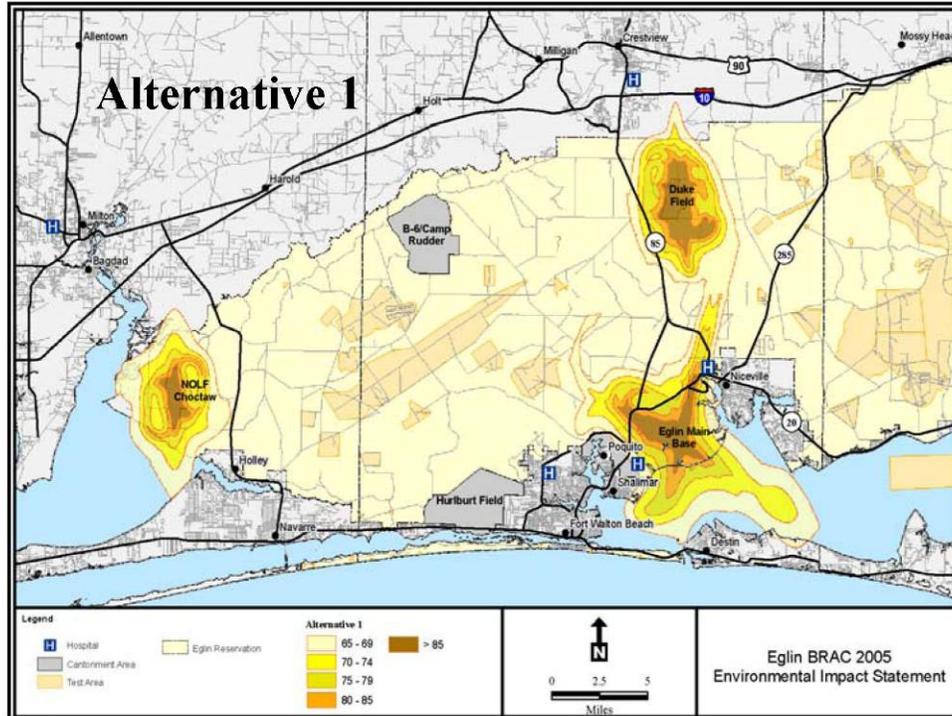
JSF Flight Operations Alternatives

- Two proposed JSF Flight Alternatives have been developed to bracket the projected JSF flight training requirements at the different airfields on Eglin AFB
- These alternatives included three airfields:
 - Eglin Main
 - Duke Field
 - Choctaw Field

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Potential Environmental Issues

U.S. AIR FORCE

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Hazardous Materials
- Land Use
- Noise
- Outdoor Recreation
- Physical Resources
- Safety
- Socioeconomics
- Solid Waste
- Transportation
- Utilities

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**Summary Of Environmental Impacts
7SFG(A)**

U.S. AIR FORCE

<p>7SFG(A) Cantonment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Under any alternative transportation would continue to be adversely impacted▪ Alternatives 2, 3 and 5 would require extensive utility development both on-site and off-site	<p>7SFG(A) Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Alternative 3 may adversely impact recreational opportunities in and around Duck Pond and Management Unit 6▪ There will be approximately 54,000 acres that will be conditionally closed under all alternatives, potentially impacting recreational opportunities
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Summary Of Environmental Impacts Joint Strike Fighter Cantonment



JSF IJTS:

- Under any alternative transportation would be perceived to be adversely impacted
- **Alternative 1**
 - 17 roadways would be potentially impacted
 - Of these 17, only 6 would result in a perceived adverse impact
- **Alternative 2**
 - 18 roadways would be potentially impacted
 - Of these 18, only 8 would result in a perceived adverse impact
- For the Baseline, there were 9 road segments deemed deficient surrounding Eglin AFB

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Summary Of Environmental Impacts Joint Strike Fighter (F-35) Flight Training



JSF Flight Training:

- Regional airspace is currently congested, and the addition of JSF would add to that congestion
- Noise levels would represent unavoidable adverse impacts to residents and sensitive receptors under the expanded noise contours. This also includes off-base residents around the airfields and Military Training Routes and Special Use Airspace
- Land uses currently under the runway approaches are under high levels of noise. The increased noise levels are expected to affect recommended land uses in adjacent communities

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Hearing Input Procedure

For those wishing to speak

- Sign up on the Speaker's List at registration desk
- Elected Officials first
- Agency and Organizational Representative second
- Private citizens in order of sign-up
- Please limit comments to 3 minutes

For written comments

- Comment sheets are available at the comment table
- Turn in completed comment sheets at the end of the evening, or mail, fax, or e-mail them to us no later than **12 May 2008!**

The Draft EIS is also available online at www.eglin.af.mil

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EIS Contact Information

Direct written comments and questions to:

Mr. Mike Spaits
96 CEG/CEV-PA
Eglin AFB, FL 32542-5000
PH: 850.882.2878
E-mail: spaitsm@eglin.af.mil

Comments should be received by **12 May 2008!**

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Hearing Input Procedure

U.S. AIR FORCE

- All comments will become part of the official administrative record.
- **Public Comment Period ends 12 May 2008**
 - Input received by this date will be considered when developing the Final EIS
- To receive a copy of the Draft EIS, please indicate preference on comment sheet or notify us by fax, phone, or e-mail

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EIS Contact Information

U.S. AIR FORCE

Direct written comments and questions to:

Mr. Mike Spaits
96 CEG/CEV-PA
Eglin AFB, FL 32542-5000
PH: 850.882.2878
E-mail: spaitsm@eglin.af.mil

Comments should be received by **12 May 2008!**

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Public Hearings Transcripts

BRAC 2005 Decision Public Meeting, Niceville April 15, 2008
4/15/2008

SCOPING MEETING
EGLIN BRAC PROGRAM 2005
EIS SCOPING MEETING
NICEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
NICEVILLE, FLORIDA

APRIL 15, 2008

Transcript of public scoping meeting held April 15, 2008, 6:30 p.m. to 7:50 p.m. at Niceville High School, Niceville, Florida. Reported by Gertrude B. Downs, FPR, Notary Public in and for the State of Florida.

APPEARANCES:

Mike Spaits
Public Affairs Representative for
Environmental Management, Eglin Air Force Base

Randall Rowland
Civil Engineering Group
Environmental Management Division
Eglin Air Force Base

Col. Thomas Cumbie
Hearing Officer
United States Air Force

Gulf Bay Reporting
P.O. Box 2131
Panama City, Florida 32402
(850) 769-4853
1-800-761-4853

GULF BAY REPORTING

BRAC 2005 Decision Public Meeting, Niceville April 15, 2008
4/15/2008

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Mr. Gregory Lundstrom 37

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Mr. Mark Williams 40

Mr. Steve Spanovich 40

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GULF BAY REPORTING

BRAC 2005 Decision Public Meeting, Niceville April 15, 2008
4/15/2008

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1 JENNIFER GEESLIN: Good evening ladies and
2 gentlemen. As you can see, we're about to begin.
3 We're going to go ahead and move into our formal
4 Air Force presentation this evening and then we'll
5 take a ten-minute break, time permitting, and move
6 into our public hearing oral testimony portion of
7 this evening. If you have not yet had the
8 opportunity to sign up, you can do so at our
9 ten-minute break which will occur about 7 o'clock.

10 So first and foremost, before we get started,
11 I'd like to ask you to dig into your pockets, and
12 your handbags and turn off your cell phones,
13 Blackberries, pagers, anything that you might have.
14 We've got a media recording the meeting this
15 evening, as well as our court reporter, and it's
16 very important that we are getting an accurate
17 record of this evening. So if you can turn those
18 off or to the vibrate position, we would appreciate
19 it.

20 Also, just a couple of admin things.
21 Obviously if we have some type of emergency this
22 evening, our exits are to our rear. If you also
23 need a restroom, just go out the doors you came in,
24 and the restrooms are on your right-hand side.
25 Anytime in the evening if you want a little snack,

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1 we've got some cookies and some Chex Mix, water,
2 soft drinks over here in the cooler, and I think
3 that's all of our admin things, so thank you for
4 coming tonight and welcome to the public hearing
5 for the Eglin BRAC 2005 Program. And without
6 further adieu, I will turn the floor over to Eglin
7 Air Force Base Public Affairs Officer, Mike Spaits.

8 MIKE SPAITS: Thanks, Jennifer.

9 Good evening and welcome to the public
10 hearings for the proposed base realignment and
11 closure, also known as BRAC 2005 decisions at Eglin
12 Air Force Base. My name is Michael Spaits. I am
13 from Eglin Air Force Base Environmental Public
14 Affairs. Because we want to ensure we provide an
15 accurate public record, our presentation will be a
16 scripted format. This hearing is designed to
17 provide you an opportunity to comment on the Draft
18 Environmental Impact Statement known as the EIS.

19 Before we begin the Air Force presentation, I
20 would like to introduce our hearing officer for
21 tonight's meeting, Col. Thomas Cumbie.

22 COL. CUMBIE: Good evening ladies and
23 gentlemen. I'm Col. Tom Cumbie. As Mr. Spaits
24 indicated, I will be the presiding officer for this
25 public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact

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1 Statement for the Eglin BRAC 2005 Program. This
2 hearing is being held in accordance with the
3 provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act
4 and the regulations that are published by the
5 Council on Environmental Quality.

6 The purpose of this hearing is to receive
7 public comments, that is your comments, on the
8 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, commonly
9 referred to as the Draft EIS. Before moving
10 forward with the Air Force briefing on the proposal
11 and the Draft EIS overview, I'd like to explain my
12 role in this hearing. I am a full-time Air Force
13 military criminal trial judge based at Eglin Air
14 Force Base, but I am not assigned there or -- nor
15 am I assigned to any of the commands associated
16 with Eglin or with this proposal. I have not been
17 involved in the development of the Draft EIS, and
18 I'm not here to act as a legal advisor to the Air
19 Force representatives of this proposal.

20 My role as presiding officer is simply to
21 ensure that we have a fair, orderly and impartial
22 hearing and that all who wish to be heard will have
23 the opportunity to speak. In summary, it's
24 important that you understand that I will be
25 serving as an impartial moderator for this hearing.

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1 The hearing will be conducted in two parts.
2 First, an Air Force presentation, and second, an
3 opportunity for you to provide oral testimony. We
4 will begin with the Air Force presentation which
5 will take approximately 30 minutes, then we will
6 receive your comments on the Draft EIS. Mr.
7 Spaits, the floor is yours.

8 MIKE SPAITS: Thank you, sir.

9 Now I'd like to introduce Mr. Randall Rowland
10 from Eglin Air Force Base Environmental Management
11 Division. He will discuss the environmental
12 process, EIS timelines, and a summary of the
13 environmental findings.

14 In addition, we have in the audience Commander
15 of the 96th Air Base Wing, Col. Eric Pohland. Also
16 in the audience are representatives from various
17 Air Force commands as well as United States Special
18 Operations Command. Mr. Rowland?

19 RANDALL ROWLAND: Thanks, Mike.

20 As Mike said, my name is Randall Rowland. I
21 am from the Base Environmental Management Division
22 here at Eglin, and I'm here to brief you on the
23 2005 BRAC Program Decisions for Eglin Air Force
24 Base, and a little bit about the National
25 Environmental Policy Act.

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1 The Air Force has developed an EIS, which is
2 the most detailed environmental analysis required
3 by NEPA, or the National Environmental Policy Act.
4 The BRAC EIS will provide the decision maker
5 detailed information to help her understand the
6 potential impacts of each proposed alternative, and
7 to help her make an informed decision. The Deputy
8 Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for
9 installations, currently Ms. Kathleen Ferguson, is
10 the decision maker for this EIS. The current scope
11 of the EIS will address the first two BRAC 2005
12 program requirements: The establishment of the
13 Joint Strike Fighter integrated, or initial joint
14 training site, and the relocation of the 7th
15 Special Forces Group Airborne from Fort Bragg,
16 North Carolina, to Eglin Air Force Base.

17 This EIS evaluates alternative ways for
18 establishing the Joint Strike Fighter initial joint
19 training site cantonment area, and establishing the
20 7th Special Forces Group cantonment area, and also
21 accommodating the training requirements for both
22 the JSF and the 7th Group.

23 According to law, BRAC must be implemented as
24 stated in the approved BRAC commission's
25 recommendations. Therefore, by BRAC law, the Air

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1 Force's proposed alternatives address how and not
2 if BRAC should be implemented at Eglin. As
3 required by NEPA, the National Environmental Policy
4 Act, the Air Force must identify and analyze a
5 reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed
6 action. The reasonable alternatives are
7 alternatives that meet the Air Force's underlying
8 purpose and need for the proposed action. Within
9 the range of reasonable alternatives, the Air Force
10 is not required to consider highly speculative
11 alternatives.

12 Also required by NEPA, the Air Force must
13 consider the no-action alternative, or an
14 alternative considering changes to Eglin Air Force
15 Base even if BRAC actions were not implemented.
16 However, it should be noted the BRAC actions will
17 be implemented at Eglin, as required by law, and
18 the no-action alternative within the EIS will
19 simply reflect the baseline, or current conditions,
20 at Eglin and within the surrounding areas which
21 will then be used for analysis purposes.

22 This slide shows the current Eglin BRAC 2005
23 EIS schedule. You can see that the Air Force
24 published a notice of availability for the Draft
25 EIS, and we're already halfway through the

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1 public-comment period.

2 After we conclude the public hearings, we will
3 respond to input and comments received, modify the
4 EIS if needed, and publish the final document later
5 this year in August 2008. Thirty days after the
6 final EIS is released to the public, the Air Force
7 expects to sign a record of decision, or ROD, and
8 the ROD will state whether the proposed actions
9 will be implemented and which siting alternative
10 has been selected. The Air Force expects
11 preparation of the EIS and the signing of the
12 Record of Decision to be completed in September
13 2008.

14 BRAC 2005 decision means the following for
15 Eglin Air Force Base: First, relocating the 7th
16 Special Forces Group Airborne from Fort Bragg,
17 North Carolina, to Eglin. This includes adding
18 approximately 2,200 military personnel, and
19 providing training resources for those 7th Group
20 personnel. Second, establishing the Joint Strike
21 Fighter initial joint training site at Eglin Air
22 Force Base. This would involve adding about 2,300
23 military, civilian, and contractor personnel to
24 Eglin Air Force Base. Bringing in about 107
25 primary assigned F-35 aircraft representing three

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1 variant models, and then providing flight and
2 maintenance training for Joint Strike Fighter
3 personnel.

