

**FINAL**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
FOR CONSTRUCTION OF AN  
ARMED FORCES RESERVE CENTER AND IMPLEMENTATION OF BRAC 05  
RECOMMENDATIONS AT  
McCOOK, NEBRASKA**



**Prepared for:**

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**June 2009**

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# FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

## FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ARMED FORCES RESERVE CENTER AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BRAC 05 RECOMMENDATIONS AT McCOOK, NEBRASKA

### INTRODUCTION

The Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to identify and evaluate potential environmental effects from the restructuring of military bases recommended by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act. The NEARNG prepared the EA in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, 42 USC § 4321 to 4370e), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (CEQ Regulations, 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions* (32 CFR Part 651). The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC Commission) made the following recommendations concerning McCook, Nebraska.

*“Close the United States Army Reserve Center in McCook, NE and relocate units to a new Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) in McCook, NE, if the Army is able to acquire suitable land for the construction of the facilities. The new AFRC shall have the capability to accommodate Nebraska National Guard Units from the Nebraska ARNG Readiness Center, McCook, NE, if the state decides to relocate those National Guard units.”*

### 1. Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

**Proposed Action.** The Proposed Action is the NEARNG's Preferred Alternative. The Proposed Action consists of the construction and operation of an AFRC. To implement Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations, the NEARNG proposed to construct a new AFRC and related facilities at a site in McCook, Nebraska. The Army's Preferred Alternative is to construct the AFRC and associated facilities south of the McCook, Nebraska Regional Airport and north of U.S. Highway 6 on the eastern edge of McCook, Nebraska. The Proposed Action includes land acquisition, construction, and future use of an AFRC. The AFRC would provide administrative, educational, assembly, library, learning center, vault, weapons simulator, and physical fitness areas for one NEARNG unit and one United States Army Reserve (USAR) unit. Activities at the AFRC will be training-related, with no weapons firing. The facility would employ approximately 2 permanent full-time personnel, and would serve about 103 personnel on a rotating basis, mostly on weekends.

**Alternatives Considered.** In addition to the Proposed Action, the NEARNG analyzed a No Action alternative. Under the No Action alternative, the proposed AFRC would not be constructed to accommodate the BRAC recommendations. The NEARNG and USAR units would continue to train at and operate from their current locations which are over-utilized and not properly configured to allow the most effective training of personnel to complete mission requirements. Council on Environmental Quality regulations require analysis of the No Action alternative, for it serves as the baseline against which the impacts of the Proposed Action can be evaluated.

## 2. Environmental Analysis

Based on the analysis contained in the EA, the NEARNG has determined that the construction and operation of the AFRC will not have any significant adverse impacts on the human or natural environments.

**Mitigation.** Mitigation measures are actions required for the specific purpose of reducing the significant environmental impacts of implementing a proposed or alternative action. An EA may specify mitigation measures that, if implemented, would prevent significant impacts that would otherwise require an Environmental Impact Statement. No mitigation measures are required for the Proposed Action discussed in this EA because resulting impacts would not meet the significance criteria described for each resource in Section 5.0; that is, the impacts would not be significant. Additionally, Best Management Practices where applicable for each affected resource, would be initiated to minimize impacts.

## 3. Regulations

The Proposed Action will not violate NEPA, the CEQ Regulations, 32 CFR Part 651, or any other Federal, state, or local environmental regulations.

## 4. Commitment to Implementation

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) and NEARNG affirm their commitment to implement this EA in accordance with NEPA. Implementation is dependent on funding. The NEARNG and the NGB's Environmental Programs, Training, and Installations Divisions will ensure that adequate funds are requested in future years' budgets to achieve the goals and objectives set forth in this EA.

## 5. Public Review and Comment

The Final EA and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) were made available for public review and comment from 15 July through 15 August, 2009 at locations were listed in the public notice. No comments were received. For further information, contact the Office of the Adjutant General, Environmental Office, 1300 Military Road, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090, (402) 309-7469, (402) 309-7453.

