

RECORD OF DECISION

As the Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, I have reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for *Implementation of Base Realignment and Closure Recommendations and Department of Defense (DoD) Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) Actions at Fort Meade, Maryland*. The EIS, prepared in compliance with the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) *Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act* (Title 40 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] Parts 1500–1508) and *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions* (32 CFR Part 651), adequately assesses the impacts of implementing Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) recommendations and DoD EUL actions for *Fort Meade, Maryland*, on the natural, biological, physical, commercial, and cultural environment and transportation. The EIS is hereby incorporated by reference. The Army will proceed as indicated herein.

1.0 Background

On September 8, 2005, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC Commission) recommended a set of domestic realignment actions occur at *Fort Meade, Maryland*. The recommendations were approved by the President on September 15, 2005, and forwarded to Congress. Upon expiration of the statutory period for Congress to enact a joint resolution of disapproval on November 9, 2005, the recommendations became law and must now be implemented as provided for in the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-510), as amended. Three BRAC Commission recommendations affect Fort Meade by relocating specified organizations and activities to the post:

- Consolidate Defense Information System Agency (DISA) and establish joint command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR), development and acquisition (D&A) capability at the Army post
- Consolidate Media Organizations into a new agency, Defense Media Activity (DMA), for Media Publications
- Collocate and realign Department Adjudication Activities and Office of Hearing and Appeals Offices activities

Under Title 10 U.S.C., Section 2667, of the National Defense Authorization Act, DoD installations have the authority and incentive to obtain a broad range of financial and in-kind considerations for leasing opportunities. This EUL program is intended to maximize the utility and value of installation real property and provide the authority to obtain a broad range of financial and in-kind considerations for leased property.

In addition to the BRAC realignments, Fort Meade proposes to use the Army's EUL program to make two parcels of land (Site Y and Site Z) available for development. Site Y (125 acres) and Site Z (48 acres) would be leased to a private developer for 50 years. These parcels would be used for development of office and administrative buildings. In consideration, the lessee would develop and construct two 18-hole golf courses on Site S (367 acres) to replace existing golf course facilities, a portion of which will be the site for BRAC construction.

2.0 Proposed Action

The Army proposes to implement the BRAC Commission's recommendations to realign Fort Meade. The Army also proposes to implement the EUL program to develop three parcels of land.

Implementation of the proposed federal action has four aspects:

- Relocation of approximately 5,700 additional personnel to Fort Meade under BRAC,
- Construction of new facilities at Fort Meade to accommodate the incoming organizations and personnel,
- Issue a 50 year real estate lease under the Army's Enhanced Use Lease program for the development of Fort Meade Sites Y (125 acres) and Z (48 acres) to a private developer for an estimated maximum 2 million square feet of office and administrative buildings supporting an estimated 10,000 personnel,
- Development and construction of two 18-hole golf courses on Site S (367 acres) by the EUL developer as in-kind consideration in exchange for the long-term lease of Sites Y and Z.

Realignment of Fort Meade will raise the post's average daily population to 43,241 personnel (a 55-percent increase). Implementing the proposed BRAC Realignment action at Fort Meade requires construction of about 2.9 million square feet of new facilities for the three incoming organizations including approximately 1.4 million square feet of administrative space and approximately 33 acres of parking. Centralized support facilities including Post Exchange (PX), Physical Fitness Center (Gym), and Unaccompanied Personnel Housing (UPH), which are not included in the BRAC realignment action, would require 153,066 square feet of new construction and an estimated 20 acres of parking.

The Army's Proposed Action consists of constructing new administrative facilities and vehicle storage for the three BRAC realignment actions on Fort Meade at identified Sites F, G, and X; and placing all support facilities at Site G. Facilities for each BRAC realignment action would be constructed on the sites indicated below:

- DISA Administration – Site F
- Media and Publications Administration – Site G
- Adjudication Administration – Site X
- Support Facilities (PX, Gym, UPH Barracks) – Site G
- Vehicle storage (A parking lot for DISA would be constructed on Site F. Smaller parking lots would be constructed to support each activity on the respective sites.)

The proposed siting for these facilities was selected for several reasons. The proposed action places incoming organizations such as DISA and Media, requiring more sensitive locations at the center of the installation, increasing the security of these facilities. The proposed action places future recreational type facilities and operations requiring less sensitive land uses such as the PX, Gym, and UPH Barracks away from the center of the installation. Troop working locations and housing would be in close proximity to their work location. The arrangement also sites the new supporting UPH Barracks, Gym, and PX next to each other, allowing for easy access to these facilities and grouping three main supporting services (PX, Gym, and UPH Barracks) in one place. The DISA administrative facility would be located near the proposed Directorate of Information Management (DOIM) site, which is advantageous because DOIM has IT staff that would benefit from being close to DISA. The proposed action also places the Media function in the vicinity of the Defense Information School (DINFOS), allowing the collocation of Media activities. The proposed action places the Adjudication Administrative buildings near the Mapes and Llewellyn Gates, so it

would be close to the Office of Personnel Management facility which has a similar mission. This would also make it easier to escort visitors to the facility.

