

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
CANTONMENT AREAS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulation for implementing the procedural provisions of the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA), Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §§ 1500-1508, and U.S. Air Force (USAF) Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP) regulations 32 CFR § 989, the Air Force has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to identify and assess the potential environmental consequences associated with future development within the five major cantonment areas (Eglin Main Base, Duke Field, Camp Rudder, 7 Special Forces Group [Airborne] [7 SFG(A)], and Site C-6 20th Space Control Squadron [20 SPCS] Area) and the Jackson Guard compound (EA Figure 1-1, page 1-2).

The Department of the Air Force has conducted an EA of the potential environmental consequences associated with development activities proposed at the five cantonment areas and Jackson Guard at Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), Florida. This EA, dated [insert date], is hereby incorporated by reference into this finding. Due to the programmatic nature of the proposed development, the associated NEPA analysis is also programmatic, so the Cantonment Areas EA addresses the general environmental issues that may result from making broad decisions. As project details will not be known until a later date, there will be supplemental NEPA to analyze any specific environmental impacts associated with future site- and project-specific development projects. Once details are available for a new development project, the proposed action would be submitted as an Air Force (AF) Form 813 to the Environmental Planning Office (EIAP) for review and direction on level of additional NEPA review that is required.

Purpose and Need (EA Section 1.3 and Section 1.4, page 1-3 to 1-5):

The Air Force desires to authorize the projected development within the cantonment areas and Jackson Guard where environmental consequences would be minimal for the next five to ten years. By identifying areas where environmental impacts would not occur, using geospatial and environmental analysis, the Air Force will be better positioned to conduct development projects as identified above quickly and efficiently to meet the growing needs of the Air Force and Eglin AFB.

Planning activities must integrate the NEPA process to ensure that federal decisions and actions reflect environmental values, identify alternatives that could be carried forward for full analysis, and inform decision-makers of potential effects from development projects.¹ Therefore, the Proposed Action will:

- Provide a fence-to-fence evaluation of environmental constraints within the five cantonment areas and Jackson Guard to facilitate quick and efficient processing of development actions. The goal is to provide a look at the environmental impacts associated with development of new facilities, demolition, and renovation of existing facilities in Eglin's cantonment areas and Jackson Guard. These actions are all

¹ AFI 32-7062, *Comprehensive Planning*.

necessary for maintaining proficiency and achieving the near- and long-term goals of the Air Force at Eglin AFB.

- Streamline the NEPA process for development of Eglin's cantonment areas by identifying areas that are free from environmental constraints, allowing for tiering and/or incorporation of this EA by reference. This EA is not intended to serve as a comprehensive NEPA analysis for every development action anticipated. Rather, it should be a starting point, helping to identify potential environmental consequences of the development actions efficiently. In many cases, individual projects may require additional analysis under NEPA, though the goal is to minimize repetition and facilitate rapid and efficient implementation of projects in the cantonment areas of Eglin AFB.
- Include the continuation of necessary routine maintenance activities already occurring within some wetlands and floodplains. This includes maintenance of landscaping in the airfield safety buffers, which is required to maintain safety for aircraft; maintenance of existing fence lines and utility rights-of-way, which already go through some wetland or floodplain areas; and other similar projects. No new developments or activities would be conducted in wetlands or floodplains as a result of the Proposed Action.

Installation development is needed to address deficiencies of function and capability in the facilities and infrastructure at Eglin AFB that result from obsolescence, deterioration, and evolving mission needs. These deficiencies are remedied through an ongoing process of construction, renovation, and demolition of redundant or obsolete facilities and infrastructure. Left unchecked, these deficiencies degrade the ability of the installation to meet USAF and Department of Defense (DoD) current and future mission requirements relative to state and federal requirements.

The need for installation development at Eglin AFB is to be able to provide and maintain facilities and infrastructure adequate for 96 TW and its tenant units in a manner that:

- Supports the USAF mission requirements and quality of life of Airmen hosted by the installation.
- Meets applicable DoD installation master planning criteria, consistent with UFC 2-100-01, *Installation Master Planning*; AFI 32-7062 *Comprehensive Planning*; and AFPD 32-10, *Installations and Facilities*.
- Meets all applicable DoD, Federal, State, and local laws and regulations including but not limited to the following: *Endangered Species Act* (ESA), *National Historic Preservation Act* (NHPA), *Clean Water Act* (CWA), *Clean Air Act* (CAA), *Resource Conservation and Recovery Act* (RCRA), and *Migratory Bird Treaty Act* (MBTA). More detailed information regarding resource-specific laws and regulations are provided in the specific resource sections located in Chapter 3.

Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

No-Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative provides the baseline for analysis of potential impacts. Under this Alternative, the anticipated development based on Eglin's IDP and ADPs would continue based

on the authorized level of activity noted in the Preferred Alternative as laid out in the 2014 *Final Eglin Air Force Base Cantonment Areas Environmental Assessment*.² Development authorized at Jackson Guard in the 2016 *Eglin Air Force Base Jackson Guard Area Development Plan Environmental Assessment Final*³ would continue as authorized. Under the No Action Alternative, AF Form 813 documents for individual projects would be applied against authorized development totals in the 2014 *Final Eglin Air Force Base Cantonment Areas Environmental Assessment*⁴ and the 2016 *Eglin Air Force Base Jackson Guard Area Development Plan Environmental Assessment Final*⁵ separately (refer to **Table 1-1**).

