

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)  
FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) OF THE  
ARMY AVIATION SUPPORT FACILITY AND  
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FACILITY  
AND THE  
JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS (JFHQ), READINESS CENTER  
AND FIELD MAINTENANCE SHOP (FMS)  
AT F.E. WARREN AFB, CHEYENNE, WYOMING**

*An Environmental Assessment of the Army Aviation Support Facility and Administrative Support Facility and the Joint Forces Headquarters, Readiness Center and Field Maintenance Shop at F.E. Warren AFB, Cheyenne, Wyoming was completed for the Proposed Action described below. The EA is attached and incorporated by reference.*

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

On September 8, 2005, the Defense Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission recommended certain realignment actions at F.E. Warren AFB. These recommendations were approved by the President on September 23, 2005 and were forwarded to Congress, and on November 9, 2005, the recommendations became law. The BRAC Commission recommendations must now be implemented as provided for in the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-510), as amended. The BRAC Commission recommended the closure of the Wyoming Army National Guard (WYARNG) Army Aviation Support Facility (AASF) in Cheyenne, Wyoming and the relocation of Army National Guard units and aviation functions to a new WYARNG AASF with Administrative Support Facility and JFHQ with Readiness Center and FMS on F.E. Warren AFB. The new FMS and Readiness Center at F.E. Warren AFB will have the capability to accommodate Army National Guard units from the existing JFHQ Complex in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Accordingly, the Proposed Action implements the Congressionally-mandated recommendations. The Proposed Action includes closing a WYARNG AASF and two WYARNG armories and constructing an AASF with Administrative Support Facility and JFHQ with Readiness Center and FMS on F.E. Warren AFB. The Proposed Action reduces costs for maintaining existing facilities by consolidating with other units in the Cheyenne area into a single facility onto an existing Air Force Base. The State of Wyoming will close the Thermopolis Armory (currently vacant with no relocating units) and the JFHQ Armory (adjacent to F.E. Warren AFB). The Proposed Action will also have the capability to accommodate units from the JFHQ Armory if the state decides to relocate those units. The Proposed Action also provides the opportunity for other local, state or Federal organizations to partner with the WYARNG to enhance homeland security and homeland defense at a reduced cost to those agencies. An estimated \$22.2M will be avoided in mission facility renovation costs and procurement avoidances associated with meeting anti-terrorism/force protection construction standards and altering existing facilities to meet unit training and communications requirements.

**ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

Five alternatives for the Proposed Action and the "No Action" alternative were initially considered. However, all alternatives except for Alternative One (the Preferred Alternative) were eliminated from consideration because operational, safety, geographic, and/or existing facility and mission constraints precluded their implementation. The Preferred Alternative is

---

analyzed in the EA and considers the AASF and Administrative Support Facility at the northwestern corner of the base and the JFHQ, Readiness Center and FMS at the eastern side of the base. The "No Action" alternative is carried forward in the EA as required by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). Since the Proposed Action is being mandated by Congress, the No Action Alternative cannot be implemented and is carried forward solely to have a benchmark against which to evaluate the Proposed Action.

The proposed AASF and Administrative Support Facility will support 149 and 167 personnel respectively to permit all personnel to perform the necessary tasks to improve the unit's readiness posture. Approximately 139,793 square feet of facilities will be constructed for the AASF and approximately 50,634 square feet of facilities will be constructed for the Administrative Support Facility.

The proposed JFHQ Complex and FMS will support 632 personnel and 4 personnel respectively to perform the necessary tasks to improve the unit's readiness posture. An approximate total of 186,523 square feet of facilities will be constructed for the JFHQ Complex and an approximate total of 20,371 square feet of facilities will be constructed for the FMS.

In addition to these two groups of facilities, associated utilities, roads and other ancillary/support facilities will be constructed within the exterior boundaries of the base.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

The environmental impacts to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic resources of F.E. Warren AFB and surrounding areas will be negligible to minor and short-term (associated with the construction phase of the project). Longer term impacts will occur during the operational phase, but those impacts also will be negligible to minor. Impacts from implementing the Proposed Action are considered insignificant.

Impacts on the environmental aspects of F.E. Warren AFB due to implementation of the Proposed Action are summarized as follows.

**Land Use:** The Proposed Action is contained within the boundaries of F.E. Warren AFB, which sets its own land use and zoning designations. The proposed land use will require land use re-designation in some areas on base, but will not conflict with currently planned uses. Also, the proposed land use is generally compatible with existing and planned uses in surrounding areas, and does not present conflicts or nonconformance with current local or state land use or zoning designations. Land use impacts are minor and considered insignificant.

**Aesthetics and Visual Resources:** The Proposed Action will cause short-term visual impacts resulting from ground disturbance associated with construction of the facilities, access road, and utility corridor, but these short-term impacts will be ameliorated by the reclamation of disturbed areas after construction. Long-term visual impacts include the addition of facilities to previously open land, helicopter operations, automobile traffic resulting from the use of facilities and the addition of lighting to previously unlit areas. These impacts are minor and considered insignificant.