The proposed EUL real estate action will involve the maximum construction of 2 million square feet of office and administrative buildings to accommodate up to 10,000 new personnel. The proposed EUL action also includes the in-kind development of two new 18-hole golf courses on Site S to replace the existing golf course on which portions of the proposed BRAC realignment actions would be constructed. Site S is a 367-acre site at the southeast corner of Fort Meade, of which 90 acres is a capped landfill. The existing golf course is located within the installation fence line. The proposed new golf courses would be constructed on the perimeter of the installation and the secure fence line would be adjusted to allow easier access to golf course facilities.

3.0 Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to implement the BRAC Commission's recommendations and proposed U.S. Army EUL actions at Fort Meade.

The need for the BRAC actions is to improve the ability of the Nation to respond rapidly to the challenges of the 21st century. To carry out its tasks, the Army must adapt to changing world conditions and must improve its capabilities to respond to a variety of circumstances across the full spectrum of military operations. BRAC supports advancing the goals of transformation, improving military capabilities, and enhancing military value. The Army must carry out the BRAC recommendations at Fort Meade to achieve the objectives for which Congress established the BRAC process and to comply with the law.

The need for the proposed EUL actions is to assist Fort Meade in meeting the following goals:

- Use available under-used, non-excess property
- Build high-quality, sustainable facilities to support mission requirements
- Enhance accessibility for recreation activities on Fort Meade
- Enhance Military Construction (MILCON) by providing ancillary facilities
- Improve, maintain, and support aging infrastructure
- Obtain in-kind services

4.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Action

The Army evaluated three alternatives: BRAC-Directed Realignment and EUL Actions Alternative, BRAC-Directed Realignment Action Alternative (without the EUL actions), and No Action Alternative. The Army determined that implementation of the proposed BRAC actions will reduce the Department's reliance on leased space including 720,000 Usable Square Feet (USF) of leased administrative space for DISA, 75,000 USF of leased administrative space for DMA, and 136,930 gross square feet of leased administrative space for Adjudication Activities. The leased space historically has higher overall costs than government-owned space and generally does not meet Anti-terrorism Force Protection Standards as in UFC 04-010-01. The benefit of enhanced Force Protection afforded by a location within a military installation fence-line will provide immediate compliance with Force Protection Standards. Existing facilities on Fort Meade are insufficient to accommodate the personnel and functions being realigned to the post. New construction is required because renovation or conversion of existing on-post facilities and leasing off-post facilities are not feasible.

In addition to the BRAC-Directed Realignment and EUL Actions Alternative (Proposed Action), the Army developed a BRAC-Directed Realignment Action Alternative (without the EUL actions). Four sub-

alternatives for siting the BRAC facilities and three sub-alternatives for EUL actions were considered. The four BRAC sub-alternatives are considered under both the BRAC-Directed Realignment and EUL Actions Alternative and BRAC-Directed Realignment Action Alternative (without the EUL actions).

Table 1: BRAC Realignment Alternatives ^{a/}

BRAC Realignment Action Sub-Alternatives for Siting Incoming Organizations				
Alternative	Administration and Media Storage	DISA	GYM	JEH
BRAC Sub-Alternative 2A (Preferred BRAC Alternative) (Preferred Site Location)	Site F,G,X DISA – Site F Media – Site G Adjudication – Site X	Site G Site G Site G	Site G Site G None	Site G Site G Site G
BRAC Sub-alternative 2B	Site F,G,K DISA – Site F Media – Site G Adjudication – Site K	Site F Site N Site K	Site F Site N None	Site M Site M Site N
BRAC Sub-alternative 2C	Site F,G,C DISA – Site F Media – Site G Adjudication – Site C	Site N Site K Site N	Site N Site K None	Site M Site M Site N
BRAC Sub-alternative 2D	Site A, L,C DISA – Site A Media – Site L Adjudication – Site C	Site K Site K Site K	Site K Site N None	Site M Site N Site N

^{a/} Several options that evaluate the best locations on Fort Meade for the placement of incoming organizations are identified as subalternatives. These sites represent reasonable and practical locations for siting incoming organizations under the BRAC-directed realignments.

Table 2: Enhanced Use Lease Development Alternatives ^{b/}

EUL Action Sub-Alternatives for EUL Build Out				
Alternative	Administration and Media Storage	DISA	GYM	JEH
EUL Sub-alternative 2A	Construct administrative buildings for an estimated 10,000 personnel on Sites Y and Z. Development would be constrained by the requirements of the Fort Meade Installation Design Guide and INRMP, conserving natural resources areas. Construct two 18-hole golf courses on Site S.	N/A	N/A	N/A
EUL Sub-alternative 2B	Construct administration buildings for an estimated 10,000 personnel, maximum build out, on Sites Y and Z with no environmental constraints beyond regulatory and permit requirements. Development would encroach on natural resources areas. Construct two 18-hole golf courses on Site S.	N/A	N/A	N/A
EUL Sub-alternative 2C	Construct administration buildings for an estimated 10,000 people on Sites Y and Z with limited encroachment on natural resources areas. Construct two 18-hole golf courses on Site S.	N/A	N/A	N/A

^{b/} EUL development sub-alternatives represent the range of baseline environmental constraints placed on a maximum build out scenario.