## 6. Final Finding of No Significant Impact

After careful review of the EA, I have concluded that implementation of the Proposed Action would not generate significant controversy or have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. This analysis fulfills the requirements of NEPA and the CEQ Regulations. An Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared, and the National Guard Bureau is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact.

26 Aug 09  
Date

  
MICHAEL J. BENNETT  
COL, NGB  
Chief, Environmental  
Programs Division



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## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

LEAD AGENCY: National Guard Bureau (NGB)

COOPERATING AGENCIES: None

TITLE OF PROPOSED ACTION: Construction of an Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) and Implementation of BRAC 05 Recommendations at McCook, Nebraska

AFFECTED JURISDICTION: McCook, Red Willow County, Nebraska

POINT OF CONTACT: Mr. Dustin Huenink at (402) 309-7469 or [Dustin.M.Huenink@us.army.mil](mailto:Dustin.M.Huenink@us.army.mil),  
CFMO Environmental, Nebraska

PROPOSERS: Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG)

APPROVED BY: Approval by Major General Timothy J. Kadavy is pending.

DOCUMENT DESIGNATION: Draft Environmental Assessment

### ABSTRACT:

The NGB and NEARNG are preparing environmental documentation for the proposed AFRC at McCook, Nebraska as part of the restructuring of military bases recommended by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act. This Environmental Assessment (EA) addresses the potential environmental, socioeconomic, and cultural impacts of this proposal and its alternatives. The Proposed Action is necessary to support the NEARNG, Federal, state, and community missions. The proposed AFRC building would provide training for one NEARNG unit and one U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) unit. The units to be housed at the new facilities are the NEARNG, Detachment 2 of the 1195th Transportation Company, and the USAR, Detachment 1 of the 1010th Quartermaster Company.

This EA evaluates the individual and cumulative impacts of the Proposed Action (construction and operation of the McCook AFRC) and the No Action Alternative with respect to the following criteria: land use, air quality, noise, geology and soils, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, socioeconomic environment, environmental justice, infrastructure, solid waste disposal, and hazardous and toxic substances.

The evaluation performed in this EA concludes that there would be no significant adverse impact, either individually or cumulatively, to the local environment or quality of life associated with the implementation of the Proposed Action, provided that best management practices specified in this EA are implemented.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **Environmental Assessment for the Construction of an Armed Forces Reserve Center in McCook, Nebraska**

On September 8, 2005, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC Commission) recommended that certain realignment actions occur in McCook, Nebraska. To implement these recommendations, the U.S. Army National Guard (ARNG) proposes to construct a new Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) and related facilities at a site in McCook, Nebraska to support the changes in force structure. This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to identify, document, and discuss the possible environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts associated with the proposed construction and operation of an AFRC in McCook, Red Willow County, Nebraska. This EA provides the necessary information to properly and fully assess the potential impacts of proposed construction and operation of the McCook AFRC as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 *et seq.*); the President's Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508); and 32 CFR Part 651, *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*.

#### **OVERVIEW OF PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED**

The Proposed Action is necessary to support the Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG), Federal, state, and community missions. The AFRC would provide administrative, educational, assembly, library, learning center, vault, weapons simulator, and physical fitness areas for one NEARNG unit and one U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) unit. The units to be housed at the new facilities are the NEARNG, Detachment 2 of the 1195<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company, and the USAR, Detachment 1 of the 1010<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Company. The facility would employ approximately two permanent full-time personnel, and would serve about 55 NEARNG and 48 USAR personnel on a rotating basis, mostly on weekends. The maximum expected use of the new facility would be about 93 members per weekend, and there would be parking for 84 privately-owned vehicles. On training weekends, reservists would either commute to the AFRC or stay in local hotels.