4 The purpose for the action in this EIS is to
5 implement the BRAC 2005 Program as required by law,
6 and it includes four actions which we will review
7 in detail in the upcoming slides.

8 The first of those is to construct the 7th
9 Special Forces Group cantonment area. And a
10 cantonment, as we discuss it here, is almost like a
11 small city. It includes administrative offices,
12 classrooms, dormitories, infrastructure and
13 services, and some equipment storage.

14 The second of the actions is to accommodate
15 the 7th Group training requirements. The third to
16 construct the Joint Strike Fighter initial joint
17 training site and associated cantonment area, and
18 the fourth to accommodate Joint Strike Fighter
19 flight operation requirements.

20 There are a variety of ways to implement each
21 of these alternatives and each action has its own
22 defined needs and requirements, and each
23 alternative must meet the underlying purpose and
24 need of the BRAC program.

25 Each action requires an independent decision.

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1 The first action for realignment of the 7th Group
2 requires the establishment of a cantonment area to
3 provide an area to prepare the 7th Special Forces
4 Group for wartime missions.

5 The 7th Group cantonment area needs access to
6 the flight line that includes rapid and secluded
7 deployments, convenient access to Eglin Air Force
8 Base operating support functions, and seclusion for
9 operation security and force protection.

10 The cantonment area requirements include the
11 following: Administrative areas including,
12 barracks offices, classrooms and motor pools, a
13 location with adequate acreage for security and
14 future expansion of the cantonment area and
15 munitions storage area, and the ability to
16 transport munitions.

17 The need requires that they have proximity to
18 training ranges, ideally no more than ten minutes
19 transport time for timely transport -- timely
20 deployment, excuse me, timely deployment area,
21 timely emergency response, access to major
22 transportation artery within 20 miles to a
23 communications farm, minimal environmental
24 restrictions, avoidance of unexploded ordnance
25 areas, and compatibility with surrounding land

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1 uses, noise levels and safety restrictions.

2 The current alternative locations can be
3 grouped into the following five geographical
4 locations: Eglin Main Base, Duke Field area, area
5 west of Duke Field, area north of Eglin Main, and
6 the area near DeFuniak Springs. This slide
7 illustrates all of the 7th Group cantonment
8 locations.

9 The second action proposed for the 7th Group
10 beddown that has been addressed in this EIS was
11 associated with training of the 7th Group. The
12 purpose of this proposed action is to provide
13 adequate ranges for the 7th Group missions while
14 maintaining range access for current and future
15 uses.

16 The Air Force has performed an extensive
17 evaluation of Eglin's range to determine whether
18 adequate ranges existed and identified possible
19 alternatives. As a result of this study, more
20 refined alternatives have been developed.

21 Specifically, the 7th Group training requires
22 13 new training ranges covering more than 6,000
23 acres of training area, approximately physical
24 43,000 training hours per year, including wheeled
25 vehicle use, including Humvees and heavy trucks,

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1 fixed and rotary wing aircraft, live and inert
2 ordnance, such as guns and hand grenades, water
3 operations using small rubber boats.

4 Training ranges are divided into two groups
5 referred to as Group 1 and Group 2 ranges. Group 1
6 ranges are comprised mostly of small-caliber
7 weapons and will be dedicated to the 7th Group
8 training activities. Group 2 ranges are comprised
9 mostly of larger caliber weapons and are not
10 dedicated to the 7th Group for utilization.

11 As a result of the range training alternative
12 narrowing process, the following locations on the
13 chart were identified as possible alternatives to
14 be evaluated. Alternative 3, east and west side,
15 this is the preferred alternative in the EIS.

16 Some range areas may be conditionally closed
17 to public use for safety reasons during the 7th
18 Group ground maneuvers and/or construction phase.
19 This slide illustrates all of the 7th training
20 locations.

21 BRAC calls for the establishment of the F-35
22 Joint Strike Fighter initial joint training site at
23 Eglin Air Force Base. It is an integrated training
24 center because both pilots and maintenance training
25 will occur at the same site. BRAC established

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1 Eglin as a joint training site for the Air Force,
2 Navy, and Marine Corps. In addition, we expect the
3 United Kingdom and other international partners in
4 the Joint Strike Fighter development program to
5 participate at various times at the training
6 center.

7 The training site will teach pilots and
8 maintenance technicians how to properly operate and
9 maintain the F-35 JSF air system and the purpose of
10 the NEPA action is to provide a cantonment area for
11 that initial joint training site.

12 The F-35 training site needs to be close to
13 the Eglin flight line and runways and have adequate
14 acreage or existing facilities to support the new
15 mission. In addition, access to Eglin's operating
16 support functions is critical.

17 The associated requirements to meet the
18 purpose and need of the JSF training site include
19 establishing a cantonment or administrative area
20 between 100 and 200 acres in size, providing 31
21 facilities totaling approximately 5.6 million
22 square feet and a munitions storage area, bedding
23 down 107 primary F-35 aircraft and allowing for
24 airfield operations.

25 Alternatives for the proposed action are

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1 associated with finding an appropriate location for
2 the JSF cantonment area. In arriving at the
3 proposed alternative locations for the JSF site,
4 the Air Force in coordination with the joint
5 program office developed a list of minimum
6 requirements for JSF training center and applied
7 them to the Eglin military complex to identify
8 potential sites for development. Those areas that
9 meet all of the criteria were included as potential
10 alternatives. The minimum requirements included an
11 airfield with two 8,000 foot runways plus aircraft
12 support and recovery requirements, available
13 utilities, fueling access and auxiliary ground
14 equipment, approximately 170 to 180 acres
15 contiguous to the flight line, physical security
16 and avoidance of wetlands and floodplains.

17 Because Chocktaw, Duke and Hurlburt Fields
18 have only one runway, they were not under
19 consideration for the JSF integrated joint training
20 site cantonment location. Furthermore, Camp Rudder
21 is not under consideration as it does not meet the
22 needed runway requirements and its location and
23 logistics are not practical.

24 The remaining possibilities include two
25 potential locations at Eglin Main Base. This slide

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1 illustrates the two JSF cantonment locations. Two
2 proposals have been developed to bracket the Joint
3 Strike Fighter training requirements at the
4 different airfield options at Eglin Air Force Base.
5 These alternatives include three airfields referred
6 to as Eglin Main, Duke Field, and Chocktaw Field.
7 These airfields include some similarities such as
8 the amount of flight training, the use of the
9 designated airspace and ordnance use.

10 Before we show the alternative, we would like
11 to illustrate the present contours associated with
12 the Eglin Air Force Base as well as the two
13 outlying fields, Duke and Chocktaw Fields. The
14 outer blue line contour represents the 65 DNL
15 baseline noise contour for each airfield. In other
16 words, the contour represents the noise level based
17 on the current flight operations at each location.
18 Note that the inner line, as the lines move inward,
19 they represent a 5 decibel DNL increase in noise
20 level.

21 Noise impacts associated with -- associated
22 with the JSF influence other environmental
23 resources such as land use, socioeconomics and,
24 therefore, this slide illustrates the noise
25 contours associated with Alternative 1. The next

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1 slide illustrates noise contours associated with
2 Alternative 2.

3 After the proposed actions and alternatives
4 are identified, the BRAC 2005 Program EIS will
5 examine potential impacts to the human environment
6 that could be affected by these proposals.
7 Environmental resources that will be evaluated
8 include air quality, biological resources, cultural
9 resources, hazardous material, land use, noise,
10 outdoor recreation, physical resources, safety,
11 socioeconomics, solid waste, transportation, and
12 utilities.

13 I'd now like to briefly summarize the
14 environment issues that have been found and
15 addressed in the Draft EIS.

16 For the 7th Group cantonment area under any
17 alternative, transportation would continue to be
18 adversely impacted. Alternatives 3 and 5 would
19 require extensive utility development both on-site
20 and off-site. And for the 7th Group training,
21 Alternative 3 may adversely impact recreation
22 associated with Duck Pond and management Unit 6.
23 Additionally, some impacts have been identified
24 associated with the JSF integrated joint training
25 site.

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1 Similar to the 7th under any alternative
2 transportation would continue to be adversely
3 impacted. For Alternative 1, 17 roadways would be
4 potentially impacted. Of these 17, only 6 would
5 result in a perceived adverse impact. For
6 Alternative 2, 18 roadways would be potentially
7 impacted roadway segments, and of these 18 only 8
8 would result in perceived adverse impact. For the
9 baseline, there are 9 road segments deemed
10 deficient surrounding Eglin Air force Base today.

11 For the Joint Strike Fighter training,
12 regional airspace is currently congested and the
13 addition of the Joint Strike Fighter would add to
14 that congestion.

15 Land uses currently under the runway
16 approaches are under high levels of noise and
17 increased noise levels are expected to affect
18 recommended land uses in adjacent communities.
19 People off base subject to noise levels of 65
20 decibel DNL or greater are estimated to increase
21 from the baseline of 2,113 to 6,757 for the Joint
22 Strike Fighter flight training Alternative 1, and
23 11,156 people for Alternative 2.

24 The JSF noise level would represent perceived
25 adverse impacts to residents and sensitive

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1 receptors under expanded noise contours. This also
2 includes off-base residents around the airfield in
3 military training ranges and special-use air space.

4 This concludes the Air Force presentation.
5 I'd like to note that the Draft Environmental
6 Impact Statement is just that, a draft document,
7 and an error was found on figure 7-10, page 7-39.
8 An errata sheet has been sent to the local
9 libraries and posted on our Eglin public website
10 for that page change, and anyone that requested a
11 copy of the document at the public scoping will be
12 mailed that replacement page for their document.

13 I'd like to now turn over the meeting to the
14 hearing officer, Col. Cumbie.

15 COL. CUMBIE: Thanks, Randall.

16 I would like to take a quick ten-minute break
17 before we begin the public testimony of the evening
18 where I will hear your comments and concerns. If
19 you would like to speak and did not already sign
20 up, please do so during the break at the sign-in
21 table in the foyer. Let's take a ten-minute break.

22 (Intermission)

23 JENNIFER GEESLIN: If you would take a seat,
24 we're going to begin the actual testimony portion.
25 And it's really important that we're able to hear

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1 you when you speak, so anyone that comes up to a
2 microphone, if we ask you to speak a little louder,
3 please do so. And if at any time you cannot hear
4 our judge, please just wave a hand, and we'll make
5 him talk a little bit louder. He's a little soft
6 spoken, so if you can't hear, just let us know.

7 Can everyone hear me in the back? This
8 microphone level okay? Okay, I get the thumbs up.
9 Okay, great. I'll turn it back over to our judge.

10 COL. CUMBIE: Ladies and gentlemen, I have
11 been accused of many things in my life but being
12 soft spoken has never been one of them.

13 We have now reached the second part of this
14 hearing which is your opportunity to provide the
15 Air Force with your comments on the Eglin BRAC 2005
16 program Draft EIS and to make statements for the
17 record. Our court reporter here is recording
18 everything that is stated during this portion of
19 the hearing.

20 The public hearings and comment period are
21 part of the Environmental Impact Analysis process.
22 This comment process gives you, the public, the
23 opportunity to provide the Air Force with your
24 issues and concerns about the draft EIS and
25 information on your community relevant to the

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1 analysis. These comments will be part of the
2 official record and included in the final EIS.
3 This will ensure that Air Force decision makers
4 benefit from your local knowledge and are aware of
5 your concerns about the environmental analysis for
6 the EIS.

7 Throughout the comment process I ask that you
8 keep in mind that this is not an arena for debate
9 nor is this hearing designed as a
10 question-and-answer session. Rather, this hearing
11 is a venue the Air Force uses to gather your
12 concerns and any additional data or recommended
13 changes you may have, whether they are through oral
14 or written comments, regarding the environmental
15 analysis and the environmental impacts identified
16 under the proposed action and alternatives. We ask
17 that you focus your comments on the environmental
18 issues related to the proposal. Non-environmental
19 issues will take away from time for other oppor --
20 for others' opportunity to comment on the Air
21 Force's analysis of the environmental concerns and
22 will not add to the adequacy of the analysis used
23 in this EIS. If you do have any questions, Air
24 Force, 7th Special Forces Group Airborne and Joint
25 Strike Fighter representatives are available in the

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1 display area and may be able to answer your
2 questions following the hearing.

3 You can officially comment tonight in several
4 ways. First, you can speak now and have it
5 recorded by the court reporter. Second, you may
6 provide comments in writing by submitting them
7 during this hearing or through the mail. Or third,
8 give extended written remarks to the court reporter
9 as part of your presentation.

10 When you signed in at the hearing, if you wish
11 to speak this evening, you should have checked the
12 box on your registration card. If you have not
13 done so and would like to speak at this time,
14 please raise your hand and Ms. Geeslin will sign
15 you up.

16 (No response from audience.)

17 If you'd like to turn in your written comments
18 at this hearing, you may give them to any Air Force
19 representative located in the room or at the
20 sign-up table. Written comments will be accepted
21 throughout the comment period or until 12 May,
22 2008. If you do not turn in your written comments
23 at this hearing, please send comments to the
24 address shown here on the slide or as provided in
25 materials available to you at this meeting.

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1 Comments made at all the public hearings or
2 provided in writing throughout the public-comment
3 period will be given equal consideration and are
4 all a part of the official record.

5 In order to move through the testimony
6 efficiently, I ask that you would observe the
7 following rules: Elected officials that choose to
8 comment will be given an opportunity to speak first
9 then we will hear from agency and organizational
10 representatives. And finally, private citizens
11 will be called upon in the order in which they
12 signed up to speak. I will announce your name.
13 Please stand and address your remarks to me so that
14 I can hear your comments clearly and so that the
15 court reporter can easily record your statement.
16 Please speak clearly and slowly. State your full
17 name and spell it out so that we can record it
18 correctly.

19 If you're representing someone or some group
20 other than yourself, please let me know. We need
21 this information to make sure that the court
22 reporter gets an accurate record. Please do not
23 provide any personal information in your comments
24 that you do not want to see published in the final
25 EIS.

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1 Each person will be allotted three minutes to
2 speak. This applies to everyone, public officials,
3 spokespersons, and individuals. You do not have to
4 speak for the full three minutes, however, if you
5 do choose to speak for the three minutes, a yellow
6 card will be raised when you have only 30 seconds
7 remaining. When your three minutes has ended, a
8 red card will be raised, and at that point, you
9 need to end your statement. Following your
10 presentation, I may ask you to sit down so that I
11 call on the next person.