To evaluate the locations for placement of the BRAC Realignment sub-alternatives, the Army used siting criteria that included force protection requirements, proximity to central support facilities, Installation plans and designations for other uses and functions, project costs, and environmental factors. The siting location under BRAC sub-alternative 2A was found to be superior to the other sub-alternatives.

Site S was considered as a site for all or part of the three incoming BRAC organizations. The numerous disadvantages to the use of this site for any of the actions outweigh the advantages, which resulted in its dismissal from further analysis for BRAC Realignment. In particular, infrastructure (utilities and roads) are lacking, and there would be increased environmental impacts and excessive costs to extend services to this location. In the case of DISA, use of this site would place an organization requiring a more sensitive location near the post's perimeter, on the very exterior of the installation, and would therefore not be in conformance with the siting parameters of the Comprehensive Expansion Master Plan (CEMP). Placement at this site would create a new, separate cantonment area. Additional security forces would be needed. For any of the realignment actions, there are concerns related to construction on a capped landfill. Contaminated areas and clean up requirements would need to be dealt with prior to clearance for construction, adding to costs and possible delays. Finally, use of this site would isolate the proposed Gym and PX, limiting use to only those employees at this location.

Sites considered for the proposed real estate lease under the Army's EUL program include Fort Meade sites A, C, and L. These sites were dismissed because their use would place non-federal activities inside the installation fence line, would place non-federal activities in close proximity to secure operations, would compromise the ability of site security to meet force protection requirements, and could site some of the incoming BRAC organizations to be placed outside the installation fence line. Not using these sites allows the BRAC organization activities to be placed in the central portion of the installation. The EUL actions would support office and administrative functions that would be used by non-military personnel; therefore, it would be better to have these located outside the security fencing for ease of use and to free up the internal, more secure locations for more sensitive military uses.

As required by CEQ regulations, the No Action Alternative was also evaluated in the EIS. The No Action Alternative serves as the benchmark against which federal actions can be evaluated. The No Action Alternative assumes that the Army would continue its mission at Fort Meade as it existed in the autumn of 2005, with no units relocating from other locations, no new units established, and no new facilities constructed. Because the BRAC Commission's recommendations now have the force of law, continuation of the Fort Meade mission as it existed in the autumn of 2005 is not possible without further Congressional action. In addition, the No Action Alternative would result in the Army not issuing a real estate lease under the Enhanced Use Lease program. The environmental impacts associated with the development of Fort Meade's Sites S, Y, and Z would not occur and the environmental impacts resulting from the development and long-term use of these sites as an EUL and in-kind compensation site would be avoided. The No Action Alternative is evaluated in detail in the EIS.

5.0 Environmental Consequences

5.1 Environmental Consequences at Fort Meade

No Action Alternative. No adverse effects would be expected on Land Use, Aesthetics and Visual Resources, Air Quality, Noise, Geology and Soils, Water Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Socioeconomics, Utilities, and Toxic and Hazardous. No significant adverse effects would be expected on Transportation. Traffic is projected to increase at a constant rate that reflects the estimated traffic growth in the surrounding area from 2006-2011. Only one out of 15 signalized intersections would drop to an LOS F and only one other intersection would remain at LOS F.

The No Action Alternative is the Environmentally Preferred Alternative since it would not produce additional impacts to those under the current operating conditions. The No Action Alternative is not feasible since implementation of the BRAC-directed action is Congressionally mandated.

Proposed Action. Implementation of the Proposed Action will result in adverse and beneficial environmental effects at Fort Meade. The majority of effects will be direct impacts to affected resources, with many long-term impacts. The following paragraphs summarize the expected effects associated with the Proposed Action for each resource at Fort Meade, as determined by the EIS.

Land Use. No significant adverse effects to land use would be expected from construction on BRAC sites. At the proposed BRAC sites, land use following implementation of this alternative would be compatible with existing surrounding land use and for the most part consistent with the land use plan as proposed in the Fort Meade CEMP. Sites F, G, and X, the preferred BRAC site locations, are previously disturbed and have been traditionally used for housing, training and recreational purposes. The most noticeable adverse impact would be on Sites F and G where several holes of the existing golf course would be developed and as many as 84 total acres of the sites' recreational, undeveloped, and forested land would be needed to accommodate DISA, Media, PX, Gym, and UPH functions. On Site X, as many as 7 acres of open space would be developed to accommodate Adjudication Activities.

Significant adverse effects to land use would be expected at the EUL Sites Y and Z. Under this sub-alternative, approximately 2 million square feet of administrative buildings would be constructed on Sites Y and Z which are currently open space (completely forested). As many as 45 acres of open space (completely forested) would change to administrative uses at these 2 sites. Depending on final footprint siting, there could be unavoidable losses to wetlands. There would be increases in impervious surfaces on Sites Y and Z therefore increasing surface water runoff that could, if not properly offset, negatively affect water quality within the affected watersheds. On Site S, the overall land use would remain open space but would convert some forest lands to managed recreational open space (golf course facilities).