**Air Quality:** The Proposed Action will cause short-term air quality impacts from temporary and localized construction activities. Contaminants will include particulate matter, vehicle emissions, and increased wind-borne dust. Potential long-term impacts include emissions resulting from proposed heating requirements and from one 15,000-gallon Above-ground Storage Tank (AST) holding JP-8 fuel for fueling helicopters. Once the construction permits have been issued and after 120 days of operation, the WYARNG will apply for an operating permit at each construction site. Expected air emissions are negligible and considered insignificant.

---

**Noise:** The Proposed Action will generate temporary noise impacts from standard construction equipment. To minimize noise impacts, construction activities will be scheduled on normal workdays during normal working hours. Anticipated long-term sources of noise include grounds maintenance activities, vehicular traffic, helicopter operations and training operations, but will be limited to certain times of the day. Noise is expected from routine training operations of UH-60 aircraft. Based on the limited number of planned daily helicopter flight corridors, flight tracks and training areas, there will be no A-weighted day/night average sound level noise contours of 65 dBA or greater.

There is the potential for aircraft noise to cause annoyance leading to possible complaints while entering/exiting the airspace. A total of 1,230 acres are affected off-base. The 1,230 acres of land off-base are designated as private and public ownership to the north and private ownership to the west. However, no particular noise-sensitive areas or facilities, such as schools or churches, are located within this area. There are no current concentrated residential areas to the north or west within the buffers. Therefore, potential noise annoyance impacts are minor and localized to a small population of rural/residential homes near the base. These impacts are considered insignificant.

**Geology and Soils:** Construction impacts to geology and soils will be localized to the construction site of the facilities and access road. The area may require some slight grading, but will not require or generate any cut or fill since the area is relatively flat. The percent of the base covered with paved areas and buildings will increase less than one percent due to large areas that will remain undeveloped. Therefore, potential impacts to geology and soils from the Proposed Action are negligible.

**Water Resources:** Water resources include surface water and groundwater. No surface water, jurisdictional wetlands or riparian areas are located in the footprints of the proposed facilities and the facilities will not be located within the 100-year floodplain. By capping the subsoil with impervious surfaces, the proposed facilities will reduce groundwater recharge locally by reducing the infiltration of precipitation. However, the proposed facilities will increase the amount of impervious surfaces on base less than one percent. Additionally, the WYARNG will not use local surface water or groundwater in the proposed facilities. Therefore, potential impacts to water resources from the Proposed Action are negligible and considered insignificant.

**Biological Resources:** Construction of the proposed facilities will result in the long-term direct loss of approximately one percent of shortgrass prairie habitat on the base. Construction may affect on-site wildlife through this relatively small loss of habitat and by direct mortality of individuals occurring in construction zones. Operation of the proposed access road may result in an increase in pronghorn-vehicle collisions. However, through maintenance of desired pronghorn population levels and the use of public education, and because pronghorn are drawn to the water sources near the center of the base, the impact of increased collisions along the access road is expected to be low. There are no wild threatened or endangered species located in the vicinity of the Proposed Action. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has concurred that the Proposed Action is unlikely to adversely affect any threatened or endangered species. Potential impacts to biological resources from the Proposed Action are negligible and considered insignificant.

**Cultural Resources:** The Proposed Action will not affect any National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-eligible archeological sites. The proposed facilities have been sited to avoid effects on historic structures and the portion of the base within the boundaries of the National Historic Landmark District. The preliminary finding of no effect by the Base Historic Preservation Office has been concurred in by the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer.

---

Therefore, potential impacts to cultural resources from the Proposed Action are none to negligible with potential short-term minor impacts during construction. These impacts are considered insignificant.

The Proposed Action will not affect federally recognized tribal interests. No comments have been received, or concerns raised by the tribes notified of the Proposed Action. Potential effects on Native American concerns are negligible.

**Socioeconomics:** The Proposed Action will generate a short-term increase in jobs during construction, which is a minor positive impact to local socioeconomic resources. The Proposed Action consolidates other WYARNG units in the Cheyenne area into a single facility (the AASF with Administrative Support Facility and JFHQ with Readiness Center and FMS) on an existing Air Force Base, resulting in no net change in the number of personnel or jobs in the Cheyenne area. Therefore, there will be no long-term effects on socioeconomic factors from the Proposed Action. Additionally, as any adverse impacts from the Proposed Action identified in this EA are not localized and do not fall disproportionately upon minority and/or low-income populations, no environmental justice impacts will occur.

**Transportation:** A small increase in vehicular traffic is expected to occur during the construction and road improvement projects. This impact will be temporary and will not exceed the capacity of the existing roadways. Heavy machinery required for site preparation and trenching will be transported by trailer or flatbed to reduce impacts to area roads. Construction activities are expected to be routed to Gate 5.