#### **OVERVIEW OF CONSIDERED PROJECT ALTERNATIVES**

This EA evaluates the individual and cumulative impacts of the Preferred Alternative (construction and operation of the McCook AFRC; the Proposed Action) and the No Action Alternative with respect to the following criteria: geographic setting and land use, air quality, noise, geology and soils, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, socioeconomic environment, environmental justice, infrastructure, and hazardous and toxic substances. Under the Preferred Alternative, site improvements would include approximately 25 acres of the 34-acre project site. In addition to the proposed 34,539-square-foot AFRC training building, the project would include construction of a 100-square-foot flammable materials facility, and a 300-square-foot controlled waste facility.

Activities at the AFRC would be training-related, with no weapons firing. There will be no firing range or weapons qualification testing or training. Maintenance training work bays would be used to perform training for vehicle maintenance functions. The flammable materials and controlled waste facilities would be located in the AFRC training building. The anticipated stored waste includes used oil or other vehicle fluids that would be changed during operator maintenance activities. Examples of maintenance activities include checking tire pressure, checking and adding vehicle fluids, and changing tires.

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed facilities would not be constructed to accommodate the BRAC recommendations. The NEARNG and USAR would continue to use the existing facilities in McCook.

### **OVERVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

No significant impacts were identified. The Proposed Action would cause short-term impacts to visual resources, air quality, noise, geology and soils, water resources, biological resources, and hazardous and toxic substances during construction of the AFRC. These impacts would be caused by ground disturbance, the movement of heavy equipment, the generation of dust and vehicle exhaust, and the potential for spills or leaks from construction equipment. However, once construction is complete, the reclamation of disturbed areas would remove these impacts. Short-term beneficial impacts to socioeconomics would occur as a result of increased jobs during construction.

The Proposed Action would cause long-term impacts to land use, visual resources, soils, and hazardous and toxic substances. Land use would change from agriculture to industrial; however, this change is compatible with the existing zoning and the surrounding land use. Therefore, viewers would likely be less sensitive to the visual impact of the new AFRC. Site improvements would result in additional impervious surfaces; however, impact on regional infiltration would not be significant. Use of hazardous materials and generation of hazardous wastes would be minimal and likely limited to cleaning products, paint, and adhesives. Infrastructure is available to support the Proposed Action and the new AFRC would be built to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver standards to promote energy efficiency and reduce operational maintenance costs throughout the life of the AFRC. No impacts would occur to cultural resources as no such resources are located at or near the site.

### **CONCLUSION**

The evaluation performed in this EA concludes that there would be no significant adverse impact, either individually or cumulatively, to the local environment or quality of life associated with the implementation of the Preferred Alternative, provided that best management practices discussed in this EA are implemented. This EA's analysis determines, therefore, that an environmental impact statement is unnecessary for implementation of the Preferred Alternative, and that a Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

$\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	microgram(s) per cubic meter
AFRC	Armed Forces Reserve Center
AIRFA	American Indian Religious Freedom Act
ARNG	Army National Guard
ARPA	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
AST	aboveground storage tank
ASTM	American Society of Testing and Materials
ATFP	Anti-terrorism/Force Protection
BMP	best management practice
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
BRL	Building Restriction Line
CAA	Clean Air Act
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
CERCLIS	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	carbon monoxide
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibels
dba	A-weighted decibel(s)
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DoD	U.S. Department of Defense
DoDI	U.S. Department of Defense Instruction
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIFS	Economic Impact Forecast System
EO	Executive Order
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FNSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
GPD	gallons per day
HVAC	heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
IBC	International Building Code
IICEP	Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning
kV	kilovolt(s)
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
MSL	mean sea level
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
NDNR	Nebraska Department of Natural Resources
NDOR	Nebraska Department of Roads