Aesthetic and Visual Resources. Significant permanent effects on the visual and aesthetics character would be expected at the proposed BRAC sites. Viewsheds at BRAC sites would change significantly, but not negatively. New construction would not degrade visual resources or block any sensitive public viewsheds. This alternative, however, is expected to add new sources of light in the area, thereby impacting site specific ambience but not the overall larger aesthetics. Significant permanent effects on the visual and aesthetics character would be expected at EUL sites. Sites S, Y, and Z are heavily wooded and undeveloped. The effects of construction on the sites would be significant and would affect character and viewsheds in the area. The proposed buildings on sites Y and Z are administrative as opposed to the surrounding buildings, which are mainly residential with some administrative uses and schools. Viewsheds around sites Y and Z would change significantly. The character of Site S would change however there would be no significant impact on the viewsheds. New sources of light would be added in the areas around sites Y and Z, thereby impacting the overall ambience and character.

Air Quality. No significant adverse effects would be expected on air quality. Several years were evaluated to determine the peak year for emissions. The evaluation showed that the emissions associated with constructing and operating the proposed buildings at Fort Meade fall below the de minimis values for the ozone precursors NO_x and VOCs, and PM_{2.5}, and its precursor, SO₂. The BRAC-related commuter vehicle emissions have been included in the 2008 to 2011 Baltimore Metropolitan Council's Metropolitan Baltimore Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The EUL related commuter vehicle emissions will be included in the 2012 to 2015 TIP, which is scheduled to be approved in the year 2008. The increase in annual emissions from the construction and operations activities related to BRAC and EUL actions would not make up 10 percent or more of the available regional emission inventory for volatile organic compounds (VOCs) or Nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and would not be regionally significant. A state implementation plan (SIP) for PM_{2.5} has not been written yet, and therefore regional significance was not determined.

Noise. No significant adverse effects would be expected related to noise from construction and demolition. Short-term direct effects would be expected during the construction of each of the proposed

projects. No significant adverse effects would be expected related to noise from facility operations. No significant adverse effects would be expected related to noise from vehicles and transportation.

Geology and Soils. No significant adverse impacts to geologic or topographic conditions would be expected. No significant adverse effects to soils would be expected to BRAC sites. No significant adverse effects to soils on EUL Sites Y and Z would be expected. Short-term temporary adverse effects would occur in areas on Site S that extend beyond the landfill, these effects would not be considered significant.

Water Resources. The proposed BRAC and EUL action is not anticipated to have a significant direct impact on water resources at Fort Meade. The two primary tributaries having the potential to be cumulatively effected by indirect impacts are Midway Branch and Franklin Branch. Long-term and short-term impacts to water quality are possible with project implementation. Short-term impacts could occur during construction activities that would temporarily increase soil erosion and stream sediment loading levels beyond current conditions in the absence of impact minimization measures. Long-term impacts that could occur in the absence of impact minimization measures include increased levels of stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces. Fort Meade will avoid, reduce, and minimize the short-term and long-term impacts to the greatest extent feasible through adherence to federal regulations; permitting conditions; U.S. EPA's Stormwater Best Management Practice Guide; and Fort Meade guidance and plans. For EUL related construction and operation, a more detailed investigation of water resources may be necessary if it is determined that minimal threshold levels of impacts established by the USACE Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404(b) (1) Individual Permit or General Permit are exceeded.

Midway Branch and Franklin Branch are classified as CWA 303(d) streams due to reported sedimentation levels. Each waterbody has established Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) levels for sedimentation that must be met to maintain Maryland's water quality standards. Fort Meade will develop BRAC and EUL sites in a manner that is consistent with established TMDL's. In addition, all BRAC and EUL sites will comply with the State of Maryland regulations governing Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Management and where feasible and appropriate for the project, incorporate low impact development techniques that further control and minimize potential impacts to water resources.

A wetland survey verifying ground conditions is currently being conducted at BRAC sites F, G and Antenna Farm, and results will be incorporated into BRAC project documentation to include applicable permits and coordination prior to commencing ground disturbance actions associated with construction. No wetland impacts are expected on the BRAC Antenna Farm or Adjudication Site X, and only minor impacts may be expected for selected areas bordering Midway Branch on the DISA Site F and the Media Site G.

Preliminary surveys of BRAC Sites F (DISA) and G (DMA) indicate the 100-year floodplain extends slightly beyond the 100-foot protection buffer for Midway Branch in selected areas bordering the BRAC DISA and DMA Sites F and G. Consistent with federal law prohibiting construction within the 100-year floodplain, the Army will avoid construction in these areas.

The Army has determined that the proposed federal action is consistent with the State's federally-approved Coastal Zone Management Program (CZMP) requirements, which are a network of Maryland state laws and policies designed to protect Maryland's coastal resources. The State agrees that it is generally consistent. The State's networked CZMP is based on existing State laws and regulations and the State issues a final consistency determination as part of the State's environmental permitting process. The delineation of non-tidal wetlands is ongoing at this time for the proposed construction areas on the Enhanced Use Lease properties and remotely BRAC areas. The State has indicated their final federal consistency determination, pursuant to Section 307 of the CZMA, will be provided as part of the

Maryland Department of the Environment's nontidal wetlands and waterway authorization, assuming the proposed activities comply with applicable State laws and regulations including erosion and sediment control, stormwater management, nontidal wetlands, waterways, and floodplains.