Table 1-1 Approved Development from 2014 EA

	Total Area Disturbed (acres)	Facilities Construction (square feet)	Parking/Impervious (acres)	Roads/Infrastructure (acres)	Demolition (square feet)
Eglin Main	365	1,031,906	128	36	145,149
Duke Field	203	511,710	78	23	25,585
7 SFG(A)	41	228,851	4	4	11,443
Camp Rudder	61	130,680	17	18	6,534
C-6 20 SPCS	4	10,084	1	0	504

Alternative 1

Alternative 1 would authorize the difference between the development authorized under the 2014 EA and the current level of activity, as established by TRIRIGA reports of activities occurring at Eglin AFB since 2014. Activities authorized under the 2016 Jackson Guard EA would be included as part of the total for Eglin Main Base. Under Alternative 1, AF Form 813 documents for individual projects at the five cantonment areas and Jackson Guard would be applied against totals authorized under Alternative 1 of this EA. The inclusion of the 2016 Jackson Guard EA would ensure efficient use of all resources while implementing authorized and proposed activities.

The current level of activity is defined as the level of activity that has taken place since the approval of the 2014 EA. This data is captured in TRIRIGA, a database used by Eglin AFB to track construction and demolition activities. The current level of activity at the five cantonment areas is shown in **Table 1-2**.

² Eglin AFB. *Final Eglin Air Force Base Cantonment Areas Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact/Finding of No Practicable Alternative*. March 2014, October 2014.

³ Eglin AFB. *Eglin Air Force Base Jackson Guard Area Development Plan Environmental Assessment Final*. March 2016.

⁴ Eglin AFB. *Final Eglin Air Force Base Cantonment Areas Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact/Finding of No Practicable Alternative*. March 2014, October 2014.

⁵ Eglin AFB. *Eglin Air Force Base Jackson Guard Area Development Plan Environmental Assessment Final*. March 2016.

Table 1-2 Current Level of Activity

	Total Area Disturbed (acres)	Facilities Construction (square feet)	Parking/Impervious (acres)	Roads/Infrastructure (acres)	Demolition (square feet)
Eglin Main	12.37	292,034	4.61	0.38	29,830
Duke Field	2.06	89,145	0	0	648
7 SFG(A)	3.32	143,468	0	0.02	260
Camp Rudder	0.09	3,732	0	0	0
C-6 20 SPCS	0	0	0	0	0

In order to most efficiently perform a quantitative analysis that would also allow for flexibility in implementation and provide a thorough environmental impacts analysis, Eglin AFB utilized the Preferred Alternative from the 2014 EA as a baseline; development approved under this EA would be authorized as the No-Action Alternative. Alternative 1 used the TRIRIGA reporting system, which totals development that has occurred since the approval of the 2014 EA to the present, to find the current level of activity (refer to **Table 1-2**). The current level of activity was subtracted from the development approved under the 2014 EA (e.g. values in **Table 1-2** have been subtracted from **Table 1-1**); then, development approved under the 2016 Jackson Guard EA was added to the Eglin Main totals. **Table 1-3** provides a summary of the proposed development at each cantonment area under Alternative 1.

Table 1-3 Alternative 1 Proposed Facilities for Each Cantonment Area

	Total Area Disturbed (acres)	Facilities Construction (square feet)	Parking/Impervious (acres)	Roads/Infrastructure (acres)	Demolition (square feet)
Eglin Main	355.6	795,266	125.4	36.6	170,016
Duke Field	200.9	422,565	78	23	24,937
7 SFG(A)	37.7	85,383	4	4	11,183
Camp Rudder	61	126,948	17	18	6,534
C-6 20 SPCS	4	10,084	1	0	504

Eglin Main Base

Alternative 1 would authorize the implementation of development at Eglin Main Base and Jackson Guard. The Eglin Main Base consists of a variety of uses and mission partners including headquarters and support functions, administrative office spaces, test and evaluation, training, laboratories, dormitories, community support and service functions, and recreation. Eglin Main Base consists of nine distinct areas: Downtown, Bayou Park, Bayside, Flightline, Boomtown, Tom's Creek, Fightertown, Westside, and Pinchot. According to the ADPs written for each of the nine areas, the overall goal of future development proposed for Eglin Main Base is to provide logical solutions for development issues and concerns while maximizing efficiency

and striking a balance between operational needs and the natural environment.⁶ Eglin Main Base is approximately 11,265 acres in size.⁷ Of this acreage, approximately 6,528 acres are developed and 4,737 acres are undeveloped.⁸ Future development included as part of the proposed action may include demolition, facilities construction, transportation infrastructure improvements, parking, facility maintenance, and other activities.⁹ Total proposed development under Alternative 1 is anticipated to consist of approximately 795,266 ft² of construction or other improvements, while approximately 170,016 ft² would be slated for demolition. Parking and other impervious surfaces would total 123.4 acres, while roads and other infrastructure would consist of 35.6 acres.