**LIST OF ACRONYMS (continued)**

NEARNG	Nebraska Army National Guard
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NGB	National Guard Bureau
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NO <sub>2</sub>	nitrogen dioxide
NO <sub>x</sub>	nitrogen oxides
NPPD	Nebraska Public Power District
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O <sub>3</sub>	ozone
OWS	oil/water separator
Pb	lead
pCi/L	picocuries per liter
PM <sub>10</sub>	particulate matter with an aerodynamic size less than or equal to 10 microns
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	particulate matter with an aerodynamic size less than or equal to 2.5 microns
ppm	parts per million
psi	pounds per square inch
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
ROI	region of influence
RTV	rational threshold value
SARA	Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act
SO <sub>2</sub>	sulfur dioxide
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TCE	trichloroethylene
tpy	ton(s) per year
TSCA	Toxic Substance Control Act
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USAR	U.S. Army Reserve
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
UST	underground storage tank

## **1.0 PURPOSE, NEED AND SCOPE**

### **1.1 Introduction**

On September 8, 2005, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC Commission) recommended that certain realignment actions occur at McCook, Nebraska. These recommendations were approved by the President on September 23, 2005, and forwarded to Congress. The Congress did not alter any of the BRAC Commission's recommendations, and on November 9, 2005, the recommendations became law. The BRAC Commission recommendations must now be implemented as provided for in the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-510), as amended.

The BRAC Commission made the following recommendations concerning McCook, Nebraska:

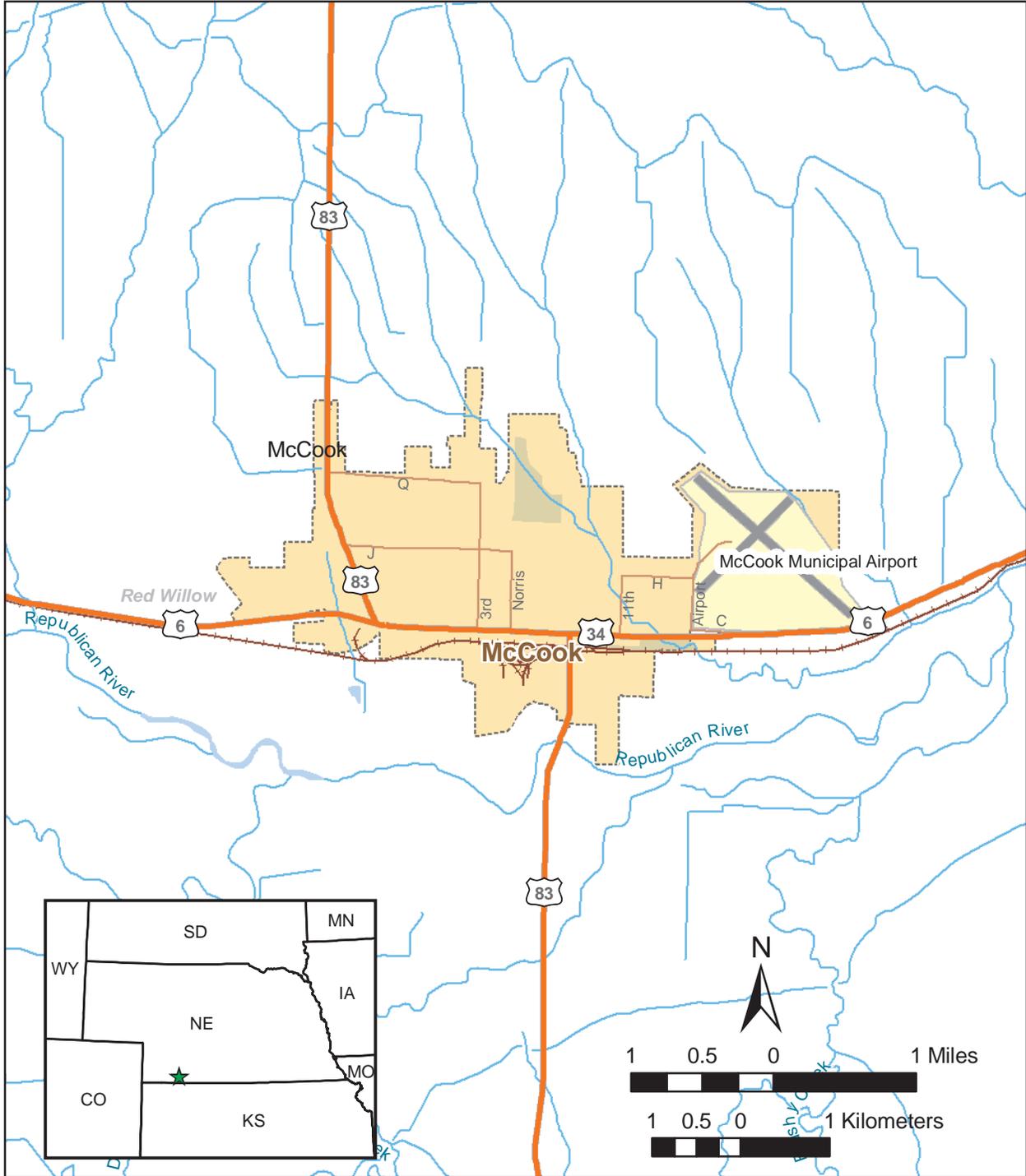
*“Close the United States Army Reserve Center in McCook, NE, and relocate units to a new Armed Forces Reserve Center in McCook, NE, if the Army is able to acquire suitable land for the construction of the facilities. The new AFRC shall have the capability to accommodate Nebraska National Guard Units from the Nebraska ARNG Readiness Center, McCook, NE, if the state decides to relocate those National Guard units.”*