Biological Resources. Significant adverse effects to vegetation would be expected with the proposed federal action. Under the Preferred Alternative, up to 230 acres of forest land could be affected, including about 25 acres of forest loss associated with the BRAC sites and up to 205 acres associated with the EUL sites (Y, Z, and S). The actual total acreage of forested lands and vegetation disturbed will be realized with the final design and layout of the structures and facilities, including the number of buildings required, the size and layout of parking facilities, and the environmental constraints for the proposed sites. Consistent with Fort Meade's implementation of the Maryland Forest Conservation Act, 20 percent of total forests that would be affected in the project area would be preserved.

Significant adverse impacts to wildlife inhabiting the installation would be expected, primarily within the areas designated for the Enhanced Use Lease. The impacts of implementing the proposed BRAC and EUL actions includes long term loss of the existing habitat on Fort Meade and direct loss of wildlife through construction activities. Construction and operation of the projects would result in temporary alteration and permanent loss of habitat, and direct impacts to wildlife species including disturbance, displacement, and mortality. Direct loss and segmenting of forest habitat for wildlife on the proposed sites for the EUL action would occur. Segmenting of contiguous forests in Sites Y, Z, and S would result in a reduction of available corridor area for species movement. Mobility of wildlife species in these areas of the development would be affected as a result of habitat segmentation.

No significant adverse impacts to Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species and aquatic resources would be expected. No known federally listed species are known to occur within the proposed BRAC and EUL action project sites.

No significant adverse impacts to aquatic resources would be expected. Wetland impacts would be avoided and minimized to the maximum extent practical. The final design of the Enhanced Use Lease facilities will avoid and minimize wetland impacts to the extent practical. Unavoidable impacts will be compensated and require permit conditions imposed by the Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the CWA and the State of Maryland regulations. Best management practices, such as installing silt fences and hay bale barriers during construction would minimize sediment loadings to adjacent aquatic habitat.

Cultural Resources. No adverse effect would be expected to NRHP eligible archaeological site for the proposed BRAC and EUL sites at Fort Meade. There would be no adverse effect upon any American Indian resources or sacred sites. There would be no effect to any of the nine cemeteries.

Socioeconomics. No significant direct and indirect effects would be expected to economic development. For this EIS analysis, the assumption is that all new personnel at Fort Meade would migrate from areas outside the Region of Influence (ROI). This population influx and the construction of the new facilities on the installation would contribute to short- and long-term increases in economic activity. Significant direct and indirect effects would be expected on demographics. Under the proposed action, incoming military and civilian personnel and their dependents would increase the ROI population by 40,724, or by about 1.76 percent. If BRAC and EUL projected populations were to arrive at once, significant adverse effects would be expected on quality of life, specifically the public services of schools, health, fire, and law enforcement. No significant adverse direct and indirect effects would be expected to housing, recreation, environmental justice, or protection of children.

Fiscal impacts associated with the construction of the EUL preferred alternative were expressed in the review of the Final EIS by Anne Arundel County officials. The County stated that the office development on federal lands will compete with the local office development elsewhere in the county and not be contributing to the county's general revenue stream through ad valorem taxation, impact, and other fees. Lost revenue coupled with a finite demand for general office space is believed to amount to a loss of fiscal opportunity to the County. The County assumes the EUL development will directly compete with other areas in the county for the same universe of businesses, and therefore lead to an overall reduction in revenues to the local government (i.e., because of reduced property taxes emanating from the federal site). In contrast, the EIS assumes that the actions under BRAC and EUL will stimulate new business activities that would not otherwise take place in the Region of Influence. While it is possible that some portion of new businesses that could locate at Fort Meade would begin operations elsewhere in the County under the No Action alternative, it is impossible to quantify this outcome, much less a measurable fiscal impact. Businesses locating at the EUL site would still pay taxes to state and local governments and so would the employees working and living within the County. Given the magnitude of the number of jobs being created by the proposed action and the availability of federal funds to compensate the County for the education of military dependents, the analyses indicates that the projected benefits to Anne Arundel County economy would exceed any potential reductions in local government revenues.

Transportation. For roadways off-post, significant adverse effects to transportation would be expected. Traffic delays are already prevalent at many intersections in the corridor with limited roadway alternatives for drivers, which contribute to the expected significant effect once the incoming BRAC and EUL traffic is engaged. As a result of the BRAC and EUL actions, the congestion and delays along the 3.2 mile MD 175 segment adjacent to Fort Meade are projected to increase during the morning and evening rush hours to Level of Service (LOS) "F" in several locations. In some cases, the addition of the BRAC plus EUL traffic is sufficient to tip a poorly performing road (LOS E) to a failing condition (LOS F). Some of these effects are demonstrated on roadways outside the boundaries of the transportation study area, and are documented in the EIS. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative would have a significant effect for the 2011 time frame because of: 1) the LOS F (unacceptable to most drivers) of the eastbound MD 175 segment during the PM Peak times, 2) the large number of intersections that degrade from an acceptable LOS to LOS F during both AM and PM peak times, and 3) the numerous intersections that are at LOS F in the current baseline (no-action alternative) that are projected to experience increased delays along this roadway. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) is proceeding with roadway improvements along this stretch of highway regardless of the BRAC or EUL implementation. Also, the EUL developer is conducting an internal traffic study that will be shared with Fort Meade, Maryland SHA and Anne Arundel County, and will provide essential information for the upgrade of MD 175 and installation access control points.