12 Out of respect for others -- out of respect
13 for others who would like to make comments, I ask
14 that you please honor your three minutes and any
15 request I might have for you to stop speaking if
16 you go over your time limit. If you think more --
17 if you think you have more comments than you can
18 present during the time allotted, make the most
19 important comments first. If you don't get a
20 chance to voice all of your comments, you could and
21 should submit them in writing. If you have a
22 written statement already prepared, you may hand it
23 in, read it out loud within the time limit or do
24 both. Any way you present it, it will be part of
25 the official record and included in the final EIS.

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1 If we have heard from all of those who wish to
2 speak, and you would like an opportunity to expand
3 on your original remarks, you may have a chance at
4 the end of the hearing if time allows. This
5 hearing is scheduled to end at approximately 8 p.m.

6 I also ask that you please not repeat what
7 another speaker has said. If you agree with the
8 previous speaker, or a particular issue, you may
9 state your agreement. This will allow more time
10 for other speakers.

11 I'd like to begin with the list of oral
12 testimony, and, please, if I should butcher
13 anyone's name, please allow me to apologize for
14 doing that first rather than later. We will first
15 hear from Valparaiso City Commissioner Mr. Thomas
16 Miller.

17 COMMISSIONNER MILLER: Thank you for giving me
18 a chance to speak. In my case, this aircraft
19 probably won't affect me because I already gave my
20 ears to the Air Force.

21 We came here in '65 with the F -- the 33rd. I
22 raised four children. Those children all live in
23 Val-P. They're all married and have children, and
24 my concern is that the noise level of this aircraft
25 is going to cause more damage to peoples' hearing

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1 and possibly the vibrations to their body than the
2 likeliness one of the airplanes falling out of the
3 sky and hitting them, and that's my concern. Thank
4 you.

5 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir. And now we will
6 hear from Valparaiso Mayor, Mr. Bruce Arnold.

7 MAYOR ARNOLD: I'm Valparaiso Mayor, John D.
8 Arnold, Jr. We in Valparaiso feel that all of the
9 13 affected resource elements depicted in the study
10 can be fairly and easily mitigated with standard
11 construction techniques and existing technology
12 except in one. That one is excessive high noise
13 levels for jets that go over Valparaiso as a result
14 of the Joint Strike Fighter Force training at
15 Eglin.

16 Two training options are proposed. Alternate
17 1 has 51 percent of the F-35 flights originating at
18 Eglin. With that alternative all of Valparaiso
19 will experience noise levels above the 65 DB level.
20 It breaks down as follows: 40 percent of the city
21 will be above 70 DB, 25 percent of those 75 DB,
22 10 percent above 80 DB, and 13 above the 85 DB, and
23 only 10 percent between 60 -- 60 and 65 -- between
24 65 and 70 DB. These figures were extrapolated from
25 charts the Air Force provided the jailer's

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1 committee, and I'll have a few of those distributed
2 now.

3 With Option 2, only 35 percent of the F-35
4 takeoff occur at Eglin. The noise levels were not
5 quite as severe but still unacceptable as
6 34 percent of the city would experience noise in
7 excess of 65 DB, 40 percent over 70 DB, 23 percent
8 over 75 DB, 14 percent over 80 DB, and 13 percent
9 over 75 DB. Only 7 percent of the city would
10 experience noise levels in the acceptable area from
11 60 to 65 DB.

12 U.S. EPA and the Air Force both have stated
13 that levels above 65 DB are not suitable for
14 residential purposes. With the above numbers
15 quoted, residential living with either option would
16 be intolerable. Businesses would experience
17 transaction difficulties, and the two public
18 schools could not function in the north.
19 Valparaiso would be devastated. We would become a
20 ghost town. Most of the homes would go on the
21 market as no one would choose to live in this very
22 high unacceptable noise level.

23 In Valparaiso, we have 1,800 homes, 120
24 store-front businesses, 10 churches and 2 public
25 schools. Valparaiso has over 6,500 residents, and

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1 we feel it is unconscionable for the Air Force and
2 the DOD to wipe out an entire city.

3 In early December 2007, the City submitted 54
4 pages of written questions and comments for the
5 preliminary EIS at the request of the Air Force.
6 After review of the Draft EIS document provided 11
7 days ago, it was apparent that many of these
8 questions are not addressed properly. We will
9 again update our concerns and -- in writing, and
10 will submit them by the established due date of 11
11 May.

12 Since learning about the BRAC decision to
13 relocate USA the Joint Strike Force at Eglin the
14 City has repeatedly asked for noise contours and
15 beddown information only to be turned down.

16 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, Mayor Arnold. We'll
17 now hear from Valparaiso City Commissioner,
18 Mr. Hayward Strong.

19 COMMISSIONER STRONG: Hayward Strong,
20 Valparaiso Commission.

21 I have two concerns, but one concern that the
22 mayor was talking about was noise. After reading
23 the executive summary, I have a feeling that the
24 noise contours will even be greater. I see no
25 addressing of environmental situa -- in the

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1 simulation of the noise contours, so I suspect it's
2 going to be greater. I think runway 1-9 coming
3 over Valparaiso and part of Niceville is not
4 viable. I think the other end of the runway 0-1
5 is -- impacts, of course, Eglin Air Force Base
6 housing and maybe the hospital. The safety issue
7 bothers me also.

8 Again, we are bringing in a lot of airplanes,
9 a lot of pilots. Some of them are trained pilots
10 just out of school. We're going to bring them in.
11 We're going to have lots of sorties over populated
12 areas. We're then going to load them up with
13 explosive ordnance, and fly them over this
14 populated area. I think we have both a major noise
15 problem, and we have a safety problem which is, I
16 think, unacceptable. So my suggestion is that this
17 runway 1-9 is certainly not viable for our city;
18 0-1 is probably not good for Eglin Air Force Base,
19 and, therefore, this runway should be abandoned.
20 And out in the 30-30 area across 85 you should
21 build another runway which will completely clear --
22 be a win for all of our cities and all of our
23 people too. Thank you.

24 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you. And we will now hear
25 from Mr. -- these next couple of names we weren't

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1 able -- we weren't able to read the names very
2 clearly, so if I mess these up, please forgive me,
3 but Mr. Ron Oak?

4 MR. OAKLE: I'm a concerned citizen. I live
5 in Niceville.

6 JENNIFER GEESLIN: Sir, can you come up to the
7 microphone, please?

8 COL. CUMBIE: Sir, if I could get you to come
9 up here just so that our court reporter will be
10 able to make sure she hears everything that you
11 say.

12 MR. OAKLE: My name's Ron Oakle. I live in
13 Niceville. I live up the end of Boggy Bayou, and
14 we're already impacted by noises. The Air 20s fly
15 up the bayou and hit the throttles just about right
16 over our house. And once we bring these sorties
17 in, I agree with Bruce Arnold and Hayward that it's
18 going to be a real problem for the whole area. And
19 the problem that I have is there's nowhere in this
20 study do I see them address that. We're talking
21 about problems but no solutions. Thank you.

22 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir. And we have a
23 Mr. Miller. I can't tell whether it's Den, or
24 Dean, or something close to that. I apologize if
25 I --

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1 MRS. DIANE MILLER: It's me.

2 COL. CUMBIE: Yes, ma'am. I guess I've gotten
3 it completely wrong.

4 MRS. DIANE MILLER: I just put D.E. Miller.

5 COL. CUMBIE: Okay.

6 MRS. DIANE MILLER: I came here for -- to
7 Eglin Air Force Base in 1965. We lived on the base
8 for three years, found a beautiful home in
9 Valparaiso in 1968, lived here ever since. It's a
10 wonderful small town.

11 Bruce (inaudible). We have two children with
12 homes in Val-P. If there are airplanes coming
13 over, it's going to ruin the property values of my
14 children's home. It probably isn't going to do a
15 whole heck of a lot for mine, either.

16 What I want to know is, that airplane could be
17 out at Edwards Air Force Base in the middle of the
18 desert where it's not going to affect anything like
19 it's going to around Valparaiso. And quite
20 personally I feel with all the real estate and
21 politics that goes around on this area, the reason
22 they want this airplane here is because we have an
23 all-volunteer service now, right? These people
24 have to be kept happy, and they want to come to
25 Eglin, not out in the desert.

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1 JENNIFER GEESLIN: Ma'am, can you please state
2 your full name for the court reporter?

3 MRS. DIANE MILLER: Diane Miller.

4 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you.

5 MRS. DIANE MILLER: That's what's behind it.

6 And that's why we can't get anything done with
7 anybody around here because it's all being
8 controlled up there. They like Eglin also.

9 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, ma'am.

10 Mr. James Finn.

11 MR. JAMES FINN: James Finn. I'm from Fort
12 Walton Beach. My question -- I have one question,
13 and I have a concern. When I was at the first one
14 at the civic center, they didn't address
15 transportation on the EIS at that time, and I asked
16 them about it, and they said it would be at this
17 one. My question is, if the Army goes in to Duke
18 or any of the other proposed areas, I had suggested
19 at that one that they talk at the federal level
20 about getting State Road 85, or 285, or both of
21 them changed to federal highways so they could be
22 federally funded and not have to deal with
23 Tallahassee.

24 When you have an EIS here identifying
25 transportation issues, it doesn't break it down as

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1 to whether that harm -- Army heavy vehicles are on
2 the range roads or are those on roads on 85 trying
3 to get to Eglin Main on a daily basis, adding
4 impact to thinly paved 85. It doesn't meet federal
5 highway standards. It's meeting state standards.

6 When we start putting Humvees and heavy
7 vehicles on there, that road's going to deteriorate
8 heavier and faster. And if the Army's going to be
9 doing the movements that they normally do typically
10 at Fort Bragg going to Polk, we're going to see
11 different impact down here than we're used to, and
12 I'm concerned about that and what's being addressed
13 in the EIS as far as transportation, ground
14 transportation, is concerned with.

15 I know everybody else is worried about the
16 Strike Fighter and what the noise levels are going
17 to be. They're problems, too, but the Army's going
18 to be here first, and they're going to start
19 impacting us a lot sooner than everybody else is.
20 We still don't have an evacuation route to get to
21 Alabama. We can get to Crestview, but we can't get
22 any farther than that.

23 So before you bring in another 5,000 people,
24 you better start thinking of how to get them out of
25 here during a hurricane. And that road is the only

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1 one we have, so we need to find a way to get it
2 better. And the Army's just going to impact it
3 more. That's what I'm concerned about.

4 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir. Mr. Ralph
5 Hurbeson?

6 MR. RALPH HURBESON: My name is Ralph
7 Frederick Hurbeson. I live on Swift Creek Court
8 which is on Shirk Bayou.

9 Six o'clock every morning I have the
10 transports flying out over my house shaking
11 double-paned windows. Okay, I can imagine what
12 it's going to be when the Strike Fighter goes. Not
13 only that, for four years in the City of Los
14 Angeles, I worked in a noisy (inaudible). It had
15 87 decibels. We have an awful lot of young
16 families around here, and the young ladies that are
17 going to be pregnant, 87 decibels there's a
18 permanent affect on the unborn fetus.

19 COL. CUMBIE: Mr. Chris Romick?

20 MR. CHRIS ROMICK: Good evening, my name is
21 Chris Romick. I'm here on behalf the JTL Capital.
22 I have a short statement that I'd like to read.
23 JTL owns 1,500 acres of property around Chocktaw
24 Field at Escribano Point where it intends to
25 develop a residential community. I note that the

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1 Draft EIS when -- assesses potential impacts
2 associated with the alternatives for flight
3 training at Chocktaw considers only the current
4 state of the property surrounding the field and
5 does not take into consideration the compatible or
6 potential use of that land.

7 On the two separate occasions JTL previously
8 wrote to the EIS to provide information on their
9 planned development so that this could be
10 considered as part of the EIS process they also
11 offered to meet with the EIS consultants to provide
12 detailed information, maps, et cetera, and have
13 received no response.

14 The Final EIS should consider the impact of
15 flight training on the compatible and potential use
16 of the land of the off-base property around
17 Chocktaw Field, around all fields for that matter,
18 and not evaluate it solely on the present condition
19 or present use. In closing, JTL remains available
20 to meet with the EIS consultants. They're ready to
21 provide detailed information on their plans so that
22 the Final EIS is truly based on the best possible
23 information available. Thank you.

24 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir. Mr. James
25 Martino?

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1 (No response.)

2 Mr. Martino must have stepped out. I'll put
3 his name at the end of the list and call again
4 before we close. Mr. Robert Bachelor.

5 MR. ROBERT BACHELOR: My name is Bob Bachelor.
6 I live in Valparaiso. I have lived there since
7 1975 -- '87, and also in the community since 1975.

8 COL. CUMBIE: Mr. Bachelor, if I could get you
9 to step into that microphone just a little bit.
10 Thank you, sir.

11 MR. ROBERT BACHELOR: Okay. I have two
12 comments on the EIS. The first comment relates to
13 figures ES-12 and ES-13. Those are noise contour
14 maps, the DNL contour maps, showing both the
15 four -- alternatives number 1 and number 2. The
16 maps are a composite, both of takeoff and
17 landing-noise levels, and further, they are DNL,
18 which means it's an average noise level over a
19 24-hour period. I think we need a better
20 indication of what the noise level will be produced
21 by this aircraft so I will also make a written
22 comment that the -- the instantaneous noise level
23 be added to the EIS. These would be contour maps
24 in the landing patterns at several points for both
25 runways so that we who live near those runways can

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1 get a better idea as the aircraft goes by what the
2 noise we will be experiencing at that time.

3 My second comment concerns page 7-85 related
4 to aircraft mishaps. Very briefly, I think the EIS
5 should be updated to address training mishaps and
6 not necessarily just the mishaps associated with
7 mature aircraft as long as they've been inventoried
8 in the Air Force and Marine Corp fleet. Thank you.

9 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you. I would ask the
10 remaining people that would like to comment, if you
11 would, if you would lean into that microphone when
12 speaking. It seems if you get more than about six
13 or eight inches from it, it starts to -- it starts
14 to lose its effect.

15 So we'll now hear from Gregory Lundstrom?

16 MR. LUNDSTROM: I'm afraid if I lean into it,
17 it will go into my belly button, but you're on.

18 As I look around, the auditorium here, the
19 courtroom, whatever, I have a real problem with it
20 because unless I'm just ill informed or have been
21 out of touch, I think that we have a basic problem
22 with this hearing today in that it's a
23 non-emergency hearing, and in your court, as in any
24 court, nobody could schedule a non-emergency
25 hearing on two-days notice.