To implement these recommendations, the U.S. Army National Guard (ARNG) proposes to construct a new Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) and related facilities at a site in McCook, Nebraska to support the changes in force structure. This Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzes the potential environmental impacts associated with the ARNG's Proposed Action at McCook, Nebraska. Figure 1-1 shows the location of McCook, Nebraska. Details on the Proposed Action are provided in Section 2.0.

### **1.2 Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide a new AFRC in McCook, Nebraska as directed by the BRAC Commission's recommendations. The AFRC is needed to ensure that adequate training and administrative space is available to support reserve units realigned from area facilities.

The need for the Proposed Action is to improve the ability of the Nation to respond rapidly to challenges of the 21st century. The Army's mission is to defend the United States and its territories, support national policies and objectives, and defeat nations and other parties responsible for aggression that endangers the peace and security of the United States. To carry out these 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. The Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG) is a dual-mission organization under the control of the Federal government [U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)] and the state of Nebraska (Governor). The Federal mission is to serve as an integral component of the Total Army by providing fully-manned, operationally ready, and well-equipped units that can respond to any national contingency such as war, peacekeeping missions, or nation building operations. The



Prepared For:  
 U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

Figure 1-1  
 McCook, Nebraska Location Map



NEARNG's state mission is to provide trained and equipped organizations to protect life and property; preserve peace, order, public safety; and support national defense. The NEARNG performs this mission in concert with its stewardship responsibility to protect and conserve the environment.

The following paragraphs discuss the major initiatives that contribute to the Army's need for the Proposed Action in McCook, Nebraska.

***Base Realignment and Closure.*** In previous rounds of BRAC, the explicit goal was to save money and downsize the military to reap a "peace dividend." In the 2005 BRAC round, DoD sought to reorganize its installation infrastructure to most efficiently support its forces, increase operational readiness and facilitate new ways of doing business. Thus, BRAC represents more than cost savings. It supports advancing the goals of transformation, improving military capabilities, and enhancing military value. The Army needs to carry out the BRAC recommendations in McCook, Nebraska to achieve the objectives for which Congress established the BRAC process.

***Installation Sustainability.*** On October 1, 2004, the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff issued *The Army Strategy for the Environment*. The strategy focuses on the interrelationships of mission, environment, and community. A sustainable installation simultaneously meets current and future mission requirements, safeguards human health, improves quality of life, and enhances the natural environment. A sustained natural environment is necessary to allow the Army to train and maintain military readiness.