With some incoming military units requiring employees to change commuting patterns, some employees may travel from Northern Virginia along the Baltimore-Washington Parkway or I-95 from the Capital Beltway (I-95/I-495) to the relocated DISA facility near the Mapes Road/MD Route 198/MD Route 32 Gate. The Maryland BRAC Report, prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning (December 2006) identifies estimated traffic condition deteriorations and isolated traffic improvements throughout the region in years 2010 and 2015. The forecast includes the volume of traffic generated by the BRAC plus EUL alternative and other developments scheduled or forecasted to occur. Employees may also elect to commute from Northern Virginia using the Washington Metro or Virginia Railway Express (VRE) to connect with MARC trains at Union Station to access the stations near the Post. There is ample capacity in this "reverse commute" direction to serve these employees. Currently not all rush hour trains stop at Odenton. Fort Meade will work with Anne Arundel County, MARC and Maryland State agencies, and the Governor's BRAC office to ensure that most or all trains make that stop by the time BRAC is implemented. To encourage the reduction of single occupant vehicles the new BRAC facilities will have dedicated preferred parking areas for car and van pools. The Department of Defense also offers transit

subsidies to employees and Fort Meade has committed to provide shuttle service from the station to the Post.

No significant effect would be expected on roadways within the installation. Additional delays are projected at some un-signalized intersections, and may result in unacceptable delays at some two-way and four-way stops. Alternative routes, however, are available to avoid these intersections, and Fort Meade has initiated a traffic study to aid in the planning efforts for future upgrades of some intersections to signals or roundabouts.

Utilities. Significant permanent adverse effects are expected to wastewater treatment. Significant long-term adverse effects to storm water drainage would be expected. Short-term adverse effects due to construction activities and long-term adverse effects due to operations would be expected. No significant short-term adverse effects would be expected to electricity during construction. The required electrical power for operation would be supplied by Baltimore Gas & Electric (BG&E) and no adverse effect to electricity would be expected during operation. No significant effects would be expected to potable water, solid waste, and communications system. No adverse effect would be expected to natural gas. The capacity of the existing natural gas system is expected to be adequate to support the proposed actions.

Hazardous and Toxic Substances. No significant adverse effects are expected to hazardous and toxic substances. No environmental or health effects resulting from the removal, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials would be expected during construction activities. No adverse effects would be expected from hazardous waste disposal. Contaminated sites are present on some of the proposed BRAC and EUL sites. There is a potential that contaminated soils and groundwater could be encountered at Site S. In addition, unexploded ordnance (UXO) issues at 2 locations on Site S require evaluation and clearance or remediation prior to being allowed for construction and long-term use.

Cumulative Effects. Implementing the Proposed Action will produce a mixture of beneficial and adverse cumulative effects with respect to land use, aesthetic and visual resources, air quality, noise, water resources-surface water run-off, biological resources, socioeconomics, transportation, and utilities. Significant cumulative adverse effects would be expected to land use, aesthetic and visual resources, water resources-surface water run-off, biological resources, transportation, and utilities. Minor beneficial effects would be expected to socioeconomics. No cumulative effects would be expected on geology and soils, cultural resources, or hazardous and toxic materials.

6.0 Mitigation

The EIS predicts that implementing the Preferred Alternative for the Proposed Action will result in adverse effects on several environmental resources. The EIS identifies mitigation measures to minimize, avoid, or compensate for such effects. All practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the selected alternative have been adopted. A monitoring and enforcement plan will be adopted for mitigation measures. The following mitigation measures are deemed appropriate.

Aesthetic and Visual Resources. The Army will revegetate disturbed areas with native vegetation and maintain trees and native vegetation wherever possible.

Water Resources. The Proposed Action, Preferred Alternative will result in increases in stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces. The Army will meet federal and state requirements for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation under the Clean Water Act Sections 401 and 404 (b) (1)) and NPDES and construction permit requirements. Other components of the permitting process that Fort Meade would fulfill include Erosion and Sediment Control Plan and Stormwater Management Plans including Storm

Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) approvals and General Permits for construction and stormwater discharges from construction sites.

Potential indirect effects to the Patuxent River and Severn River watersheds, Midway Branch and Franklin Branch would be minimized to the greatest extent feasible through strict adherence to applicable regulations and plans including COMAR 26091-26092, Fort Meade's Nutrient Management Plan, stormwater management planning including Fort Meade's SWPPP, Fort Meade's INRMP, Fort Meade's IDG, site specific erosions and sedimentation planning, Maryland's 2000 Stormwater Design Manual, U.S. EPA's Stormwater Best Management Practice Design Guide; federal and state permitting conditions, and EUL Site Development Plan (at EUL sites).