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1 The vast majority of Okaloosa, Walton, and
2 Santa Rosa County find their news from the local
3 newspaper. The vast majority found out about this
4 hearing today by Sunday's newspaper. This
5 auditorium found out about this hearing more than
6 two months ago yet the public finds out about it
7 two days ago. That is just patently unfair. You
8 can't even get your hands around this
9 multi-hundred-page document and digest it in two
10 days.

11 This May the 12th date up here, you know, they
12 slipped this Draft EIS into the public register in
13 Washington on March the 28th, but it doesn't appear
14 in our local paper. It doesn't come to our
15 attention. So out of the 45 days that the National
16 Environmental Protection Act requires notice,
17 period, comment period, we've been basically
18 cheated out of 15 days.

19 Now, that's not to say there aren't -- I don't
20 live in Valparaiso or I'd be saying what Mayor
21 Arnold said, you know, and I think it's nice at the
22 beginning of a recession to have this big training
23 come into town, but I do have a serious problem
24 that this auditorium is not standing room only. So
25 that's my thoughts.

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1 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir.

2 Mr. Lawton Rockman?

3 MR. LAWTON ROCKMAN: Hello, my name is Lawton
4 Rockman. I'm president of the Northwest Florida
5 Dog Owner's Association. We are concerned about
6 the closed areas that they plan on closing, the
7 recreation part of it. Our concern is the hunting,
8 but it will affect a lot of the recreation that
9 Eglin reservation is known for. You've got walking
10 trails. You've got fishing ponds. You've got
11 hunting areas. Turkey people, we've got people
12 that turkey hunt. Those are what we are concerned
13 about. And we don't think they need to close down
14 some of the areas that they're closing down. And
15 if they are going to close down some of these
16 areas, they need to open up some other areas so we
17 don't lose a lot of recreational areas.

18 When they do close these recreation areas
19 down, they -- these people that are using these
20 closed areas are going to move to the other areas
21 that are open. And during hunting season, that
22 could, you know, prevent or cause a problem,
23 because the more people you have in a smaller area
24 hunting, the more accidents there may be.

25 That's our biggest concern, and we'd like to

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1 have -- see that addressed in some of the closed
2 areas. Thank you.

3 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir. Mr. Mark
4 Williams?

5 MR. MARK WILLIAMS: Sir, those who know me
6 know I can't say too much in three minutes. I'll
7 submit my comments written.

8 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you. Mr. Steve Spanovich?

9 MR. STEVE SPANOVICH: Sir, I've chosen to
10 decline. Thank you.

11 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you. Miss Tammy Johnson.

12 MS. TAMMY JOHNSON: Tammy Johnson, City of
13 Valparaiso. I would like to finish reading Mayor
14 Arnold's comments, please.

15 "Since learning about the BRAC decision to
16 locate the JSF at Eglin Air Force Base, the City of
17 Valparaiso has repeatedly asked for noise contours
18 and beddown information only to be turned down. We
19 are proud to be the home of Eglin Air Force Base,
20 and we will be just as proud to have the moniker
21 Fighter Town USA with the F-35 here. We also
22 understand the economic benefit to our region that
23 this new mission will generate, and we fully
24 support the economic property, however, unless the
25 F-35 noise is significantly mitigated, this

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1 progress will come at the expense of the City of
2 Valpariso.

3 The City has in the past offered suggestions
4 to minimize noise impacts on Valpariso, and they
5 have fell on deaf ears. We want to continue to be
6 good neighbors and cooperate with Eglin to make
7 this new mission a success, but without (inaudible)
8 our city, it is our desire to sit down and face --
9 sit down face to face with the decision makers in
10 the Department of Defense to find acceptable
11 solutions to significantly reduce aircraft noise to
12 acceptable levels over Valpariso." Thank you.

13 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you.
14 (Off the record. Court reporter changes disks.)

15 COL. CUMBIE: Mr. Bob Cross.

16 MR. BOB CROSS: Bob Cross, I'm a Valpariso
17 resident 35 years. I have a couple of questions.

18 First, the numbers that's been depicted in
19 this report, 65 DB, I would just like to know if
20 any of you military or civilians represented here
21 tonight have actually heard a JS-35 aircraft? Can
22 you answer or respond to that? That includes
23 anyone here in the audience.

24 COL. CUMBIE: No, sir, not right now, but I
25 think we would probably have someone who would be

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1 able to answer that question for you.

2 MR. BOB CROSS: The reason for the question
3 is, living here around the end of the runway for 35
4 years, the only one that I can really -- there are
5 several objection of noise -- noise level, but the
6 ones that I recall is the F-4. The F-4 with
7 afterburners was very loud. If this thing is a lot
8 louder than that, we don't want it. F-15 was
9 great. We'll take it any day.

10 The other comment I have is, living there for
11 a good while, this is a critical comment to you as
12 an Air Force representative is that the Air Force
13 does not seem to care as much as they used to in
14 years past, and I noticed a change probably about
15 six or eight years ago.

16 It seems like you have some of the National
17 Guard C-130s flying at 500 feet at 11 o'clock at
18 night. No cause for that. It's over residential
19 areas. They could be -- in the other -- in the
20 years past, they've stayed over the water. They've
21 moved away from the populated areas early on in
22 their flight patterns. Like for you to consider
23 that and show some concern for the citizenry
24 around, close and around the airport -- around the
25 airport.

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1 I have several concerns. One is -- these are
2 not necessarily in order. One is Valpariso is a
3 bird sanctuary. I take that very strong. We have
4 quite a number of birds and migratory birds in the
5 area. I didn't see that in the environmental
6 statement. Maybe I missed it, but I wonder if
7 there's been a study on the birds in the area close
8 in to Valpariso and what will happen to them
9 whenever these noise are coming around.

10 The other is -- two others. One is how much
11 fuel dump will the aircraft do right at the last
12 over populated areas. And the other is it seems
13 very strange to me that 107 aircraft of the most
14 sophisticated in the world, the most expensive
15 would not take into consideration the security in
16 these days and times. It seems like you're putting
17 too many assets at one point in this country,
18 whether it's Valpariso or what. I would put them
19 apart, you know, 30 or so from here and there.
20 Thank you.

21 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir. Mr. Jeff
22 Watson.

23 MR. JEFF WATSON: I'll pass.

24 COL. CUMBIE: And Mr. Jim Bailey.

25 MR. JIM BAILEY: My name is Jim Bailey. I was

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1 born and raised on Eglin Air Force Base. My only
2 neighbors growing up were the Canadian generals at
3 Eglin Air Force Base, and I can represent them
4 tonight and represent other people as well,
5 including the president of the United States, and
6 the congress in the early 1900's when they studied
7 and designated this area as ecologically one of the
8 most sensitive in the world, and one of the, what
9 led to be less than 20 national forests in the
10 world. So this land and this area environmentally
11 was supported by presidents and congress that I can
12 represent tonight, the thousand or so forest
13 rangers that started to stroll onto this area in
14 1907 with the advent of this land that we're
15 talking about that was legislated to be protected
16 forever ecologically for our children started to
17 occur, and then there were at least a thousand
18 forest rangers that started and worked here and
19 dedicated their lives to protecting this
20 environment.

21 Another group of folks I'd like to represent
22 tonight is -- are people that President Franklin
23 Roosevelt asked to serve in the Conservation Corps.
24 There were 200 plus people from Niceville and
25 Valpariso that answered that call in the -- in the

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1 United States' worst depression time, and they
2 spent their time making sure that the environmental
3 concerns of the United States of America were made
4 right here in northwest Florida and on this
5 particular land. Those people, if they were here
6 tonight, I'm sure would have strong words to say.

7 In addition to that, I think it would be
8 fitting to recognize what President Truman said to
9 returning servicemen from World War II at Eglin Air
10 Force Base when he said we no longer need your
11 services with the war department fighting World War
12 II, but we need your services in the government to
13 maintain the ecological systems in the -- in the
14 forests and the Eglin Reservation when it comes to
15 ecology, and we invite you to be forest rangers
16 working for the government side by side with
17 representatives to ensure that -- that, that
18 happens. And many of the people returning from the
19 service answered that call. Many of which I know
20 personally and many of which may be surviving still
21 that could testify. But certainly, I'm here
22 tonight to -- to tell you that legislatively,
23 legally -- and these are my introductions, sir. I
24 can get my three minutes.

25 COL. CUMBIE: Go ahead, please, sir.

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1 MR. JIM BAILEY: I can make my statements in
2 three minutes.

3 Essentially you're running into legal, moral,
4 and ethical problems with your proposal as it
5 affects the environment. Cooperatively I know
6 firsthand because my only neighbors were the
7 Canadian generals, and I lived at a forest-ranger
8 station here, and I can tell you strongly that the
9 cooperative efforts between the groups were in
10 sync, and it appears that the leadership has
11 changed dramatically, as the gentleman before me
12 has stated. And that, that cooperative effort is
13 not in the best interest of the other groups that
14 I'd like to represent, and that's all the unborn
15 folks that -- that the legislation and all those
16 people dedicated their lives for.

17 They quite simply were -- it was a requirement
18 of the United States to make this area so
19 ecologically sensitive to be protected for our
20 unborn kids for many, many years to go, and so this
21 fails on the issue of -- of the environment. Thank
22 you.

23 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you. Just to make sure,
24 Mr. James Martino?

25 (No response.)

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1 Apparently not. That appears to have covered
2 all of the individuals on the list who had
3 indicated they would like to speak. Was there
4 anyone that we missed?

5 (No response.)

6 Apparently not. And I indicated to
7 everyone -- it seemed that everyone got the
8 opportunity to say what they wanted to say within
9 the three minutes allotted, but we do have a little
10 time left over, and was there anyone who didn't
11 have the opportunity to finish their comments?

12 Yes, ma'am.

13 MRS. DIANE MILLER: I'd like to just add one
14 thing, please. Please save Valpariso. Thank you.

15 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, ma'am.

16 Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes the
17 public hearing. Thank you for your participation
18 and input. Please remember that the public-comment
19 period for the Eglin BRAC 2005 Program Draft EIS
20 will extend through 12 May, 2008, and you can leave
21 your written comments here for me or send them to
22 the address shown. This public hearing is now
23 adjourned. Thank you for attending.

24 (Public hearing adjourned at 7:50 p.m.)

25

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STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF BAY

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the public hearing for the Eglin BRAC 2005 program held April 15, 2008, at Niceville High School, Niceville, Florida.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I was authorized to and did report the foregoing proceeding and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

DATED this the 28th day of April 2008.

Gertrude B. Downs, FPR

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SAIC BRAC 2005 Decision Public Hearing April 16, 2008, Crestview, Florida
4/16/2008

SCOPING MEETING
EGLIN BRAC PROGRAM 2005
EIS SCOPING MEETING
CRESTVIEW COMMUNITY CENTER
CRESTVIEW, FLORIDA

APRIL 16, 2008

Transcript of public scoping meeting held April 16, 2008, 6:30 p.m. to 7:10 p.m. at Crestview Community Center, Crestview, Florida. Reported by Gertrude B. Downs, FPR, Notary Public in and for the State of Florida.

APPEARANCES:

Mike Spaits
Public Affairs Representative for
Environmental Management, Eglin Air Force Base

Randall Rowland
Civil Engineering Group
Environmental Management Division
Eglin Air Force Base

Col. Thomas Cumbie
Hearing Officer
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1 JENNIFER GEESLIN: Welcome to the public
2 hearing for the BRAC 2005 Program. We're really
3 glad all of you took the time to come out this
4 evening. We really appreciate how active the
5 communities are throughout this process.

6 A few admin things before we get started.
7 First of all, the restrooms are here to your right.
8 If we have an emergency of some kind, we have three
9 exits to the room. One this way, one this way, and
10 one in the rear. I really look like a flight
11 attendant right now. If you need a snack, we got
12 some snacks back here. We've got some Chex Mix,
13 cookies, water, coke, that type thing. And we do
14 have a court reporter here this evening to help us
15 ensure we get an accurate record of these hearings,
16 so if you would at this time, look into your
17 pockets or your purses and turn off all cell
18 phones, Blackberries, pagers, tracking devices,
19 anything you might have that might be making some
20 noise. That way if we don't have any background
21 noise during the hearing, we would really
22 appreciate it.

23 Okay, and at this time, I will introduce our
24 first speaker from Eglin Air Force Base, he is the
25 Environmental Public Affairs Officer, Mr. Mike

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1 Spaits. Mike, over to you.

2 MIKE SPAITS: Thank you, Jennifer.

3 Good evening. Welcome to the public hearings
4 for the proposed base realignment and closure, also
5 known as BRAC 2005 decisions at Eglin Air Force
6 Base. My name is Michael Spaits. I am from Eglin
7 Air Force Base Environmental Public Affairs.

8 Because we want to ensure we provide an
9 accurate public record for our presentation, this
10 will be a scripted format. This hearing is
11 designed to provide you an opportunity to comment
12 on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement also
13 known as the EIS. Before we begin the
14 presentation, I'd like to introduce our hearing
15 officer for tonight's meeting, Col. Thomas Cumbie.

16 COL. CUMBIE: Good evening ladies and
17 gentlemen. I am Col. Tom Cumbie --

18 (Audience indicates they can't hear Col. Cumbie.)

19 COL. CUMBIE: -- I have been threatened to not
20 touch this microphone. They are going to give me
21 the microphone a little later on, but unless you
22 want some more of what you got a little earlier,
23 I'll just try to scream at you for the first couple
24 of minutes. If you can't hear me, please raise
25 your hand.

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1 (Off the record. Microphone adjustments made.)

2 COL. CUMBIE: As I said a minute ago, I'm Col.
3 Tom Cumbie. As Mr. Spaits indicated, I'll be the
4 presiding officer in this public hearing for the
5 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Eglin BRAC
6 2005 Program. This hearing is being held in
7 accordance with the provisions of the National
8 Environmental Policy Act and the regulations that
9 are published by the Council on Environmental
10 Quality.

11 The purpose of this hearing is to receive
12 public comments, that is your comments, on the
13 Draft Environmental Impact Statement commonly
14 referred to as the Draft EIS. Before moving
15 forward with the Air Force briefing on the proposal
16 and the EIS overview, I'd like to explain my role
17 for this hearing. I am a full-time Air Force
18 military criminal trial judge based at Eglin Air
19 Force Base, but I'm not assigned there nor am I
20 assigned to any of the commands associated with
21 Eglin or with this program. I've not been involved
22 in the development of the Draft EIS, and I'm not
23 here to act as a legal advisor to the Air Force
24 representatives of this proposal.