The Jackson Guard compound is 14 acres in size and is located north of Eglin Main Base near the intersection of Florida Highway 85 and Florida Highway 20.¹⁰ Jackson Guard's mission is the management of Eglin's natural resources in support of the military mission within the land and water ranges of the Eglin Military Complex.¹¹ Jackson Guard is responsible for integrating and prioritizing wildlife, fire, and forest management activities to protect and effectively manage the Complex's aquatic and terrestrial environments, and ensuring "no net loss" in the operational capability of these strategic priorities.¹² Proposed development at Jackson Guard may include refurbishments and upgrades to existing facilities, construction of new facilities, and demolition of infrastructure. Approximately 4.72 acres of Jackson Guard are developed, while the remaining 9.28 acres are undeveloped. Total proposed development under Alternative 1 is anticipated to consist of approximately 55,394 ft² of construction or other improvements, while approximately 54,697 ft² would be slated for demolition. Parking and other impervious surfaces would total 1.61 acres, while roads and other infrastructure would consist of 0.98-acre. Because Jackson Guard is not a defined cantonment area, its proposed development has been combined with that of Eglin Main Base in **Tables 1-3** and **1-4**.

Duke Field

Duke Field is a self-contained military airport located approximately 12 miles north of Eglin Main Base within the greater Eglin AFB Reservation. Duke Field is home to the 919th Special Operations Wing (919 SOW) and consists of facilities, roads, parking, paved runways, taxiways, helipads, and aprons.¹³ The overall goal of development on Duke Field is to maximize efficiency and create a balance between operational needs and the natural environment while supporting readiness posture and missions.¹⁴ Duke Field is approximately 1,946 acres in size.¹⁵ Of this acreage, approximately 1,464 acres are developed and 482 acres are undeveloped.¹⁶ Proposed development at Duke Field under Alternative 1 may include airfield improvements, facilities construction, transportation infrastructure improvements, and demolition projects.¹⁷

⁶ Eglin AFB. *Downtown District Area Development Plan*. September 2017. p. 2-1.

⁷ Source: Eglin AFB GIS data

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Eglin AFB. *Installation Development Plan*. 2017.

¹⁰ Eglin AFB. *Jackson Guard Area Development Plan*. July 2013. p. 7.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 35.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Eglin AFB. *Duke Field Area Development Plan*. October 2012. p. 6.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 26.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 23.

¹⁶ Source: Eglin AFB GIS data

¹⁷ Eglin AFB. *Duke Field Area Development Plan*. October 2012.

Total proposed development under Alternative 1 is anticipated to consist of approximately 422,565 ft² of construction or other improvements, while approximately 24,937 ft² would be slated for demolition. Parking and other impervious surfaces would total 78 acres, while roads and other infrastructure would consist of 23 acres.

7 SFG(A) Cantonment

The 7 SFG(A) Cantonment is located approximately 12 miles north of Eglin Main Base. The 7 SFG(A) cantonment is designated for use by the 7 SFG(A), which is part of the U.S. Army Special Forces Command. Overall goals of the development proposed under Alternative 1 include enhancing mission readiness, maintaining security and low visibility of cantonment operations, implementing sustainable design, and enhancing the quality of life for military personnel and their families as well as civilian personnel.¹⁸

The 7 SFG(A) Cantonment is approximately 500 acres in size.¹⁹ Of this acreage, approximately 306 acres are developed and 194 acres are undeveloped. Development proposed under Alternative 1 may include facilities construction for housing and recreational uses, security improvements, and transportation infrastructure improvements.²⁰ Total proposed development under Alternative 1 is anticipated to consist of approximately 85,383 ft² of construction or other improvements, while approximately 11,183 ft² would be slated for demolition. Parking and other impervious surfaces would total 4 acres, while roads and other infrastructure would also consist of 4 acres.

Camp Rudder

Camp James E. Rudder, located approximately 14 miles northwest of the Eglin Main Base, is home to the U.S. Army's 6th Ranger Training Battalion (6 RTB). The 6 RTB conducts approximately 11 classes per year and exposes students to tactical operations in a coastal swamp environment, including the third and final phase of U.S. Army Ranger Training.²¹ The overall goal of proposed development at Camp Rudder is to ensure that facilities will provide quality training for U.S. Army Ranger Training School students.²² Camp Rudder is approximately 287 acres in size.²³ Of this acreage, approximately 87 acres are developed and 200 acres are undeveloped.²⁴ The proposed development on Camp Rudder reflects an anticipated increase in use of the site; projects may include multi-purpose and recreational facilities as well as housing.²⁵ Total proposed development under Alternative 1 is anticipated to consist of approximately 126,948 ft² of construction or other improvements, while approximately 6,534 ft² would be slated for demolition. Parking and other impervious surfaces would total 17 acres, while roads and other infrastructure would consist of 18 acres.

Site C-6 20 SPCS Area

The 20 SPCS operates a phased array radar system at Site C-6 on Eglin AFB. The phased array radar system is dedicated to tracking more than 16,000 near-earth and deep-space objects and

¹⁸ Eglin AFB. *7 SFG(A) Area Development Plan*. September 2013. p. 24.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Eglin AFB. *Camp Rudder Area Development Plan*. October 2012. p. 21.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

²⁴ Source: Eglin AFB GIS data

²⁵ Eglin AFB. *Camp Rudder Area Development Plan*. October 2012.

provides space situational awareness for the U.S. Strategic Command's (STRATCOM) space control mission area.²⁶

Site C-6 is located approximately 17 miles east of Eglin Main Base. The cantonment area for Site C-6 is approximately 14 acres in size.²⁷ Of this acreage, all 14 acres are developed and zero acres are undeveloped.²⁸ Total proposed development under Alternative 1 is anticipated to consist of approximately 10,084 ft² of construction or other improvements, while approximately 504 ft² would be slated for demolition. Parking and other impervious surfaces would total 1 acre, while no development of roads and other infrastructure is anticipated.