### 1.3 Scope

This EA was developed in accordance with the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.); implementing regulations issued by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500-1508; *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*, 32 CFR Part 651; and the National Guard Bureau (NGB) NEPA Handbook. Its purpose is to inform decision makers and the public of the likely environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and alternatives.

This EA identifies, documents, and evaluates environmental impacts of the proposed realignment in McCook, Nebraska. An interdisciplinary team of environmental scientists, biologists, planners, economists, engineers, archaeologists, historians, and military technicians analyzed the Proposed Action and alternatives in light of existing conditions and identified relevant beneficial and adverse impacts associated with the actions. The Proposed Action is described in Section 2.0 and the alternatives are described in Section 3.0. Conditions considered the "environmental baseline" conditions are described in Section 4.0, Affected Environment. The expected impacts of the Proposed Action are presented in Section 5.0, Environmental Consequences. Section 5.0 also addresses the potential for cumulative impacts, and mitigation measures are identified where appropriate. Section 6.0 provides conclusions summarizing the magnitude of expected impacts, and identifies the environmentally preferred alternative. References cited in this document are provided in Section 7.0, the list of preparers of this EA is presented in Section 8.0, and the agencies and individuals consulted are presented in Section 9.0.

The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 specifies that NEPA does not apply to actions of the President, the BRAC Commission, or the DoD, except “(i) during the process of property disposal, and (ii) during the process of relocating functions from a military installation being closed or realigned to another military installation after the receiving installation has been selected but before the functions are relocated (Sec. 2905(c)(2)(A), Public Law 101-510, as amended).” The law further specifies that in applying the provisions of NEPA to the process, the Secretary of Defense and the secretaries of the military departments concerned do not have to consider “(i) the need for closing or realigning the military installation which has been recommended for closure or realignment by the Commission, (ii) the need for transferring functions to any military installation which has been selected as the receiving installation, or (iii) military installations alternative to those recommended or selected (Sec. 2905(c)(2)(B)).” The Commission’s deliberation and decision, as well as the need for closing or realigning a military installation, are exempt from NEPA. Accordingly, this EA does not address the need for realignment.

## **1.4 Decision to be Made**

The decision to be made is how NEARNG will implement the BRAC recommendations in McCook, Nebraska and, as appropriate, carry out mitigation measures that would reduce impacts on resources. The decision on how to implement the realignment will be based on strategic, operational, environmental, and other considerations, including the results of this analysis.

## **1.5 Public Involvement**

### **1.5.1 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT/SCOPING**

The NEARNG and the NGB invite public participation in the NEPA process. Consideration of the views and information of all interested persons promotes open communication and enables better decision-making. All agencies, organizations, and members of the public having a potential interest in the Proposed Action, including minority, low-income, disadvantaged, and Native American groups, are urged to participate in the decision-making process.

Public participation opportunities with respect to this EA and decision-making on the Proposed Action are guided by 32 CFR Part 651.14. Upon completion of this EA, the Notice of Availability will be published in a local newspaper, the *McCook Daily Gazette*, and a regional newspaper, the *Omaha World-Herald*. At that point, the EA will be made available to the public for 30 days, along with a draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) at the McCook Public Library, 802 Norris Avenue, in McCook, Nebraska and on the BRAC website at [http://www.hqda.army.mil/acsim/brac/env\\_ea\\_review.htm](http://www.hqda.army.mil/acsim/brac/env_ea_review.htm). At the end of the 30-day public review period, the NEARNG and NGB will consider all comments submitted by individuals, agencies, and organizations on the Proposed Action, the EA, and draft FNSI. As appropriate, the NEARNG and NGB may then execute the FNSI and proceed with implementation of the Proposed Action. If it is determined prior to issuance of a final FNSI that implementation of the Proposed Action would result in significant impacts, the NEARNG will publish in the *Federal Register* a notice of intent

to prepare an environmental impact statement, commit to mitigation actions sufficient to reduce impacts below significance levels, or not take the action.