The Department of the Interior (DOI) expressed concerns in their review of the Final EIS regarding potential watershed impacts to the Patuxent Research Refuge due to the development and operation of the proposed golf courses and support facilities on the EUL development area (Site S) that is adjacent to the Refuge. Their concerns centered on the potential off-post impacts resulting from uses of fungicides, pesticides, and other treatments on the golf courses that may leach contaminants onto downstream Refuge research lands. To address this, Fort Meade's long-term strategies to address nutrient loading in its Nutrient Management Plan will be applied during construction and long-term operations of the golf courses. The plan was developed in accordance with Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, guidance from the 1995 Presidential Memorandum on Environmentally and Economically Beneficial Landscape Practices on Federal Landscaped Grounds, and Fort Meade's 2005 Installation Natural Resources Management Plan. Fort Meade's Nutrient Management Plan must be complied with during construction actions by the EUL developer and utilized by Fort Meade during operations. Additionally, Fort Meade will conduct biennial surveys of aquatic life and water chemistry conditions of streams and share the results with the DOI, based on availability of funding. Also, in development of the golf course designs, the Audubon Society's Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (ACSP) will be considered during the design phase, as will other design guidelines for reducing impacts from golf courses. Other design principles to reduce the potential for impact are outlined in the EIS. All these, including Fort Meade's stormwater management responsibilities, are aimed at reducing to the maximum extent practicable or eliminating altogether additional impacts to refuge research operations resulting from activities at Site S.

Potential effects to groundwater from spills and leaks would be minimized by adherence to Fort Meade's Spill Contingency Plan (SCP) and Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasures Plan (SPCCP), compliance with the Spill Prevention, Control & Countermeasures Rule (40 CFR 112) and existing groundwater protection protocols as required under the Safe Drinking Water Act (1974, with amendments 1986).

Biological Resources. The Army will preserve associated roads and blocks of connective native vegetation on each site, where possible, to act as buffers and wildlife corridors. Bridges or oversized culverts will be constructed to allow for wildlife passage to the extent feasible. To the maximum extent possible, the Army will comply with the Maryland Forest Conservation Act, which includes ensuring the construction contractors coordinate with the Fort Meade Environmental Office for review and approval of tree and habitat area clearings before implementing tree removal or planting actions. The Army will obtain federal and state wetland permits under CWA Section 404, and for specific areas where wetland losses can not be avoided or further minimized as appropriate, the Army will mitigate for losses of wetlands lost to the footprints of new construction. The Army will obtain Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) authorization before action is initiated and incorporate recommendations in the Fort Meade Green Building Manual where feasible. New construction will meet LEED Silver rating, or higher if resources allow.

Transportation. The EIS identifies several actions the Army will take to address adverse traffic conditions on-post and in the vicinity of Fort Meade attributable to the Proposed Action. These actions are provided below:

Roadways and Traffic (Off-Post)

The Army will coordinate with all appropriate transportation agencies on an ongoing basis and the Army is committed to the process of information sharing and design coordination.

During construction, where feasible, the Army will limit the movement of construction vehicles during peak traffic hours.

The Army will require the EUL developer to conduct a traffic study to support Maryland SHA planning efforts and to identify potential road improvements and traffic-related entry/exit strategies.

The Army will coordinate with SHA on potential gate management strategies to avoid exterior roadway impacts from gate operations. Construction access gate(s) are proposed to open by summer 2008.

The Army will continue current planning interaction with Anne Arundel and Howard Counties to lease land to develop a coordinated transit operations facility on Fort Meade property, in the expectation of Fort Meade receiving in-kind transit service. The service details are in process and will be determined at a later date.

The Army will evaluate and implement local versions of successful rideshare/commuter programs, including evaluating and implementing, where feasible, strategies to reduce single occupant vehicle use generated by the preferred alternative of BRAC and EUL actions.

Fort Meade will adopt an easement to allow for the widening of MD 175. The process for obtaining the necessary approvals for the easement has been initiated.

Fort Meade will analyze highway and transit mitigation projects to determine if any would meet the requirements of the Defense Access Roads (DAR) Program (23 USC §210). Those that meet the DAR requirements will be forwarded for certification to the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC). If the SDDC determines that the road or transit facility is important to national defense under the rules of the program, the projects will be eligible and considered for the use of defense funds.

Installation Transportation

Fort Meade has initiated an Installation Transportation Study to develop engineered projects/strategies necessary to improve intersections and roads. The Installation Transportation Study will identify which transportation actions or improvements will be adopted to address identified capacity problems. Any recommended actions or improvements will be implemented as funds become available.

Fort Meade will alter existing directional flows at all installation gates as needed to improve access and reduce traffic impacts on exterior roadways. Corrective measures could include designating specific gates for one-way entrance or exit at peak volume hours, managing gate volumes by assigning specific gates to specific organizations and limiting gate exit options, e.g., right turn only exits. Construction access gate(s) are proposed to open by summer 2008.

Roadways: Where feasible, Fort Meade will implement Installation Design Guide (IDG) guidance by providing turning lanes and minimizing intersections along primary roads.

Bicycle/ pedestrian: Where feasible, Fort Meade will develop sidewalks, paths and bicycle trails on the Post consistent with guidance from the CEMP Transportation Plan and IDG.