25 My role as a presiding officer is simply to

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1 ensure that we have a fair, orderly, and impartial
2 hearing and that all who wish to be heard will have
3 the opportunity to speak. In summary, it's
4 important that you understand that I'll be serving
5 as an impartial moderator for this hearing.

6 The hearing will be conducted in two parts.
7 First, an Air Force presentation, and second, an
8 opportunity for you all to provide oral testimony.
9 We'll begin with the Air Force presentation which
10 will take approximately 30 minutes, then we will
11 receive your comments on the Draft EIS. Mr.
12 Spaits.

13 MIKE SPAITS: Thank you, sir.

14 Okay, now I'd like to introduce Mr. Randall
15 Rowland from Eglin Air Force Base Environmental
16 Management Division. He will discuss the
17 environmental process, the EIS timelines, and a
18 summary of the environmental findings to date.

19 In addition, we have in the audience the
20 Commander of the 96th Air Base Wing, Col. Eric
21 Pohland. Also in the audience are representatives
22 from various Air Force commands and the Department
23 of Defense. Rowland?

24 RANDALL ROWLAND: Thank you, Mike.

25 Good evening, my name is Randall Rowland. I'm

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1 here from the Base Environmental Division, and I'm
2 here to brief on the 2005 BRAC Program Decisions
3 for Eglin Air Force Base, and also a quick briefing
4 on the National Environmental Policy Act
5 procedures.

6 The Air Force has developed an EIS, an
7 environmental impact study, which is the most
8 detailed environmental analysis required by NEPA,
9 or the National Environmental Policy Act. The BRAC
10 EIS will provide a decision maker detailed
11 information to help her understand potential
12 impacts of each proposed alternative, and to help
13 her make an informed decision. The Deputy
14 Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for
15 installations, currently Ms. Kathleen Ferguson, is
16 the decision maker for this EIS.

17 The current scope of the EIS will address the
18 first two BRAC 2005 program requirements: The
19 first is to relocate the 7th Group -- 7th Special
20 Forces Group Airborne from Fort Bragg to Eglin Air
21 Force Base, and the establishment of the Joint
22 Strike Fighter initial training site.

23 This EIS evaluates alternative ways for
24 establishing the 7th Group cantonment area --
25 establishing the Joint 7th Special Forces Group

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1 cantonment area, and then accommodating training
2 requirements for both the Joint Strike Fighter and
3 7th Group.

4 According to law, BRAC must be implemented as
5 stated in the approved BRAC commission's
6 recommendations. Therefore, the BRAC law and the
7 Air Force's proposed alternatives address how and
8 not if BRAC should be implemented at Eglin. As
9 required by NEPA, the Air Force must identify and
10 analyze a reasonable range of alternatives to the
11 proposed action. The reasonable alternatives are
12 alternatives that would meet the Air Force's
13 underlying purpose and need for the proposed
14 action. Within the range of reasonable
15 alternatives, the Air Force is not required to
16 consider highly speculative alternatives.

17 Also required by NEPA, the Air Force must
18 consider a no-action alternative, or an alternative
19 considered -- considering no changes to Eglin Air
20 Force Base even if the BRAC actions were not
21 implemented. However, it should be noted the BRAC
22 action will be implemented at Eglin, as required by
23 law, and the no-action alternative within this EIS
24 will simply reflect the baseline, or current
25 conditions, at Eglin and within the surrounding

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1 areas which will then be used for analysis
2 purposes.

3 This slide shows the current Eglin BRAC 2005
4 EIS schedule, and you can see that the Air Force
5 published a notice of availability for the Draft
6 EIS, and we're already halfway through the
7 public-comment period.

8 After we conclude the public hearings, we will
9 respond to the input and comments received tonight,
10 modify the EIS if needed, and publish the final
11 document later this year in August 2008. Thirty
12 days after the final EIS is released to the public,
13 the Air Force expects to sign a record of decision,
14 or ROD. The ROD will state whether the proposed
15 action will be implemented and which siting
16 alternatives have been selected. The Air Force
17 expects preparation of this EIS and the signing of
18 the Record of Decision to be completed in September
19 2008.

20 The BRAC 2005 decision means the following for
21 Eglin Air Force Base: First, relocating the 7th
22 Group from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to Eglin Air
23 Force Base. This includes approximately 2,200
24 military people, and providing training resources
25 for the 7th Group personnel. Second, establishing

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1 the Joint Strike Fighter initial joint training
2 site at Eglin Air Force Base. This would involve
3 adding about 2,300 military, civilian, and
4 contractor personnel to Eglin Air Force Base,
5 bringing in about 107 primary assigned F-35
6 aircraft representing three variant models, and
7 providing flight and maintenance training for JSF.

8 The purpose for the actions in this EIS is to
9 implement the BRAC 2005 Program. As required by
10 law, it includes four actions which we will review
11 in detail in the upcoming slides.

12 First to construct the 7th Group cantonment
13 area. A cantonment area in this case is almost
14 like a small city. It includes administrative
15 offices, classrooms and dormitories,
16 infrastructure, services, and equipment storage;
17 second to accommodate the 7th Group training
18 requirements; third to construct the Joint Strike
19 Fighter initial joint training site and associated
20 cantonment area; and then fourth to accommodate
21 Joint Strike Fighter operation requirements.

22 There are a variety of ways to implement each
23 of these alternatives. Each action has its own
24 defined needs and requirements, and each
25 alternative must meet the underlying purpose and

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1 need of the BRAC program.

2 Each action requires an independent decision.

3 The first action for the realignment of the 7th
4 Group requires establishment of a cantonment area
5 to provide an area to prepare the 7th Group for
6 wartime missions.

7 The 7th Group cantonment area needs access to
8 a flight line that includes rapid and secluded
9 deployments, convenient access to the Eglin Base
10 operating support functions, and seclusion for
11 operational security and force protection.

12 The cantonment area required -- requirements
13 include the following: Administrative areas,
14 including barracks, offices, classrooms, and motor
15 pools, a location with adequate acreage for
16 security and future expansion of the cantonment
17 area and munitions storage area, and the ability to
18 transport those munitions.

19 The need requires that they have proximity to
20 training ranges, ideally no more than ten minutes
21 transport time for timely deployment air lift,
22 timely emergency response, access to major
23 transportation artery, within 20 minutes of a
24 communications farm, minimal environmental
25 restrictions, avoidance of unexploded ordnance

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1 areas, and compatibility with surrounding land
2 uses, noise levels and safety restrictions.

3 The current alternatives locations can be
4 grouped into the following five geographical
5 locations: Eglin Main Base, Duke Field, area west
6 of Duke Field, area north of Eglin Main, and area
7 near DeFuniak Springs. This slide illustrates all
8 of the 7th Group cantonment locations.

9 The second action proposed for the 7th Group
10 beddown that has been addressed in this EIS is
11 associated with training for the 7th Group. The
12 purpose of this proposed action is to provide
13 adequate ranges for the 7th Group missions while
14 maintaining range access for current and future
15 use.

16 The Air Force has performed an extensive
17 evaluation of Eglin's range to determine whether
18 adequate ranges existed and identified possible
19 alternatives. As a result of this study, more
20 refined alternatives have been developed.

21 Specifically, the 7th Group training requires
22 13 new ranges covering more than 6,000 acres of
23 training area, approximately 43,000 training hours
24 per year, including wheeled vehicle use like
25 Humvees and heavy trucks, fixed and rotary wing

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1 aircraft, live and inert ordnance, such as guns and
2 hand grenades, and water operations using small
3 rubber boats.

4 Training ranges are divided into two groups,
5 Group 1 and Group 2 ranges. Group 1 ranges are
6 comprised mostly of small-caliber weapons and will
7 be dedicated to 7th Group training activities.
8 Group 2 ranges are comprised mostly of larger
9 caliber weapons and are not dedicated to the 7th
10 Group for utilization.

11 As a result of the range training alternative
12 narrowing process, the following locations on the
13 chart were identified as possible alternatives to
14 be evaluated. Alternative 3, east and west side,
15 is the preferred alternative in this case.

16 Some range areas may be conditionally closed
17 to the public use for safety reasons during the 7th
18 Group ground maneuvers and/or construction phase.
19 This slide illustrates all of the 7th Group
20 training locations.

21 BRAC calls for the establishment of the Joint
22 Strike Fighter initial joint training site at Eglin
23 Air Force Base. It is an integrated training
24 center because both pilot and maintenance training
25 will occur at the same site. BRAC established

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1 Eglin Air Force Base as the training -- joint
2 training site for the Air Force, Navy, and Marine
3 Corps. In addition, we expect the United Kingdom
4 and other international partners in the Joint
5 Strike Fighter development program to participate
6 at various times in the training center.

7 The training site will teach pilots and
8 maintenance technicians how to properly operate and
9 maintain the F-35 JSF air system. The purpose of
10 the NEPA action is to provide a cantonment area for
11 the initial joint training site.

12 The F-35 training site needs to be close to
13 the Eglin flight line and runways and have adequate
14 acreage for existing facilities to support the new
15 mission. In addition, access to Eglin's Base
16 operating support functions is critical.

17 The associated requirements for meeting the
18 purpose and need for a Joint Strike Fighter
19 training site include establishing a cantonment, an
20 administrative area between 100 and 200 acres in
21 size, providing 31 facilities at approximately
22 5.6 million square feet, and a munitions storage
23 area and bedding down 107 primary assigned F-35
24 aircraft for allowing the airfield operations.

25 The alternatives for this proposed action are

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1 associated with finding an appropriate location for
2 the Joint Strike Fighter cantonment area. In
3 arriving at the proposed alternative locations for
4 the JSF site, the Air Force in coordination with
5 the joint program office developed a list of
6 minimum requirements for the JSF training center
7 and applied them to the entire Eglin military
8 complex to identify potential site for development.
9 Those areas meeting all of the criteria were
10 included as potential alternatives. The minimum
11 requirements included an airfield with two 8,000
12 foot runways plus aircraft support and recovery
13 requirements, available utilities, fueling access
14 and auxiliary ground equipment, approximately 170
15 to 180 acres contiguous to the flight line,
16 physical security and avoidance of wetlands and
17 floodplains.

18 Because Chocktaw, Duke and Hurlburt Fields
19 have only one runway, they are not under
20 consideration for a Joint Strike Fighter integrated
21 training site cantonment location. Furthermore,
22 Camp Rudder is not under consideration as it does
23 not meet runway requirements, and its location and
24 logistics are not practical.

25 The remaining possibilities include two

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1 potential locations at Eglin Main Base. This slide
2 illustrates the two Joint Strike Fighter cantonment
3 locations. Two proposals have been developed to
4 bracket the projected Joint Strike Fighter training
5 requirements at the different airfield options at
6 Eglin Air Force Base. These alternatives include
7 the airfields referred to as Eglin Main, Duke
8 Field, and Chocktaw Field. These airfields include
9 some similarities such as the amount of flight
10 training, the use of the designated airspace, and
11 ordnance use.

12 Before we show you the alternative, we'd like
13 to show an illustration of the present noise
14 contours associated with the Eglin Air Force Base
15 as well as the two outlying fields, Duke and
16 Chocktaw. The outer blue line contour represents
17 the current 65 decibel DNL contour. Noise --
18 baseline noise contours for each airfield, in other
19 words, the contours represent the noise levels
20 based upon the current flight ops at each location.
21 Note that each inner line represents a 5 decibel
22 increase in noise level.

23 Noise impacts associated with the Joint Strike
24 Fighter influence other environmental resources
25 such as land use and socioeconomics and, therefore,

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1 this slide illustrates the noise contours
2 associated with Alternative 1. The next slide
3 illustrates will show the noise contours associated
4 with Alternative 2 also included in the EIS.

5 Two proposals have been developed to bracket
6 the projected Joint Strike Fighter training
7 requirements at the different airfield options at
8 Eglin Air Force Base. However, the level of
9 operations in the special-use air space -- I'm
10 sorry, that's -- I got to a different point in the
11 script. I'm sorry.

12 After the proposed actions and alternatives
13 are identified, the BRAC 2005 Program EIS will
14 examine potential impacts to the human environment.
15 Environmental resources that will be evaluated
16 include those listed on the slide in front of you.

17 I'd now like to briefly summarize the
18 environment issues that have been found and
19 addressed in the Draft EIS. For the 7th Group
20 cantonment area under any alternative,
21 transportation would continue to be adversely
22 impacted. Alternative 2, 3, and 5 would require
23 extensive utility development both on-site and
24 off-site. And for the 7th Group training,
25 Alternative 3, it may impact -- adversely impact

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1 recreation associated with Duck Pond and management
2 Unit 6 on Eglin. Also, regardless of which
3 training alternative is selected, approximately
4 54,000 acres of land will be conditionally closed,
5 potentially impacting recreational opportunities.
6 Additionally, some impacts have been identified
7 associated with the JSF integrated joint training
8 site.

9 Similar to the 7th Group, under any
10 alternative, transportation would continue to be
11 adversely impacted. For Alternative 1, 17 road
12 segments would be potentially impacted. Of those
13 17, only 6 would result in a perceived adverse
14 impact from this action. For Alternative 2, 18
15 road segments would be potentially impacted, and of
16 these 18, only 8 would result in a perceived
17 adverse impact. For the baseline, there would --
18 there were 9 road segments deemed deficient
19 surrounding Eglin Air Force Base.

20 For the Joint Strike Fighter training,
21 regional airspace is currently congested and the
22 addition of JSF would add to that congestion. Land
23 uses currently under the runway approaches are
24 under high levels of noise. The increased noise
25 levels are expected to affect recommended land uses

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1 in adjacent communities. People offbase subject to
2 noise levels of 65 decibel DNL or greater are
3 estimated to increase from the baseline of 2,113
4 people to 6,757 for JSF alternative training,
5 Alternative 1, and 11,156 people for Alternative 2.

6 The Joint Strike Fighter noise level would
7 represent perceived adverse impacts to residents
8 and sensitive receptors under the expanded
9 contours. This also includes offbase residents
10 around the airfield and military training ranges
11 and special-use air space.

12 This concludes the Air Force presentation.
13 I'd like to note that the Draft Environmental
14 Impact Statement that was distributed is just that,
15 a draft document, and had an error on page 3-79,
16 figure 7-10. An erratum sheet has been sent to the
17 local libraries and placed on the Eglin public
18 website, and a replacement page has also been
19 mailed out to anyone requesting a copy of the
20 document.