The public may obtain information on the status and progress of the Proposed Action and the EA through the NEARNG by contacting Mr. Dustin Huenink at 402-309-7469 or [dustin.m.huenink@us.army.mil](mailto:dustin.m.huenink@us.army.mil).

### **1.5.2 AGENCY PARTICIPATION**

In conjunction with the preparation of this EA, and to comply with NEPA, written correspondence has been sent to Federal, state, and local agencies with jurisdictions that could possibly be affected by the proposal. This coordination fulfills requirements under Executive Order (EO) 12372 (superseded by EO 12416, and subsequently supplemented by EO 13132), which requires Federal agencies to cooperate with and consider state and local views in implementing a Federal proposal. It also constitutes the Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning (IICEP) process for this EA.

Section 9.0 contains a list of agencies contacted regarding the Proposed Action and any sensitive resources at or near the proposed AFRC in McCook, Nebraska. These agencies include, but are not limited to, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NDNR); and the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office. Data on local species of special concern, threatened and endangered species, soils, water resources, and other data pertinent to environmental resources in McCook, Nebraska were requested. These data were used in developing this EA. Copies of all IICEP correspondence, including data request letters and all received agency responses, are included in Appendix A.

### **1.5.3 NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION**

The NEARNG is conducting formal consultation with federally recognized Native American tribes as required under Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 4710.02 (*DoD Interactions with Federally Recognized Tribes*), which implements the *Annotated DoD American Indian and Alaska Native Policy* (dated October 27, 1999). These entities were invited by the NEARNG to participate as Sovereign Nations per EO 13175 (*Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*) in both the EA and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 process. Consultations with these tribes were conducted by the NEARNG in accordance with the protocol set forth in the NGB NEPA Handbook (2006). Section 9.0 lists the federally recognized Native American tribes that were notified of the Proposed Action and invited to consult. Copies of all correspondence with Native American tribes, including data request letters and all received tribal responses, are included in Appendix A.

## **1.6 Regulatory Framework**

A decision on whether to proceed with the Proposed Action rests on numerous factors such as mission requirements, schedule, availability of funding, and environmental considerations. In addressing environmental considerations, the Army is guided by relevant statutes (and their implementing regulations) and EOs that establish standards and provide guidance on environmental and natural resources management and planning.

These include the Clean Air Act (CAA), Clean Water Act (CWA), Noise Control Act, Endangered Species Act (ESA), NHPA, Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA), Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), and Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA). EOs bearing on the Proposed Action include EO 11988 (*Floodplain Management*), EO 11990 (*Protection of Wetlands*), EO 12088 (*Federal Compliance with Pollution Control Standards*), EO 12580 (*Superfund Implementation*), EO 12898 (*Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*), EO 13045 (*Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks*), EO 13175 (*Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*), EO 13186 (*Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*), and EO 13423 (*Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management*). These authorities are addressed in various sections throughout this EA when relevant to particular environmental resources and conditions. The full texts of the laws, regulations, and EOs are available on the Defense Environmental Network & Information Exchange website at <https://www.denix.osd.mil>. In addition there may be corresponding laws and/or regulations of the state of Nebraska, as many of the applicable Federal laws noted provide for delegation of authority to states. Further discussion of state-specific or local issues is included within the narrative discussion of the EA.

## **2.0 PROPOSED ACTION**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This section describes the Army's Proposed Action for carrying out the BRAC Commission's recommendations. The Proposed Action includes land acquisition, construction, and future use of an AFRC. The details of the facilities and operations, equipment, and personnel for the Proposed Action are described below.

### **2.2 Facilities and Operations**

The Proposed Action includes the construction and operation of the following facilities:

- 34,539-square-foot AFRC training building
- 100-square-foot flammable materials facility
- 300-square-foot controlled waste facility

Future site improvements are expected to occupy approximately 25 acres. The state of Nebraska would acquire new land for construction of these facilities. The Army estimates that construction would begin in March 2010 and would be completed by August 2011.