Alternative 2

Implementation of Alternative 2 would authorize the same types of proposed development at the five cantonment areas, but would also include a 25 percent footprint increase for proposed development and demolition. A summary of the proposed development at each cantonment area is included in **Table 1-4**.

Table 1-4 Alternative 2 Proposed Facilities for Each Cantonment Area Plus 25 Percent Footprint Increase

	Total Area Disturbed (acres)	Facilities Construction (square feet)	Parking/Impervious (acres)	Roads/Infrastructure (acres)	Demolition (square feet)
Eglin Main	444.5	994,083	156.75	45.75	212,520
Duke Field	251.1	528,206	97.5	28.8	31,171
7 SFG(A)	47.1	106,729	5	5	13,979
Camp Rudder	76.3	158,685	21.3	22.5	8,168
C-6 20 SPCS	5	12,605	1.3	0	630

Environmental Consequences

Summary of Findings

The Air Force has concluded that there would be no significant adverse effects to the following resources as a result of implementation of the Proposed Action: air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hazardous materials and waste, noise, safety, soil, and water resources. No significant adverse cumulative impacts would result from activities associated with any of the preferred alternative projects when considered with past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future projects at Eglin AFB. In addition, the EA concluded that the action alternatives would not affect airspace and land use.

Air Quality (EA Section 3.2)

Possible actions associated with the approved level of development under Alternatives 1 and 2 include grading, facility construction and demolition, and paving of roads, sidewalks, parking areas, and other impervious surfaces. Construction worker travel, use of stationary equipment

²⁶ Eglin AFB. *Site C-6 Space Utilization Study*. October 2012. p. 11.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 14.

²⁸ Source: Eglin AFB GIS data

(such as generators and saws), use of mobile equipment, and architectural coatings would also be associated with potential development. Fossil fuel combustion during the use of machinery and fugitive dust emissions from ground disturbance would contribute to construction emissions. Individual pollutant emissions from the implementation of Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 would not exceed the General Conformity de minimis threshold values outlined in **Table 3-3** of the EA for any of the criteria pollutants. Therefore, no significant impacts to air quality would be associated with the implementation of either Alternative. The Proposed Action is located in Okaloosa, Walton, and Santa Rosa Counties, which are classified as being in attainment for all criteria pollutants; therefore, a conformity determination is not required for the Proposed Action. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were quantified in order to provide information for comparison by members of the public as well as decision makers and are summarized in **Section 3.2** of the EA. However, there is currently no regulatory or USAF threshold for significance determination. Based on air emissions modeling and analysis, implementation of the Proposed Action would not be expected to result in any significant increase in air emissions in the region of influence (ROI), and no adverse impacts would be expected. The project proponent would be responsible for adherence to:

- Construction and demolition activities will employ standard measures such as watering of graded areas, covering soil stockpiles, and contour grading (if necessary), to minimize temporary generation of dust and particulate matter.
- Diesel-powered highway and non-road vehicles/engines used in construction will limit idling time, except as necessary for safety, security, or to prevent damage to property; and such exhausts will be located the maximum feasible distance from any building fresh air intake vents.

Biological Resources (EA Section 3.3)

No significant adverse impacts to biological resources are anticipated as a result of implementation of the Proposed Action. Eglin AFB as a whole is home to four broad ecological associations as defined by flora, fauna, and geophysical attributes, including the Sandhill Matrix, Flatwoods Matrix, Barrier Island Matrix, and Wetlands/Riparian Matrix.²⁹ These four ecological associations describe the majority of land cover types found on Eglin AFB, with the exception of artificially maintained open grassland/shrubland areas and developed/urban areas. With the exception of some undeveloped portions of Eglin Main, the five cantonment areas predominantly feature developed/urban landscapes.

Habitat degradation or alteration occurs when physical damage or changes are made to terrestrial or aquatic resources as a result of development. Actions such as filling, clearing, grading, or construction associated with proposed development could contribute to habitat alteration. Habitat degradation or alteration is especially significant for sensitive species or species of concern. Species that are listed or on the ESA receive federal protection, as do species listed under the other acts. Ten federally protected species and their habitats are known to occur within the boundaries of the Eglin Main Range (refer to EA Table 3-6).³⁰

Federally protected sensitive species known to occur on or near the five cantonment areas include the red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW), and eastern indigo snake. Choctaw bean, Gulf

²⁹ Eglin AFB. *Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan*. August 2017. p. 45-48.

³⁰ Eglin AFB. *Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan*. August 2017. p. 50.

sturgeon, narrow pigtoe, southern sandshell, fuzzy pigtoe, and reticulated flatwoods salamander are not known to occur within or in the immediate vicinity of the cantonment areas; therefore, these species receive no further analysis in the document. State protected sensitive species known to occur on or near the five cantonment areas include the Florida pine snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus*) and the gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*). Undeveloped portions of the cantonment areas often feature trees, shrubs, and other vegetation that provides habitat for migratory birds, protected under the MBTA.