The Army will evaluate and implement expanded transit service on the Post, as warranted, coordinated with off-Post services such as a regular shuttle from the Odenton MARC station. Funding and coordination for such services are under discussion between the installation and local governments in the context of the Central Maryland Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility agreements.

The Army will continue to cooperate with the Maryland Planning Office in the planning for all of the BRAC and EUL projects identified in the EIS.

Utilities. At Fort Meade, the Army would modify or upgrade the Wastewater Treatment Plant in order to address any increasing population growth with the addition of more stringent effluent requirement/limits from the State of Maryland. The BRAC and EUL population growth is not expected to reach the original design treatment capacity of the WWTP, therefore upgrades would not be as extensive as projected in the EIS.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used to ensure that the maximum amounts of solid waste materials are recycled and that landfill disposal is minimized. Appropriate erosion and sediment controls will be used as BMPs to minimize surface erosion and runoff of pollutants. Protocols outlined in the storm water NPDES permits and state sediment and erosion control guidelines will be implemented. Fort Meade will continue to implement the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

Hazardous and Toxic Substances. The U.S. EPA Region III issued to the Department of the Army a unilateral administrative order (UAO) at Fort Meade to address on-going issues related to the clean-up of contaminated sites on the National Priority List within Fort Meade. This order may have an affect on the proposed activities in the selected alternative. The Army will continue to work with environmental regulators on these issues, and will take no actions that would be inconsistent with the Army's obligations under RCRA or CERCLA.

Related Resource Impacts and Considerations

EUL Site S serves as a site for detonation of suspicious packages and functions as a mission training area for bivouac operations and physical training with loaded backpacks. Potential increases in demand for suitable areas to conduct these operations may occur with the arrival of new BRAC directed realignment units with training needs and the loss of Site S for existing training operations. It is acknowledged that requests may be made to DOI to use their lands to conduct some training operations. To mitigate the potential for impact to DOI lands, the Army will first attempt to meet the training needs within the existing boundary limits of the installation. Additionally, the Army will consider the establishment of a central point of contact at Fort Meade to identify locations to support the training needs of installation tenants by looking at other Department of Defense locations or for making requests to use DOI lands.

The DOI requested the Army reconsider and avoid the proposed substantial losses of forest cover for EUL projects in Site S with a reduced size course or utilize other non-forested lands in the local area, and also recommended cooperative agreements with Anne Arundel County for use of their new Compass Pointe golf course or other existing courses in the County. A reduced golf course size was considered as a reasonable response to DOI concerns. Because of the demand volumes for use of the two existing 18-hole golf courses a reduced size and cooperative agreements for use of other facilities would not meet the needs of the many golf course users.

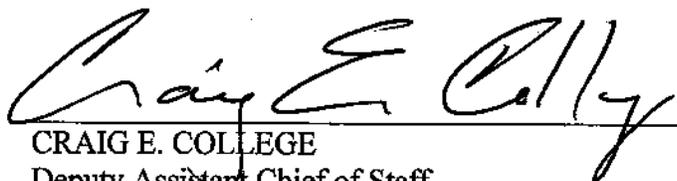
7.0 Decision

On behalf of the Department of the Army, I have decided to proceed with BRAC Sub-alternative 2A and EUL Sub-alternative 2A under the Proposed Action. I have considered the results of the analysis presented in the EIS, supporting studies, and comments provided during formal comment and review periods. These factors as well as the description of the purpose and need for the Proposed Action guided my decision on whether to approve the Proposed Action. I gave special consideration to the effect of the Proposed Action on natural resources, socioeconomic, cultural resources, and transportation/traffic. I also took into account the fact that the No Action Alternative would not meet the Army's purpose and need for the Proposed Action. This was critical because the BRAC realignment is required by Congress and needed for Army transformation to be effective. On the basis of this review, I have determined that implementing the preferred BRAC and EUL Sub-alternatives under the Proposed Action reflects a proper balance between initiatives for protection of the environment, appropriate mitigation, and actions to achieve the Army's requirements. Consistent with this decision and the Proposed Action and analyses described in the EIS, the Army will:

- Relocate approximately 5,700 additional personnel to Fort Meade related to BRAC realignment,
- Construct new facilities at Fort Meade to accommodate the incoming BRAC organizations and personnel,
- Issue a 50 year lease to a private developer for development of office and administrative buildings for an estimated 10,000 personnel on two parcels of land totaling 173 acres, and
- Implement the mitigation measures and best management practices as specified in Paragraph 6.0, above and Table 4-40 of the EIS, subject to the availability of funds.

The Army will require the lessee to do the following:

- Develop and construct two 18-hole golf courses on a third parcel of land totaling 367 acres, in consideration of the 50 year lease.
- Develop a EUL Site Development Plan, which considers and incorporates design guidelines and BMPs that protects natural resources, minimizes environmental impacts, and comply with applicable USACE, MDE and EPA permit requirements. This plan will be reviewed and approved by Fort Meade's Environmental Division, before construction begins.
- Complete a more accurate boundary line survey, in coordination with the Army, of the Federal boundary line between the DOI and the Department of Army, with on-going coordination between the Army and the DOI for the posting of signage along the established boundary.



CRAIG E. COLLEGE
Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff
for Installation Management

11/9/07
Date