21 I'd like to now turn the meeting back over to
22 Col. Cumbie.

23 COL. CUMBIE: Thanks, Randall.

24 I'd like to take a quick ten-minute break
25 before we begin the public testimony of the evening

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1 where I hear your comments and concerns. If you
2 would like to speak and did not already sign up
3 earlier, if you'd please do so during the break at
4 the sign-in table in the back of the room. Let's
5 take a quick break.

6 (Intermission)

7 JENNIFER GEESLIN: Okay, guys, time to get
8 started on the second portion of our meeting. If I
9 could get everyone to come back up and take a seat
10 so we can start the hearing. Okay, before we -- I
11 turn the mic back over to the judge, obviously
12 we're having a little bit of audio difficulties
13 this evening. We did do five dry runs, so we're
14 really not sure what's going on, but we really did
15 test the system out and --

16 (Comment from the audience.)

17 JENNIFER GEESLIN: I know. I know. So I
18 apologize. And if we get that screechy sound --
19 the mic that we're having trouble with is the
20 judge's microphone, obviously -- and I'm going to
21 (inaudible) a little bit, so if we get it, we're
22 going to turn it off our way and then we'll just
23 really try and sound off for -- for everyone
24 tonight. And I apologize again for the audio
25 difficulties that we're having. Sir, the floor is

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1 yours.

2 COL. CUMBIE: We have now reached the second
3 part of this hearing which is your opportunity to
4 provide the Air Force with your comments on the
5 Eglin BRAC 2005 Program Draft EIS and to make
6 statements for the record. Our court reporter is
7 recording everything stated during this portion of
8 the hearing.

9 The public hearing and comment periods are
10 part of the Environmental Impact Analysis process.
11 This comment process gives you, the public, the
12 opportunity to provide the Air Force with your
13 issues and concerns about the draft EIS and
14 information on your community relevant to the
15 analysis. These comments will be part of the
16 official record and included in the final EIS.
17 This will ensure that the Air Force decision makers
18 benefit from your local knowledge and are aware of
19 your concerns about the environmental analysis for
20 this EIS.

21 Throughout the comment process I'd ask you to
22 keep in mind that this is not an arena for a debate
23 nor is this hearing designed as a
24 question-and-answer session. Rather, this hearing
25 is a venue for -- the venue the Air Force uses to

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1 gather your concern and any additional data or
2 recommended changes you may have, whether they be
3 oral or written comments, regarding the -- oral or
4 written comments regarding the environmental
5 analysis and the environmental impacts identified
6 under the proposed actions and alternatives. We
7 ask that you focus your comment on the
8 environmental issues related to this proposal.
9 Non-environmental issues take away from time
10 others' opportunity to comment on the Air Force's
11 analysis of environmental concerns and will not add
12 to the adequacy of the analysis used in this EIS.

13 You can officially comment in several ways.
14 You can speak now and have it recorded by the court
15 reporter. You can provide your comments in writing
16 by submitting them during the hearing or through
17 the mail, or you may give extended written remarks
18 to the court reporter as part of your presentation.

19 When you signed in at the hearing, if you wish
20 to speak this evening, you should have registered
21 on the speaker sheets. If you've not done so and
22 would like to speak at this time, if you'd please
23 raise your hand and Ms. Geeslin will sign you up.
24 (Inaudible) anybody that wanted to speak have the
25 opportunity to sign up.

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1 If you'd like to turn in your written comments
2 at this hearing, you may give them to any Air Force
3 representative -- representative located in the
4 room or at the sign-in table. Written comments
5 will be accepted throughout the comment period or
6 until 12 May, 2008. If you do not turn in your
7 written comments at this hearing, please send
8 comments to a point -- it would be on the slide
9 except it's not going to be on the slide because of
10 the microphone backfeed, but it is provided in the
11 materials available to you here in the meeting.

12 Comments made at all the public hearings or
13 provided in writing throughout the public-comment
14 period will be given equal consideration and are a
15 part of the official record.

16 In order to move through the testimony
17 efficiently, I ask that you observe the following
18 rules: Elected officials that choose to speak --
19 choose to comment will be given an opportunity to
20 speak first then we'll hear from agencies and
21 organizational representatives. And finally,
22 private citizens will be called upon in the order
23 in which they signed up to speak. When I announce
24 your name, please stand and address your remarks to
25 me so that I can hear your comments clearly and so

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1 that the court reporter can easily record your
2 statement. Please speak clearly and slowly. State
3 your full name and spell it out so that we can
4 record it correctly.

5 If you're going to represent someone or some
6 group other than yourself, please let us know. We
7 need this information to make sure that the court
8 reporter gets an accurate record. Please do not
9 provide any personal information in your comments
10 that you would not like to see published in the
11 final EIS.

12 Each person will be allotted three minutes to
13 speak, and this applies to everyone. You don't
14 have to speak for the full three minutes, however,
15 if you do choose to speak for three minutes, a
16 yellow card will be raised when you have only 30
17 seconds remaining. And when your three minutes has
18 ended, a red card will be raised, and you will need
19 to end your statement. Following your
20 presentation, I ask you to sit down so we can call
21 on the next person.

22 Out of respect for others, if you would like
23 to make comments, I ask that you please honor the
24 three minutes and any request that I might have for
25 you to stop if you go over this time. If you think

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1 you'll have more comments than you can present in
2 the allotted time, please make the most important
3 comment first. If you don't get a chance to voice
4 all of your comments, you can and should submit
5 them in writing. If you have a written statement
6 already prepared, you may hand it in, read it aloud
7 within the time limit, or do both. Any way you
8 want to present it, it will be part of the official
9 record and included in the final EIS.

10 If we have heard from all of those who wish to
11 speak, and you'd like an opportunity to expand on
12 your original remarks, you'll have that chance at
13 the end of the hearing if time allows. This
14 hearing is scheduled to end at approximately 8
15 o'clock.

16 I also ask that you please not repeat what
17 another speaker has said. If you agree with the
18 previous speaker on a particular issue, you may
19 certainly state your agreement. This will allow
20 more time for other speakers should that become
21 necessary.

22 It appears that our first speaker tonight is
23 Col., retired, Joseph Masterson?

24 COL. MASTERSON: My name is Joseph Masterson,
25 M-A-S-T-E-R-S-O-N, Colonel United States Army,

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1 retired. As such, I'm interested in the presence
2 of more Army personnel here. Are they going to be
3 permanently assigned here or is this strictly a
4 training base for them? Will there be family
5 housing? Is there a requirement for them for
6 housing off base?

7 Another concern or curiosity, what's to happen
8 to the newly refurbished and enlarged regional
9 airport that we now have instead of having to go to
10 Pensacola or some of those other places to depart?
11 That's all I'm concerned with right now. Thank
12 you.

13 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir. Mr. Mike Roy?

14 MR. MIKE ROY: I'm Mike Roy, R-O-Y, president
15 of the area chamber of commerce. We feel that we
16 have been informed all along in the BRAC process by
17 Eglin, and our Mac community as well as our
18 chamber, and we concur with what has been going on.
19 We support wholly the environmental impact studies
20 that have been going on, and we just want to
21 know -- want you to know that we back what Eglin is
22 proposing.

23 COL. CUMBIE: Mr. Chris Romig?

24 MR. CHRIS ROMIG: I'm Chris Romig, R-O-M-I-G.
25 I'm here on behalf of JTL Capital. I have two

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1 comments I'd like to make tonight regarding the
2 alternative for flight training. First is that the
3 property south and west of Chocktaw Field called
4 Escribano Point is presently zoned low-density
5 residential. JTL began planning a residential
6 community well before the BRAC decision in 2005 but
7 under either alternative, noise from the F-35 will
8 severely and negatively impact the ability for JTL
9 to develop a sustainable community.

10 Second comment regards the limited
11 alternatives. The EIS alternatives for flight
12 training appear to be very limited to the two that
13 have been briefed, the outsource of the noise and
14 the periphery of the base where it impacts the
15 offbase community primarily. You'd think with a
16 multi-million dollar program being fielded here, at
17 least an alternative to look at a new runway in the
18 interior of the base that would have less impact on
19 the community would be considered. Thanks very
20 much.

21 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you. And, please, if I
22 butcher your name, I apologize, Miss Sally Bluemel?

23 MISS SALLY BLUEMEL: I just wanted to make one
24 comment that was addressed at the break.

25 COL. CUMBIE: Okay.

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1 MISS SALLY BLUEMEL: Thank you.

2 COL. CUMBIE: Well, we had a very short list
3 tonight, and it appears that everyone had the
4 opportunity to say what they needed to say within
5 their allotted three minutes, but if there's anyone
6 who has not had the opportunity to speak, please
7 let us know.

8 (No response.)

9 Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes the
10 public hearing. Thank you for your participation
11 and input. And one other thing, please remember
12 that the public comment period for the Eglin BRAC
13 2005 Program Draft EIS will extend through
14 May 12th, 2008. And you can bring your written
15 comments here to me or send them to the address in
16 the envelopes that's at the table. Thank you all.

17 (Public hearing concluded at 7:10 p.m.)

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STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF BAY

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the public hearing for the Eglin BRAC 2005 program held April 16, 2008, at Crestview Community Center, Crestview, Florida.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I was authorized to and did report the foregoing proceeding and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

DATED this the 29th day of April 2008.

Gertrude B. Downs, FPR

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SCOPING MEETING
EGLIN BRAC PROGRAM 2005
EIS SCOPING MEETING
MONROEVILLE WATER WORKS
MONROEVILLE, ALABAMA

APRIL 17, 2008

Transcript of public scoping meeting held April 17, 2008, 6:30 p.m. to 7:05 p.m. at the Monroeville Water Works, Monroeville, Alabama. Reported by Gertrude B. Downs, FPR, Notary Public in and for the State of Florida.

APPEARANCES:

Mike Spaits
Public Affairs Representative for
Environmental Management, Eglin Air Force Base

Randall Rowland
Civil Engineering Group
Environmental Management Division
Eglin Air Force Base

Col. Thomas Cumbie
Hearing Officer
United States Air Force

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1 JENNIFER GEESLIN: Let's go ahead and get
2 started. We have some refreshments in the corner
3 if you'd like to grab some. Over here are some
4 Chex Mix, and there's plenty for you before we get
5 started, so help yourself. It's here for you so --
6 I'm not saying you need caffeine to make your
7 briefing. We'll try to make this as exciting as
8 possible, I promise.

9 UNIDENTIFIED 1: Well, in Monroeville,
10 Alabama, we need a little excitement, so...

11 JENNIFER GEESLIN: That's why we're here.

12 UNIDENTIFIED 2: Bring it on.

13 COL. CUMBIE: You're going to be sorely
14 disappointed.

15 JENNIFER GEESLIN: Okay, we didn't set the
16 mics up in this room. It seemed pretty cozy to us
17 when we got here, so if at any point throughout the
18 evening you can't hear, raise your hand, and we'll
19 have folks from the stage kind of sound off a
20 little bit more.

21 Welcome to the Eglin BRAC Public Hearing for
22 the Eglin BRAC 2005 Program. A lot of folks coming
23 ask me this question so I'll say it in front of the
24 crowd. The public hearing is sort of at the
25 halfway point of this process so that's what we're

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1 here to talk about the Draft Environmental Impact
2 Statement and let you know what that document says
3 and where we are in the process. And obviously you
4 had the opportunity to look at some of our boards
5 and talk to some of our subject-matter experts that
6 are here with us this evening who really know
7 what's in this document and where this project is
8 going.

9 Again, help yourself to refreshments. There's
10 restrooms on either side in the foyer, and of
11 course we have emergency exits behind you to the
12 side or right back here beyond our court reporter.
13 Please let her go first. And then I'll just
14 introduce our first speaker, and he's from Eglin
15 Air Force Base. He's the Environmental Public
16 Affairs Officer up there, so if you ever have any
17 questions, he's the right guy to talk to. He's
18 also the person on the back of your brochure and on
19 the comment sheet, he's the point of contact for
20 this project, Mr. Mike Spaits.

21 MIKE SPAITS: Thank you, Jennifer.

22 Good evening and welcome to the public
23 hearings for the proposed base realignment and
24 closure, also known as BRAC 2005 decisions at Eglin
25 Air Force Base. My name is Michael Spaits. I am

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1 the Environmental Public Affairs Officer for Eglin
2 Air Force Base, and because we want to ensure we
3 provide an accurate public record, our presentation
4 this evening will be a scripted format.

5 This hearing is designed to provide you an
6 opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental
7 Impact Statement known as the EIS. Before we begin
8 Air Force presentation, I would like to introduce
9 our hearing officer for tonight's meeting, Col.
10 Thomas Cumbie.

11 COL. CUMBIE: Good evening ladies and
12 gentlemen. I'm Col. Tom Cumbie, and as Mr. Spaits
13 indicated, I'll be the presiding officer at this
14 public hearing for the Draft Environmental Impact
15 Statement for Eglin BRAC 2005 Program.

16 The hearing is being held in accordance with
17 the provisions of the National Environmental Policy
18 Act and the regulations that are published by the
19 Council on Environmental Quality. The purpose of
20 this hearing is to receive public comments, that is
21 your comments, on the Draft Environmental Impact
22 Statement commonly referred to as the DEIS.

23 Before moving forward with the Air Force
24 briefing on the proposal and the EIS overview, I'd
25 like to explain my role in this process. I'm a

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1 full-time military criminal trial judge. I'm
2 stationed at Eglin Air Force Base, but I'm not
3 assigned there nor am I assigned to any of the
4 commands associated with Eglin Air Force Base or
5 this proposal. I've not been involved in the
6 development of the Draft EIS, and I'm not here to
7 act as a legal advisor for the Air Force
8 representatives of this proposal.

9 My role as presiding hearing officer is simply
10 to ensure that this proceeding is conducted in a
11 fair, orderly, and impartial manner and that all
12 who wish to be heard will have the opportunity to
13 speak. In summary, it's important that you
14 understand that I'll be serving as an impartial
15 moderator for this hearing.

16 The hearing will be conducted in two parts.
17 First, the Air Force presentation, and second, an
18 opportunity for you all to provide public
19 testimony. We'll begin with the Air Force
20 presentation which will take approximately 30
21 minutes and then we will receive your comments on
22 the Draft EIS. Mike.

23 MIKE SPAITS: Thank you, sir.

24 Now I'd like to introduce Randall Rowland from
25 the Eglin Air Force Base Environmental Management

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1 Division. He will discuss the environmental
2 process, the EIS timelines, and a summary of the
3 environmental findings to date.