Any construction actions taking place within the boundaries of a high-quality natural area or outstanding natural area (ONA) would be reviewed by Eglin Natural Resources Office (NRO), which would provide recommendations on how best to mitigate potential impacts to biological resources within these areas.

Okaloosa darter streams are present on Eglin Main in the Toms Creek area and near Duke Field in the Juniper Creek area. Sedimentation and runoff associated with construction and land-clearing activities occurring at these two cantonments could potentially impact the Okaloosa darter. However, Eglin AFB requires a vegetative buffer of at least 200 feet around Okaloosa darter streams in order to minimize potential impacts.³¹ Development authorized under the No-Action Alternative would adhere to these guidelines. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and erosion BMPs would be implemented to minimize any unnecessary soil erosion that could occur during construction or land clearing activities associated with the authorized development.

Development authorized under the No-Action Alternative would be designed and sited to minimize the loss of trees and special species habitat, including RCW active or inactive cavity trees, gopher tortoise burrows, and other suitable habitat. Development occurring under the No-Action Alternative would comply with the Terms and Conditions identified in the 2013 Final Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO)³² for the RCW, the 2009 PBO for Air Force activities that may potentially affect the Eastern indigo snake,³³ and best practices and guidelines as outlined in the 2017 *Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan* (INRMP).³⁴ In the event that a gopher tortoise or eastern indigo snake is spotted, construction activities would cease and the animals would be allowed to leave the area before activities are resumed. In the event that a gopher tortoise burrow would be impacted by authorized development occurring under the No-Action Alternative, relocations would be conducted in accordance with the procedures outlined in the *Threatened and Endangered Species Component Plan*.³⁵ Coordination with Eglin NRO would be required prior to project initiation to ensure compliance with the MBTA. The project proponent would be responsible for adherence to:

- Coordinate with Eglin AFB NRO prior to initiation of individual projects to confirm compliance with the MBTA and verify that no migratory bird survey is required.
- In order to limit the potential for introduction of invasive species, equipment and off-site vehicles would be required to be cleaned prior to use on-site. Fill dirt, straw, and any plantings must also be checked for evidence of invasive non-native plants.

³¹ Eglin AFB. *Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan*. August 2017. p. 67.

³² USFWS. *Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Final Programmatic Biological Opinion*. August 14, 2013.

³³ USFWS. *Indigo Snake Programmatic Biological Opinion Eglin Air Force Base, Florida*. February 18, 2009.

³⁴ Eglin AFB. *Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan*. August 2017.

³⁵ Eglin AFB. *Eglin AFB Final Threatened and Endangered Species Component Plan Update*. June 2017. p. 14-40.

- Only native plants would be used for landscaping.
- All activities (training, construction, or otherwise) would cease in the event of an eastern indigo snake sighting until the snake is safely out of harm's way.
- Eglin Natural Resources Office must be notified of any sightings of the eastern indigo snake, gopher tortoise, or black bear.
- A gopher tortoise survey may be required for individual projects prior to the beginning of construction activities. Any tortoises found during the pre-construction survey would be relocated qualified biologists in compliance with FWC guidelines. A temporary silt fence or similar barrier would be erected during construction to prevent relocated gopher tortoises from returning to the area. Burrows found on the project site during the pre-construction survey would be investigated for the presence of eastern indigo snakes. Burrows would be collapsed after investigation and relocated, if applicable, to deter further occupation by additional gopher tortoises or wildlife.
- Waste would be disposed of in bear-proof dumpsters and bear-resistant garbage cans to discourage human-bear interactions.
- A 100-foot vegetated buffer would be maintained along Okaloosa darter and Florida bog frog streams. Erosion control measures, such as silt fencing, would be utilized near these streams.
- Monitoring of RCW near cantonment areas by Eglin NRO would continue.
- Prescribed burns in RCW foraging habitat would continue to the extent possible.

Cultural Resources (EA Section 3.4)

No significant impacts to cultural resources are anticipated to occur as a result of proposed development within the five cantonment areas. Eglin Main Base contains 23 archaeological sites which are considered eligible, potentially eligible, or under review on listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Fifteen cultural restricted access areas are found within the boundaries of Eglin Main. There are seven historic districts either listed in the NRHP or eligible for listing within the boundaries of Eglin Main, as well as 31 structures currently listed in the NRHP and 60 structures eligible for listing. An additional 12 structures are potentially eligible, while 34 structures are currently under review and 28 structures have not been assessed. One cemetery, Davis Cemetery, is potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP and is located within the boundaries of Eglin Main.

One archaeological site is located on Jackson Guard; it is ineligible for listing on the NRHP. To date, two cultural resources surveys have been conducted on Jackson Guard. The Eglin Golf Course Driving Range and the Eglin Golf Course are located adjacent to Jackson Guard and are Historic Designated Landscapes listed on the NRHP.

One archaeological site considered eligible for listing on the NRHP is located within the boundaries of Duke Field. There is one cultural restricted access area. Fourteen cultural resource surveys have been conducted on Duke Field.

No archaeological sites or historic buildings are located within the boundaries of the 7 SFG(A) Cantonment. Six cultural resource surveys have been conducted on 7 SFG(A) Cantonment.

Five historic buildings located on Camp Rudder are considered potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP. Five cultural resource surveys have been conducted at Camp Rudder.