Long-term impacts associated with the Proposed Action will involve an increase in traffic on and surrounding F.E. Warren AFB. Based on the most current information provided at the issuance of the EA, Gate 5 (Central Avenue west of Bishop Avenue) will be the gate used for incoming and outgoing traffic associated with the Proposed Action. The use of Gate 5 may have localized impacts especially during security threat levels. These impacts may increase traffic volume and gate transit time at peak commute hours. To further evaluate impacts on Central Avenue and I-25 access road, a traffic study may be required by the WYARNG prior to implementation of the Proposed Action.

In addition to an increase in traffic near Gate 5, there will be an added increase of traffic on F.E. Warren AFB. Facilities near the northwestern section of the base will require an access road that will be located within an unpopulated area. Because the majority of the personnel are expected during weekend hours, weekday traffic for most of the on-base personnel should not be affected. Overall, potential impacts to transportation from the Proposed Action are minor and considered insignificant.

**Utilities:** Specific design parameters for utilities have not yet been developed for the Proposed Action at the time of the EA. However, it is anticipated that the WYARNG will privatize all utilities and will not utilize any of F.E. Warren AFB's easements. As part of storm water management, the WYARNG would construct appropriate storm water devices, such as retention ponds, and consider the use of structures to reduce storm water discharges, such as semi-pervious asphalt, in the construction of the AASF, Administrative Support Facility and access road. Overall, potential impacts to utilities from the Proposed Action are minor and considered insignificant.

**Hazardous and Toxic Substances:** The proposed AASF may generate hazardous wastes, which may include adhesives, byproducts used in painting touch-up parts on helicopter aircraft (zinc chromate), and oil and lubricants. Oil and lubricant waste will be recycled. However, hazardous wastes are not expected to increase from last year's inventory. No hazardous wastes are expected to occur from the proposed JFHQ Complex. Therefore, potential impacts

---

to hazardous and toxic substances from the Proposed Action are negligible and considered insignificant.

**Safety and Occupational Health:** The entire northern part of the base, including the locations of the Proposed Action, was used extensively as an impact area for various munitions and is currently being investigated under the signed Federal Facilities Agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the WDEQ. While the Installation Restoration Program will provide a construction area as clear of Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) as possible, the potential for construction workers to encounter UXO will remain and cannot be avoided. The 90<sup>th</sup> Space Wing Safety office is forwarding the UXO remediation after-action report to allow the Department of Defense Explosive Safety Board (DDESB) to clear the proposed construction sites for use. The proposed road and sewer line sites must be remediated for UXO, then approved by DDESB. Until the DDESB clearance is received, no real property permit shall be issued. Once appropriate clearances are received and activities are permitted, all site workers will be trained in identification and proper reporting of UXO to reduce safety risks. The AASF and Administrative Support Facility will not overlay current explosives safety Quantity-Distance (Q/D) zones and therefore, no impacts are expected. The JFHQ Complex may impact a Q/D zone associated with a number of storage bunkers located to the west of the proposed complex. The proposed layout of the JFHQ Complex will need to be designed so that the established Q/D zones do not overlay any of the proposed occupied facilities.

Long-term impacts from the AASF and Administrative Support Facility may result from potential accidents from UH-60 aircraft. The WYARNG anticipate using 12 UH-60 aircraft for routine training and mission operations. Based on the safety records, the WYARNG had only one Category I accident since 1978. Therefore, a significant accident potential is not anticipated from the UH-60 on or near F.E. Warren AFB. Long-term impacts from the JFHQ Complex may result from an accident potential zone, which is located near the northern perimeter of the proposed complex. Since certain land use restrictions apply in this accident potential zone, the proposed layout of the JFHQ Complex will be developed to avoid this zone. Overall, potential impacts to safety and occupational health from the Proposed Action are minor to moderate. These impacts are considered insignificant.

**Cumulative Effects:** Cumulative effects are those environmental impacts that result from the incremental effects of the Proposed Action when compounded by other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions. Ten future projects and one ongoing project were identified on F.E. Warren AFB. One reasonably foreseeable action was identified within 1 mile surrounding the base. No past or present actions were identified in the area 1 mile surrounding the base. Impacts are expected to be negligible to minor, with one minor to moderate impact. The cumulative effects are considered insignificant.

#### **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

The EA was prepared and evaluated in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and implementing regulations issued by the President's CEQ and the U.S. Air Force Environmental Impact Analysis Process (32 CFR 989), as well as guidance provided by the 2005 Army BRAC NEPA Manual.

I have concluded that the Preferred Alternative for the Proposed Action does not constitute a "major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment" when considered individually or cumulatively and including both direct and indirect impacts. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary.

---

*REWM*

RICHARD E. WEBBER  
Major General, USAF  
Director of Installations and Mission Support

*25 Jan 07*

Date

*Gerald I. Walter*

GERALD I. WALTER  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Chief, Environmental Programs Division

*23 Feb 07*

Date