4 In addition, we have in the audience the
5 Commander of the 96th Civil Engineer Group, Col.
6 Dennis Yates. Also in the audience are
7 representatives from various Air Force commands and
8 the Department of Defense. Randall?

9 RANDALL ROWLAND: Thank you, Mike.

10 As Mike said, my name is Randall Rowland. I'm
11 here from the Environmental Management Division at
12 Eglin, and I'm here to brief on the BRAC 2005
13 Program Decisions for Eglin and then a little bit
14 about the National Environmental Policy Act.

15 The Air Force has developed an EIS,
16 Environmental Impact Statement, which is the most
17 detailed environmental analysis required by NEPA.
18 The BRAC EIS will provide the decision maker
19 detailed information to help her understand
20 potential impacts of each proposed alternative and
21 help her make the most informed decision. The
22 Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for
23 installations, currently Ms. Kathleen Ferguson, is
24 the decision maker for this EIS.

25 The current scope of the EIS will address the

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1 first two BRAC 2005 program requirements. The
2 first of those is the relocation of the 7th Special
3 Forces Group Airborne from Fort Bragg, North
4 Carolina, to Eglin Air Force Base, and then the
5 second, to establish the Joint Strike Fighter
6 initial joint training site at Eglin.

7 This EIS evaluates alternative ways for
8 establishing the 7th Group cantonment area at
9 Eglin, establishing the Joint Strike Fighter
10 initial joint training site, cantonment area, and
11 then accommodating the training for both the Joint
12 Strike Fighter and the 7th Group.

13 According to law, BRAC must be implemented as
14 stated in the approved BRAC commission's
15 recommendations. Therefore, the BRAC law -- by
16 BRAC law the Air Force's proposed alternatives
17 address how and not if BRAC should be implemented
18 at Eglin Air Force Base. As required by NEPA, the
19 Air Force must identify and analyze any reasonable
20 range of alternatives to the proposed action. The
21 reasonable alternatives are alternatives that would
22 meet the Air Force's underlying purpose and need
23 for the proposed action. Within the range of
24 reasonable alternatives, the Air Force is not
25 required to consider highly speculative

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1 alternatives.

2 Also required by NEPA, the Air Force must
3 consider a no-action alternative, or an alternative
4 considering changes to Eglin Air Force Base even if
5 the BRAC actions were not implemented. However, it
6 should be noted that the BRAC actions will be
7 implemented at Eglin as required by law, and the
8 no-action alternative within this EIS will simply
9 reflect the baseline, or current conditions, at
10 Eglin and within the surrounding areas which will
11 then be used for analysis purposes.

12 This slide shows the current Eglin BRAC 2005
13 EIS schedule, and you can see that the Air Force
14 published a notice of availability for the Draft
15 EIS, and we're currently about halfway through the
16 public-comment period.

17 After we conclude the public hearings, we will
18 respond to the input and comments received, modify
19 the EIS if needed, and publish a final document
20 later this year in about August 2008, and then
21 thirty days after the final EIS is released to the
22 public, the Air Force expects to sign a record of
23 decision, or ROD. That ROD will state whether the
24 proposed action will be implemented and which
25 siting alternatives have been selected. The Air

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1 Force expects preparation of the EIS and the
2 signing of a Record of Decision to be completed in
3 September 2008.

4 The BRAC 2005 decision means the following for
5 Eglin Air Force Base: First, relocating the 7th
6 Group from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to Eglin Air
7 Force Base, and this includes adding approximately
8 2,200 military personnel and providing training
9 resources for the 7th Group personnel. Second,
10 establishing the Joint Strike Fighter initial joint
11 training site at Eglin Air Force Base. This would
12 involve adding about 2,300 military, civilian, and
13 contractor personnel to Eglin, bringing in 107
14 primary assigned F-35 aircraft representing three
15 variant models, and then providing flight and
16 maintenance training for JSF.

17 The purpose for the actions in this EIS is to
18 implement the BRAC 2005 Program as required by law.
19 It includes four actions which we will review in
20 the upcoming slides.

21 The first is to construct the 7th Group
22 cantonment area, and a cantonment area is almost
23 like a small city. It has administrative offices,
24 classrooms and dormitories, infrastructure,
25 services and equipment storage. The second action

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1 is to accommodate the 7th Group training
2 requirements. The third, to construct the Joint
3 Strike Fighter initial joint training site
4 cantonment area. And then the fourth is to
5 accommodate the Joint Strike Fighter flight
6 operations requirements.

7 There are a variety of ways to implement each
8 of these alternatives and each action has its own
9 defined needs and requirements, and each
10 alternative must meet the underlying purpose and
11 need for the BRAC program. Each action requires an
12 independent decision.

13 The first action for the realignment of the
14 7th Group requires the establishment of the
15 cantonment area to provide an area to prepare the
16 7th Group for wartime missions.

17 The 7th Group cantonment area needs access to
18 a flight line that includes rapid and secluded
19 deployments, convenient access to Eglin Air Force
20 Base operating support functions, and seclusion for
21 operational security and force protection.

22 The cantonment area requirements include the
23 following: Administrative areas, including
24 barracks, offices, classrooms, and motor pools, a
25 location with adequate acreage for security and

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1 future expansion of the cantonment area, munitions
2 storage area, and ability to transport munitions.

3 The need requires that they have proximity to
4 training ranges, ideally no more than ten minutes
5 transport time, timely deployment airlift, timely
6 emergency response, access to a major
7 transportation artery, within 20 miles of a
8 communication farm, minimal environmental
9 restrictions, avoidance of unexploded ordnance
10 areas, and compatibility with surrounding land use,
11 noise level, and safety restrictions.

12 The current alternatives locations can be
13 grouped into the following five geographical
14 locations: Eglin Main Base, Duke Field, area west
15 of Duke Field, area north of Eglin Main, and area
16 near DeFuniak Springs. This slide illustrates all
17 of the 7th Group cantonment locations.

18 The second action proposed for the 7th Group
19 beddown has been addressed in this EIS is
20 associated with training of the 7th Group, and the
21 purpose of this proposed action is to provide
22 adequate ranges for the 7th Group missions while
23 maintaining range access for current and future
24 users.

25 The Air Force has performed an extensive

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1 evaluation of Eglin's range to determine whether
2 adequate ranges existed and identified possible
3 alternatives. As a result of this study, more
4 refined alternatives have been developed.

5 Specifically, the 7th Group training requires
6 13 new ranges totaling more than 6,000 areas --
7 acres of training area, approximately 43,000
8 training hours per year, including wheeled vehicle
9 use, Humvees -- such as Humvees and heavy trucks,
10 fixed and rotary wing aircraft, live and inert
11 ordnance, such as guns and hand grenades, and water
12 operations using small rubber boats.

13 Training ranges are divided into two groups,
14 Group 1 and Group 2 ranges. Group 1 ranges are
15 comprised mostly of small-caliber weapons and will
16 be dedicated to 7th Group training activities.
17 Group 2 ranges are comprised mostly of larger
18 caliber weapons and are not dedicated to the 7th
19 Group for utilization.

20 As a result of the range training alternative
21 narrowing process, the following locations on the
22 chart were identified as possible alternatives to
23 be evaluated. Alternative 3, east and west side,
24 is the preferred alternative in the Draft EIS.

25 Some range areas may be conditionally closed

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1 to public use for safety reasons during the 7th
2 Group maneuvers and construction phase. This slide
3 illustrates all of the 7th Group training
4 locations.

5 BRAC calls for the establishment of the F-35
6 Joint Strike Fighter initial training site at
7 Eglin. It is an integrated training center because
8 both pilot and maintenance training occurs at the
9 same site. BRAC established Eglin Air Force Base
10 as a joint training site for the Air Force, Navy,
11 and Marine Corps. In addition, we expect the
12 United Kingdom and other international partners in
13 the Joint Strike Fighter development program to
14 participate at various times in the training
15 center.

16 The training site will teach pilots and
17 maintenance technicians how to properly operate and
18 maintain the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter air system.
19 The purpose of the NEPA action is to provide a
20 cantonment area for the initial joint training
21 site.

22 The F-35 training site needs to be close to
23 the Eglin flight line and runways and have adequate
24 acreage for existing facilities to support the new
25 mission. In addition, access to Eglin's Base

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1 operating support functions is critical.

2 The associated requirements for meeting the
3 purpose and need for the JSF training site include
4 establishing a cantonment or administrative area
5 between 100 and 200 acres in size, providing 31
6 facilities at approximately 5.6 million square
7 feet, and a munitions storage area, bedding down
8 107 primary assigned F-35 aircraft and allowing for
9 airfield operations.

10 The alternatives for this proposed action are
11 associated with finding appropriate locations for
12 the JSF cantonment area. In arriving at the
13 proposed alternative locations for the JSF site,
14 the Air Force coordinated with the joint program
15 office, developed a list of minimum requirements
16 for the JSF training center and applied them to the
17 Eglin military complex to identify potential sites
18 for development. Those areas meeting all of the
19 criteria were included as potential alternatives.
20 The minimum requirements included an airfield with
21 two 8,000 foot runways plus aircraft support and
22 recovery requirements, available utilities, fueling
23 access and auxiliary ground equipment,
24 approximately 170 to 180 acres contiguous to the
25 flight line, physical security avoidance -- and

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1 avoidance of wetlands and floodplains.

2 Because Chocktaw, Duke, and Hurlburt Fields
3 have only one runway, they are not under
4 consideration for a JSF integrated training site
5 cantonment location. Furthermore, Camp Rudder is
6 not under consideration as it does not meet the
7 runway requirements, and its location and logistics
8 are not practical.

9 The remaining possibilities include two
10 potential locations at Eglin Main Base. This slide
11 illustrates the two Joint Strike Fighter cantonment
12 locations. Two proposals have been developed to
13 bracket the projected Joint Strike Fighter flight
14 training requirements at the different airfield
15 options on Eglin Air Force Base. A commonality
16 between both alternatives is the special-use
17 airspace over Alabama. As you can see from this
18 chart, BR 1082 and 1085 are the two training routes
19 that basically loop around the Monroeville area,
20 and they will be utilized by the Joint Strike
21 Fighter.

22 The two special-use airspace routes both have
23 a baseline of about 45 decibels DNL, and DNL is a
24 day night average noise level averaged over a
25 24-hour period. And it's anticipated that these

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1 levels will increase between -- to between 57 and
2 76 decibels DNL, and the population numbers are
3 shown on the slide at the right-hand column. Those
4 are population figures overflowed by those two
5 military training routes.

6 After the proposed actions and alternatives
7 are identified, the BRAC 2005 Program EIS will
8 examine potential impacts to the human environment
9 that could be affected by these two proposals.
10 Environmental resources that will be evaluated
11 include those listed on the slide.

12 Now I'd like to briefly summarize the
13 environmental issues that have been found and
14 addressed in the Draft EIS. For the 7th Group
15 cantonment area under any alternative,
16 transportation would continue to be adversely
17 impacted. Alternatives 2, 3, and 5 would require
18 extensive utility development both on-site and
19 off-site. And for the 7th Group training,
20 Alternative 3 may adversely impact recreation
21 associated with Duck Pond and the management of
22 use -- Unit 6 on Eglin. And also, regardless of
23 which training alternative is selected,
24 approximately 54,000 acres of land will be
25 conditionally closed, potentially impacting

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1 recreational opportunities. Additionally, some
2 impacts have been identified associated with the
3 JSF integrated joint training site.

4 Similar to the 7th Group under any alternative
5 transportation would continue to be adversely
6 impacted. For Alternative 1, 17 roadway segments
7 would potentially be impacted, and of those 17,
8 only 6 would result in a perceived adverse impact.
9 For Alternative 2, 18 roadway segments would be
10 potentially impacted. Of these 18, only 8 would
11 result in a perceived adverse impact, and for the
12 baseline, there were 9 road segments deemed
13 deficient surrounding Eglin Air Force Base.

14 For the Joint Strike Fighter flight training,
15 regional airspace is currently congested, and the
16 addition of Joint Strike Fighter would add to that
17 congestion. Land uses currently under the runway
18 approaches are under high noise levels and the
19 increased noise levels are expected affect -- to
20 affect recommended land uses in adjacent
21 communities. People offbase subject to noise
22 levels of 65 decibel DNL or greater is estimated to
23 increase from a baseline of 2,113 people to 6,757
24 for the flight training Alternative 1, and 11,156
25 people for Alternative 2. All of those people are

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1 in and around the Eglin Air Field operations.

2 The JSF noise level would represent perceived
3 adverse impacts to residents and sensitive
4 receptors under the expanded noise contours. This
5 also includes offbase residents around the airfield
6 and military training ranges and special-use air
7 space.

8 This concludes the Air Force presentation.
9 I'd like to note that in the Draft Environmental
10 there is a mistake, because it is a draft document,
11 on page 3-79, figure 7-10 is incorrect, and a
12 correction sheet has been mailed out to all of the
13 libraries, and the people receiving a Draft
14 Environmental Impact Statement.

15 I would like to turn the meeting back over to
16 Col. Cumbie.

17 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, Randall.

18 At this point in the hearing what we would
19 normally do is to take a 10-minute recess to allow
20 anyone who would like to speak at the hearing today
21 and did not have the opportunity to sign up to do
22 so, but I think given the limited number of people
23 we have here that we can certainly work that out as
24 we go along in here, saving you folks some time.

25 We've reached the second part of the hearing

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1 which is your opportunity to provide the Air Force
2 with your comments on the Eglin BRAC 2005 Draft EIS
3 and to make statements for the record. Our court
4 reporter here is recording everything that is
5 stated during this portion of the hearing.

6 The public hearings and comment period are
7 part of the Environmental Impact Analysis process.
8 This comment process gives you, the public, the
9 opportunity to provide the Air Force with your
10 issues and concerns about the draft EIS and
11 information on your community relevant to the
12 analysis. These comments will be part of the
13 official record and included in the final EIS.
14 This will ensure that the Air Force decision makers
15 benefit from your local knowledge and are aware of
16 the concerns about the -- aware of your concerns
17 about the environmental analysis for this EIS.

18 Throughout the comment period I'd ask you to
19 keep in mind that this is not an arena for a debate
20 nor is it a hearing designed for questions and
21 answers. Rather, this hearing is a venue the Air
22 Force uses to gather your concerns and any
23 additional data or recommended changes that you may
24 have, whether through your oral comments tonight or
25 written comments regarding the environmental

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1 analysis and the environmental impacts identified
2 with the proposed actions and alternatives. We ask
3 that you focus your comments on environmental
4 issues related to the proposal. Non-environmental
5 issues will take away from others' opportunity to
6 comment on the Air Force's analysis of
7 environmental concerns and will not add to the
8 adequacy of this analysis.