One historic building located within the boundaries of Site C-6 20 SPCS is considered eligible for listing on the NRHP. One cultural resource survey has been conducted at Site C-6 20 SPCS.

In the event that unknown cultural resources are discovered during the construction or operational phases of the Proposed Actions, all activity in the immediate vicinity would cease until the Base Historic Preservation Officer and the Cultural Resources Office of 96th Civil Engineer Group/Environmental Assets (96 CEG/CEIEA) have been notified and a determination of significance has been rendered. The following actions would be taken to prevent potential impacts to cultural resources in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) outlined in the *Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan* (ICRMP):³⁶

- All ground-disturbing activities would be coordinated with the 96 CEG/CEIEA.³⁷
- Any archaeological artifacts discovered would be left in place and their locations immediately reported to the 96 CEG/CEIEA. Construction or demolition activities would cease and efforts to protect the resource from further impact would be taken.³⁸
- Vehicle movements would be restricted near water bodies, on steep slopes, or in areas where the soil is soft and/or devoid of vegetation, or in areas where artifacts are located on the surface of the ground.³⁹
- In the event of the discovery of potential Native American artifacts and/or remains, construction and operational activities would cease and the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) would be notified immediately.⁴⁰

Government-to-government consultation with federally recognized tribal groups is not anticipated under this alternative per SOP No. 4 of the Eglin AFB ICRMP.⁴¹ No effect on prehistoric archaeological sites eligible or potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP would occur.⁴²

Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste (EA Section 3.5)

No significant to hazardous materials, hazardous waste, or installation restoration sites are anticipated as a result of the proposed action. Any hazardous materials or petroleum products proposed for use during the construction or maintenance would be authorized and approved through the Eglin AFB Hazardous Waste Management Plan (HWMP).⁴³ Implementation of processes established for proper hazardous materials and petroleum products management during demolition and construction would reduce any potential adverse impact that would result from a spill or release. All hazardous materials and petroleum products would be managed of in

³⁶ Eglin AFB. *Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan*. 2017. p. 32-52.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 32.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 35.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 51.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 35.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 35.

⁴² Eglin AFB. *Final Eglin Air Force Base Cantonment Areas Environmental Assessment*. March 2014. p. 3-69.

⁴³ Eglin AFB. *U.S. Air Force Hazardous Waste Management Plan*. January 2019.

accordance with applicable USAF regulations and federal, state, and local requirements as well as the Eglin AFB HWMP.

Demolition of existing facilities could produce small amounts of lead-based paint (LBP), asbestos-containing material (ACM), mercury, and/or polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB). Any buildings considered for demolition under the approved action that are of an age in which ACM, LBP, mercury, or PCBs could be present would be surveyed prior to commencing demolition. Removal of contaminated debris would be performed by a licensed contractor and all notification and abatement would be done according to federal, state, and USAF regulations.

Construction and demolition activities associated with the proposed development could result in workers encountering contaminated groundwater or soils if these actions take place in the vicinity of an active Installation Restoration Program (IRP) site. Excavation and any associated dewatering activities during demolition would be coordinated with the Eglin AFB IRP Office, Building 216, to ensure proper worker safety and environmental controls are implemented and groundwater generated from dewatering activities is properly managed and disposed. Coordination with the Eglin AFB IRP Office and Environmental Restoration Branch would be undertaken prior to any construction and demolition activities to verify the status of IRP site cleanups occurring near Proposed Actions sites and to verify that proceeding with the Proposed Actions is appropriate. The project proponent would be responsible for:

- Manage hazardous materials/waste in coordination with the 96th Civil Engineer Group/Environmental Compliance (96 CEG/CEIEC) and in accordance with all applicable environmental compliance regulations and Eglin AFB environmental management plans.
- Construction will adhere to AFI 32-7086 and existing tracking and reporting requirements as presented in the *Hazardous Waste Management Plan*.
- Nonhazardous solid waste generated from construction activities will be recycled to the extent possible.
- Equip all construction sites with adequate waste disposal receptacles for solid, liquid, and hazardous wastes to prevent construction and demolition debris from leaving the work site.

Noise (EA Section 3.6)

No significant impacts to noise are anticipated to occur as a result of proposed development within the five cantonment areas. Aircraft noise would be considered when siting facilities, and appropriate procedures and/or sound attenuation measures would be implemented during facility design and construction. Construction noise resulting from construction and demolition activities would temporarily increase noise levels in the area surrounding the construction site. However, noise impacts resulting from implementation of the authorized development would be limited to the duration of construction and demolition activities and would occur only during normal working hours between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Construction noise would be temporary and localized to the areas immediately surrounding the active project sites. Therefore, implementation of the proposed development would have short-term, minor, direct, adverse effects on noise levels.

All applicable noise laws and guidelines would be followed to reduce effects from noise produced by construction activities. Workers would be required to use proper personal hearing protection in accordance with Air Force Occupational and Environmental Safety, Fire Protection, and Health (AFOSH) Standard 48-20, *Operational Noise and Hearing Conservation Program*, to limit exposure. Appropriate noise attenuation equipment would also be used where applicable.

Safety (EA Section 3.7)

No significant impacts to safety are anticipated to occur as a result of proposed development within the five cantonment areas. Existing coordination procedures would continue to be implemented to ensure safety of all personnel while working in areas associated with increased risk of explosives and munitions. The construction of new munitions storage facilities would require the submittal of an Explosive Site Plan package in accordance with Air Force Manual 21-201. When required, signage will be constructed to prohibit public entry in restricted areas. Coordination with the 96 TW/RANSS and 96 CES/CESD would occur prior to construction of other ground-disturbing activities proposed in areas of possible or probable UXO contamination. In accordance with DoD Instruction 4165.57, *AICUZ*, construction or alteration of facilities within a CZ or APZ would be performed in accordance with AICUZ. Operations and maintenance procedures would continue to be conducted in accordance with applicable regulations, technical orders, and AFOSH standards pertaining to ground safety. The AT/FP security program would continue in accordance with regulations and force protection standards at Eglin AFB.

All construction activities would be conducted in compliance with all applicable OSHA regulations to protect workers. USAF and OSHA excavation safety procedures and regulations would be followed at each phase of each project to help ensure the safety of all involved. The project proponent would be responsible for:

- Coordination with 96th Test Wing Safety Office (96 TW/SE), 96th Test Wing Range Support Squadron (96 TW/RANSS), and 96th Civil Engineering Squadron/Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron (96 CES/CESD) would be conducted for any ground disturbing activity occurring within the Eglin AFB Range Complex. Surface or subsurface activities occurring within an area delineated as probable UXO contamination would require surveying and remediation prior to 96 TW/SE approval.
- Physical barriers and “no trespassing” signs would be placed around the demolition and construction sites to deter children and unauthorized personnel. All construction vehicles and equipment would be locked or otherwise secured when not in use.
- All construction equipment would be maintained to the manufacturer’s specification to minimize effects associated with safety and minimize impacts from construction noise.

Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice (EA Section 3.8)

Proposed development would be anticipated to generate temporary construction workers in the local region as well as revenue to the local economy through the purchase of materials and supplies. However, no new military jobs would be generated as a result of proposed development and no new personnel would be relocated to Eglin AFB as a result of the proposed development. Therefore, it is anticipated that expenditures, employment, and population at Eglin AFB would remain near current levels. Construction activities associated with implementation

of the proposed development would be anticipated to result in temporary, beneficial, insignificant impacts. Similarly, demolition of buildings would result in indirect, temporary impacts through the on-base relocation of personnel, equipment, and operations to new facilities.

No disproportionate impacts to minority or low-income populations would be anticipated to occur as a result of authorized development at Duke Field, Camp Rudder, 7 SFG(A) Cantonment, and Site C-6 20 SPCS because no environmental justice populations are located near these cantonments. Despite the presence of environmental justice populations occurring in the vicinity of Eglin Main, no disproportionate impacts to environmental justice populations would be anticipated to occur as a result of authorized development at Eglin Main because all activities would occur within the confines of Eglin AFB and projects would be sited appropriately to avoid potential impacts from construction noise.

Soils (EA Section 3.9)

No significant impacts to soils are anticipated to occur as a result of proposed development within the five cantonment areas. Land clearing and disturbing activities would temporarily disrupt the top layers of soil, while construction and demolition activities would result in grading and compaction of the soil for stability. New construction would result in the addition of impervious surfaces, such as new parking lots, buildings, or roadways.

In areas where the topography is mostly level, including Eglin Main Base, Duke Field, Camp Rudder, and 7 SFG(A) Cantonment, no changes to stormwater drainage would be anticipated. The steeper slope of approximately 12 percent at Site C-6 20 SPCS would be more prone to increased stormwater velocity as a result of the proposed development.

Development approved under the No-Action Alternative would be conducted in a series of projects, each adhering to basewide best management practices (BMPs) for erosion control as outlined in the *Erosion Control Component Plan*.⁴⁴ A Construction Generic Permit would be required under FAC Rule 62-621 for construction activities that would disturb one or more acres of land collectively. Under the terms of the permit, a comprehensive Stormwater, Erosion, and Sedimentation Control Plan and a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan in the final plan design would be required. An application for a Stormwater Discharge Permit with stormwater retention and design would be required prior to any ground-disturbing activities per FAC Rule 62-346. The project proponent would be responsible for:

- A site-specific SWPPP would be implemented to minimize any unnecessary soil erosion that could occur during construction.
- Clearing and grubbing would be timed with construction to minimize the exposure of cleared surfaces. Such activities would not be conducted during periods of wet weather. Construction activities would be staged to allow for the stabilization of disturbed soils.
- Soil erosion-control measures, such as soil erosion-control mats, silt fences, straw bales, diversion ditches, riprap channels, water bars, water spreaders, vegetative buffer strips, and hardened stream crossings, would be used as appropriate.
- Disturbance boundaries would be clearly delineated by measures such as staking, fence, or flagging, prior to the start of construction. Any off-road traffic would be prohibited in

⁴⁴ Eglin AFB. *Erosion Control Component Plan*. April 17, 2018. p. 5-1.

the disturbance area. All equipment would be confined to these designated work zones (including access roads and laydown) within the Proposed Action area.