9 You can officially comment in several ways.
10 You may speak now and have our court reporter
11 record it. You may provide your comments in
12 writing by submitting them during this hearing or
13 through the mail, or you may give extended written
14 remarks to the court reporter as part of your
15 presentation.

16 When you signed in at the hearing, if you wish
17 to speak this evening, you should have registered
18 on the speaker sheets, and if you've not done so
19 and would like to speak, please raise your hand at
20 this time and we'll make sure we get you signed up.

21 (No response.)

22 Fair enough.

23 If you'd like to turn in your written comments
24 at this hearing, you may give them to any Air Force
25 representative located in the room or at the

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1 sign-in table. Written comments will be accepted
2 throughout the comment period or until 12 May,
3 2008. If you do not turn in your written comments
4 at this hearing, please send comments to the
5 address shown here on the slide.

6 Comments made at all the public hearings or
7 provided in writing throughout the public-comment
8 period will be given equal consideration and are
9 all part of the official record.

10 In order to officially move through the
11 testimony, I'd ask you to observe the following
12 rules: Elected officials that choose to comment,
13 we'll give them the opportunity to speak first then
14 we'll hear from agency and organizational
15 representatives, and finally, private citizens will
16 be called upon in the order in which they signed up
17 to speak.

18 When I announce your name, you can please
19 stand and address your remarks to me so that I can
20 hear your comments clearly and that our court
21 reporter can easily record your statement. You can
22 please speak clearly and slowly. State your full
23 name and spell it so we can record it for the
24 record.

25 If you're representing someone or some group

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1 other than yourself, please let us know. We need
2 this information to make sure the court reporter
3 gets an accurate record. Please don't provide any
4 personal information in your comments that you
5 would not like to see published in the final EIS.

6 Each person will be allotted three minutes to
7 speak, and this applies to everyone. If you do not
8 have -- you do not have to speak for the full three
9 minutes, however, if you do choose to speak for the
10 full three minutes, a yellow card will be raised
11 when you have only thirty seconds remaining. And
12 when your thirty (sic) minutes has ended, a red
13 card will be raised, and you'll need to end your
14 presentation.

15 With the few people we have here in the
16 audience, that probably seems like an unnecessary
17 way of doing things, but we do it for that reason
18 because in each of the public hearings that we've
19 done, we've done them all the same way, and to
20 ensure that everyone has the same opportunity at
21 all the hearings, and in addition it's kind of
22 fun to watch Jennifer hold up the signs, so -- but
23 I can assure you at the end that if anyone has any
24 comments that will exceed the three minutes, there
25 is going to be plenty of opportunity for you to

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1 make your full comments.

2 Mr. Harold Hamite?

3 MR. HAROLD HAMITE: Yes.

4 COL. CUMBIE: You indicated that you'd like to
5 make comments?

6 MR. HAROLD HAMITE: Sure.

7 COL. CUMBIE: Okay, please do so.

8 MR. HAROLD HAMITE: I'm a little confused at
9 exactly the regimen we should go by to make the
10 comments. I'll try to do my best, and you can
11 correct me if I do wrong.

12 COL. CUMBIE: Any order that you would like.

13 MR. HAROLD HAMITE: My concerns are two-fold.
14 As a pilot, I'm very concerned about the
15 low-altitude routes. I have not understood from
16 the presentations tonight what they would be
17 altitude-wise, and/or speed-wise. I -- I guess
18 that's a question that I don't think you're going
19 to answer right now, but I did not hear that from
20 the presentation. That's a scary thing as a pilot.

21 The second thing I'd like to address is the
22 noise levels, which is obvious to all of us in the
23 room as residents of this community and surrounding
24 areas. I got the impression from the presentation
25 that, that was a substantial increase in noise

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1 levels that we would expect in the community.

2 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir. Mr. Tim Tiray
3 (phonetic), Tirey?

4 MR. TIM TIREY: Tirey, T-I-R-E-Y.

5 Could I get somebody to take us and show us
6 that slide where the airways are and question, so
7 we can pinpoint where Monroeville is?

8 COL. CUMBIE: You want to show him the
9 airspace, Commander?

10 (Member of BRAC team responds affirmatively.)

11 MR. TIM TIREY: Because we -- as a group, we
12 have not read this entire EIS.

13 MIKE SPAITS: Okay, understand we sent out the
14 notices, and we chose the location for a central
15 location to the region.

16 MR. TIM TIREY: Okay.

17 MIKE SPAITS: So that's why you don't see
18 specifically, you know, certain --

19 MR. TIM TIREY: Well, I understand, but we
20 haven't read it is what I'm saying.

21 MIKE SPAITS: Right, sir.

22 MR. TIM TIREY: So what -- what we're
23 concerned about, and I know it's not a
24 question-and-answer thing, but maybe somebody could
25 answer the question. I run the fixed-base

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1 operation at the airport. All I care about in the
2 whole project is how does it affect me. How does
3 it affect the people flying in and around
4 Monroeville when below 1,200 feet, you don't even
5 have to have a radio in this airspace. So, I mean,
6 that's really all -- can you highlight where
7 Monroeville is on that map?

8 UNIDENTIFIED 3: Out in the middle of that.

9 MR. TIM TIREY: That's what I thought.

10 UNIDENTIFIED 3: Right. Yeah.

11 MR. TIM TIREY: So those routes, they're
12 existing routes that go around us today. All we're
13 talking about is adding a couple of flights a day
14 or more to those routes.

15 MIKE SPAITS: Yeah, that would be correct,
16 sir.

17 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, Mr. Tirey. Mr. Tim
18 Averett.

19 MR. TIM AVERETT: Yes. My concerns are as a
20 recreational pilot, just the same thing that Tim
21 said the -- you know, I fly a Cessna 150. I don't
22 want to, I don't want to dog fight with a YF-35, or
23 whatever it is, so I'm just a little concerned
24 about, you know, that part of it, you know, getting
25 in and out around wherever you guys are going to

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1 be. And then just a side note, you probably could
2 do away with all of the concerns that everybody has
3 if you could arrange for us to have a ride in one
4 of those puppies.

5 COL. CUMBIE: You get in line, sir, because
6 I'm one.

7 MR. TIM AVERETT: Yeah, they always let all
8 the dumb reporters do that, you know? Somebody
9 that don't even know how to climb in an airplane
10 gets to go ride with the Blue Angels and everybody
11 else. You know, I've never seen a licensed pilot
12 get to go flying in one of the darned things.

13 COL. CUMBIE: Well, that was a short and sweet
14 comment period, but like I say, if anyone would
15 like to expand on their remarks, we've got plenty
16 of time. Yes, sir?

17 MR. ROY HART: I've got a question.

18 COL. CUMBIE: Sir, could I get you to --

19 MR. ROY HART: Roy Hart, H-A-R-T.

20 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir.

21 MR. ROY HART: I'm one of the longest plane
22 owners in Monroeville. I don't fly now, but are
23 those green routes just burner routes or are you
24 control -- you going to put that all in a
25 controlled airspace from a certain altitude 1,200

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1 feet to 50,000 feet or what? I don't -- I didn't
2 catch all your presentation.

3 UNIDENTIFIED 4: Those are current military
4 training routes.

5 UNIDENTIFIED 5: They are Victor routes,
6 meaning that we fly individual flight rules. They
7 are published, not only the width, they have an
8 altitude structure, a minimum and a maximum
9 altitude that we can fly, and basically these are
10 the two that we can fly through, and they're Victor
11 routes. They're typically three miles either side
12 of center line, they'll be -- always (inaudible)
13 flight of center line routes. They cannot -- I'm
14 not familiar with the exact altitude structure, but
15 when we modeled it, we flew it at the lowest
16 altitude permissible in that -- in the Victor
17 route.

18 MR. ROY HART: Because I know, my farm -- I
19 know we're not supposed to be getting personal on
20 this, but my farm over in Covington County is right
21 over one of the flight ways, which is about 50
22 miles from Eglin Air Force Base. And I've had
23 phantom, (Inaudible) Phantom, they flew so low over
24 my farmhouse they bent the antenna on my house. So
25 I wondered what kind of control and what kind of

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1 regulations you're going to have on your top gun
2 outlet through there, because I know you guys don't
3 worry about mid airs. One of my best friends was a
4 Phantom -- Phantom pilot. He said, you know, we're
5 flying so fast, we -- if we saw a plane, we
6 couldn't miss it. And us guys that fly around slow
7 at 60 miles an hour, you know, here comes a guy
8 barreling down at 3 o'clock level, it's a -- it's a
9 real fear. You make my -- you understand what I'm
10 saying?

11 UNIDENTIFIED 4: Yes, sir.

12 MR. ROY HART: What kind of controls will you
13 set all these pilots and how low an altitude will
14 they be flying?

15 Another thing that concerns me, you know,
16 we -- we're congested in all this airspace right
17 here, and y'all got millions of acres in New Mexico
18 or Arizona, out there, and you've got the whole
19 Gulf of Mexico. Why in the world are you
20 concentrating right here in a populated area when
21 you've got plenty of airspace to fly that there's
22 nothing? That's all I have to say.

23 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, sir. Anyone else?
24 Yes, please.

25 MR. DON OLIVER: Don Oliver. How you doing?

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1 COL. CUMBIE: Well. Thank you, Mr. Oliver.

2 MR. DON OLIVER: You know, one concern I have
3 to be voiced is communications. We fly a jet in
4 and out of Monroeville, and I need to know if these
5 jets will be -- what -- will they be speaking to
6 Atlanta Center, or Houston Center, or any center?
7 Because lots of times we fly into Navy guys, and we
8 don't hear from them until we're on a short final
9 ops on directional landing. Who are they speaking
10 to?

11 Also, these routes, the slot times, will there
12 be a certain time of day, day and night, or are
13 they going to be spontaneous weekly? And the third
14 comment I would have is the communication. I heard
15 about this meeting two days ago, and it took me a
16 lot of trouble even to find out what this meeting
17 was about right up until the time I showed up. How
18 can we be better informed of where this process
19 goes from here?

20 MIKE SPAITS: I can address one thing for you,
21 sir. Because this is meant to be a regional
22 meeting, we tried to target as many regional
23 newspapers as possible. The Montgomery newspaper
24 has a daily. We placed ads in there. We
25 encouraged the reporters to write articles on it,

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1 but we did place ads in there several weeks ago.
2 And that's the process for how we try to reach out
3 to a region as large as we were trying to reach
4 here. So we try to find the daily newspaper that
5 serves most of that region and target those.

6 MR. DON OLIVER: With your attention, then, is
7 there a chance, is there a place online I can go
8 to, to follow up on this?

9 MIKE SPAITS: Yes, there is, www.eglin.af.mil
10 is the -- where you can see the EIS online.

11 MR. DON OLIVER: Okay.

12 MIKE SPAITS: And also stay up with any new
13 information that comes out.

14 JENNIFER GEESLIN: That information is also on
15 your brochures, and --

16 MR. DON OLIVER: I saw it just now.

17 JENNIFER GEESLIN: And just -- and something
18 for -- for the folks here, I know a lot of folks
19 haven't received the information previously. We do
20 have CD copies of the Draft EIS with us. So if
21 you'd like a copy of it, we're more than happy to
22 have you leave with one so that way you can take a
23 quick look at it.

24 COL. CUMBIE: Anyone further? Any -- yes,
25 ma'am?

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1 MS. SANDY SMITH: My name is Sandy Smith. I'm
2 with Bain and Revell (phonetic) Monroeville County
3 Chamber of Commerce, and I guess our main interest
4 here is, number one, our airport, to make sure that
5 there's nothing that will happen with this that
6 will negatively impact our airport, just to
7 reiterate what all these gentlemen have said. Our
8 airport with its 6,100-foot runway, if this -- you
9 know, we're in a remote area. We have a lot of
10 people who fly in and out of here, and, you know,
11 safety is an issue and concern. And we want to
12 make sure that there's nothing that's going to
13 adversely impact the safety of getting in and out
14 of our airport.

15 Also, you mentioned roadways. It's hard to
16 get here, and I hope that none of our roadways in
17 Monroe County will be adversely affected by this
18 whatever. You know, that would be a concern.

19 And then the noise is the further concern. I
20 understand it's not going to really impact
21 Monroeville, but a lot of people move here because
22 they want to be quiet. And when they're out in the
23 country, and, you know, I -- I just, that would be
24 a further concern. It would be a quality-of-life
25 issue.

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1 And we appreciate what y'all are doing. We
2 just want to protect and maintain the quality of
3 life we have here, too. Thank you very much.

4 COL. CUMBIE: Thank you, ma'am. Any seconds
5 for anyone else? Apparently not.

6 If you would please remember that the
7 public-comment period for the Eglin BRAC 2005 Draft
8 EIS will be extended through the 12th of May 2008.
9 You can leave your written comments here at the
10 meeting or send them to the address shown there on
11 the slide. Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes
12 this public hearing. Thank you very much for your
13 participation and input.

14 (Public hearing concluded at 7:05 p.m.)

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STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF BAY

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the public hearing for the Eglin BRAC 2005 program held April 17, 2008, at Monroeville, Alabama.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I was authorized to and did report the foregoing proceeding and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

DATED this the 1st day of May 2008.

Gertrude B. Downs, FPR

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Public Hearings Media Coverage

<i>Date of Article</i>	<i>Media Outlet</i>	<i>Article Title</i>
21 January 2008	WEAR, Channel 3	Eglin Encroachment
27 March 2008	NW Florida Daily News	Balancing Act
28 March 2008	WEAR, Channel 3	BRAC report released
28 March 2008	NW Florida Daily News	Comments from concerned citizens
9 April 2008	Bay Beacon	AF drops less-noisy jet plan
13 April 08	NW Florida Daily News	BRAC hearings scheduled
16 April 2008	Bay Beacon	Mayor says jet noise could be death of Valparaiso
16 April 2008	NW Florida Daily News	Noise, Recreation Restrictions among concerns
18 April 2008	NW Florida Daily News	Emerald Coast citizens talk
18 April 2008	Eglin Flyer	F-35 basing has residents up in arms
20 April 2008	NW Florida Daily News	Raising a racket over BRAC
22 April 2008	Letters to the Editor	Worse than stupid
23 April 08	NW Florida Daily News	Joint Strike Fighter plans still on track
7 May 2008	Bay Beacon	Jet noise cuts home values

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