- Project planning should include the need for sampling and subsequent remediation within the project area to account for the discovery of contaminated soil.
- Development would be required to adhere to basewide BMPs for erosion control as outlined in the *Erosion Control Component Plan*.⁴⁵

Utilities (EA Section 3.10)

All five cantonment areas were determined to have sufficient electrical capacity to support future mission and development requirements. Natural gas supplies at Eglin Main, Duke Field, and 7 SFG(A) Cantonments were deemed adequate to support future mission and development requirements; no natural gas is available at Camp Rudder or Site C-6 20 SPCS. While natural gas supplies are not anticipated for development at Camp Rudder or Site C-6 20 SPCS, coordination with Okaloosa and Walton Counties would occur in the event that natural gas infrastructure would be implemented. Communications networks at all five cantonment areas are adequate to support future mission and development requirements.

Alteration of potable water systems that could occur under the approved development would be conducted in accordance with state and federal regulations, including the *Florida Safe Drinking Water Act* and the federal *Safe Drinking Water Act* (42 USC 201, 300 *et seq.*) and the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations.

Actions authorized under the No-Action Alternative that could affect wastewater systems would be conducted in accordance with the CWA and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting system. Permitting and implementation pertaining to the *Florida Air and Water Pollution Control Act* would be coordinated with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) as needed. Therefore, no adverse impacts related to utilities are associated with implementation of the proposed development. The project proponent would be responsible for:

- Coordination with all utility providers would be required prior to any ground-disturbing activities in order to minimize potential conflicts between providers.

Water Resources (EA Section 3.11)

No impacts to groundwater would be anticipated under implementation of the No-Action Alternative. Only surface-level land-clearing activities would be anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed development. Coordination with the IRP would occur in order to check for any relevant land use controls (LUCs) and to locate and comply with restrictions near monitored sites or water wells within the five cantonment areas.

Overall, individual construction activities would have the potential for short-term, minor to moderate, direct and indirect, adverse effects on surface water quality in any location where construction would occur within 50 feet of a surface water body. However, the use of BMPs specified in the installation-specific SWPPP and development of site-specific construction SWPPPs (as required) would minimize potential adverse effects. There is a potential for erosion and associated sedimentation to flow into surface water features during construction.

⁴⁵ Eglin AFB. *Erosion Control Component Plan*. April 17, 2018. p. 5-1.

All construction activities resulting in ground disturbance would be conducted in accordance with the applicable stormwater discharge permit to control erosion and prevent sediment, debris, or other pollutants from entering the stormwater system. Construction activities that disturb one acre or more would need coverage under the NPDES Construction Generic Permit. No construction activities would begin until a Proposed Action-specific construction SWPPP is completed. All required BMPs contained within the SWPPP would be implemented during construction.

New construction could result in a potential increase in surface runoff due to an increase in impermeable surfaces. Development proposed under Alternative 1 would be anticipated to result in an increase in surface runoff of 2.212 inches, while development proposed under Alternative 2 would be anticipated to result in an increase in surface runoff of 4.864 inches (refer to **Appendix E** of the EA, *Stormwater Analysis*).

No new actions would take place in floodplains aside from regular maintenance activities such as airfield landscaping (mowing, trimming, tree removal, etc.) to maintain flight safety buffers, maintaining existing fence lines and utility right-of-ways, etc. These impacts would be temporary in nature and no permanent changes to drainage would occur within these areas. Therefore, no impacts to floodplains are anticipated to occur.

The Proposed Action would take place within the coastal zone and the jurisdictional area of the FDEP. Eglin AFB has prepared a *Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA)* determination to address potential impacts to the coastal zone (refer to **Appendix B** of the EA). Concurrence would be required prior to construction. The project proponent would be responsible for:

- Use established roads to cross streams.
- Follow recommended BMPs for soil erosion and sedimentation prevention. BMPs utilized by the base to control erosion and excess sedimentation could include one or more of the following:
 - Installation of temporary silt fencing or hay bales
 - Earth moving to establish berms, detention basins, or other stormwater controls
 - Planting of grasses and woody vegetation
 - Fertilizing and mowing
 - Establishing or reestablishing native wetland plants.
- Install and maintain entrenched silt fencing and hay bales along the perimeter of the construction site prior to any ground-disturbing activities and maintain them in effective working order through the construction process to prevent fill material, pollutants, and runoff from entering wetlands or other surface waters.
- Incorporate a monitoring plan to observe the effectiveness of silt fencing, hay bales, and other erosion and sedimentation control devices and address deficiencies accordingly.
- Vehicles and equipment must remain at least 50 meters from the edge of slopes leading down to streams.
- A 100-ft vegetated buffer must be maintained between construction sites and surface waters,
- Where applicable, reduce erosion using rough grade slopes or terrace slopes.

Public Notice

A notice was published in the *Northwest Florida Daily News* on [insert date], inviting the public to review and comment on the draft final EA and draft Finding of No Significant Impact. The public comment period closed on [insert date], and [insert number] public comments were received. State agency correspondence indicated [insert summary]. Copies of agency correspondence and a copy of the public notice can be found in **Appendix A**, Agency and Public Coordination, of the EA.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on my review of the facts and analyses contained in the attached EA, conducted under the provisions of NEPA, CEQ regulations, and 32 C.F.R. Part 989, I conclude that implementation of the projects identified in the EA would not have a significant environmental impact, either by themselves or cumulatively with other projects at Eglin AFB. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The signing of this Finding of No Significant Impact completes the environmental impact analysis process.

JOHN D. SCHULIGER, Colonel, USAF
Commander, 96th Civil Engineer Group

DATE