The AFRC would provide administrative, educational, assembly, library, learning center, vault, weapons simulator, and physical fitness areas for one NEARNG unit and one U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) unit. The units to be housed at the new facilities are the NEARNG, Detachment 2 of the 1195<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company, and the USAR, Detachment 1 of the 1010<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Company.

Activities at the AFRC would be training-related, with no weapons firing. There will be no firing range or weapons qualification testing or training. Maintenance training work bays would be used to perform training for vehicle maintenance functions. The flammable materials and controlled waste facilities would be located in the AFRC training building. The anticipated stored waste includes used oil or other vehicle fluids that would be changed during operator maintenance activities. Examples of maintenance activities include checking tire pressure, checking and adding vehicle fluids, and changing tires.

The facilities would be permanent construction with reinforced concrete foundations; concrete floor slabs; structural steel frames; masonry veneer walls; standing seam metal roofs; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems; and plumbing, mechanical, electrical, and security systems. Total pavement would include approximately 11,900 square yards which includes 2,000 square yards of parking space for military vehicles and 2,930 square yards for privately-owned vehicles. All facilities would be designed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver standards, in accordance with the Army sustainability policies.

Supporting improvements are also proposed to complement the facilities, including approximately 768 square yards of walkways, grading, clearing and landscaping,

extension of utility services, 1,492 linear feet of security fencing, security gates, and general site improvements. Anti-terrorism/Force Protection (ATFP) safety and security regulations would be incorporated into the facility designs and siting.

### **2.3 Equipment**

A maximum of approximately 22 vehicles including high mobility multi-purpose wheeled vehicles (Humvees), semi tractors, and commercial cars and trucks are anticipated as a result of the realignment of USAR and NEARNG units to the new AFRC. In addition, a maximum of approximately 27 flat bed, cargo, and specialty trailers are also anticipated. Occasionally, some of these vehicles could be staged and then moved as a convoy for off-site training.

### **2.4 Personnel**

The new facility would realign the USAR and NEARNG units, resulting from the closure of the United States Army Reserve Center in McCook, Nebraska, as directed by BRAC 05. The facility would employ approximately two permanent full-time personnel, and would serve about 55 NEARNG and 48 USAR personnel on a rotating basis, mostly on weekends. The maximum expected use of the new facility would be about 93 members per weekend, and there would be parking for 84 privately-owned vehicles. On training weekends, reservists would either commute to the AFRC or stay in local hotels.

## **3.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

### **3.1 Introduction**

A bedrock principle of NEPA is that an agency should consider reasonable alternatives to a proposed action. Considering alternatives helps to avoid unnecessary impacts and allows analysis of reasonable ways to achieve the stated purpose. To warrant detailed evaluation, an alternative must be reasonable. To be considered reasonable, an alternative must be “ripe” for decision making (any necessary preceding events having taken place), affordable, capable of implementation, and satisfactory with respect to meeting the purpose of and need for the action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action have been examined according to three variables: means to physically accommodate realigned units, siting of new construction, and schedule. This section presents the Army’s development of alternatives and addresses alternatives available to the Proposed Action. This section also describes the No Action Alternative.

### **3.2 Screening Criteria**

NEPA and CEQ regulations require exploration and objective evaluation of all reasonable alternatives. Identification of those alternatives eliminated from detailed evaluation along with brief justification for elimination is required. An alternative is considered reasonable only if, as a result of its implementation, it meets essential requirements of affording land and facilities to mitigate deficiencies of administrative space, educational space and resources, assembly space, and maintenance training areas in McCook, Nebraska. Alternatives that would not achieve essential requirements are considered unreasonable.

BRAC recommendations direct the relocation of units to a new AFRC in McCook, Nebraska if the Army is able to acquire land suitable for the construction of the facilities. The Army considers both general and specific siting criteria for construction of new facilities.

General siting criteria include consideration of compatibility between the functions to be performed and the land use designation for the site, adequacy of the site for the function required, proximity to related activities, distance from incompatible activities, availability and capacity of roads, efficient use of property, development density, potential future mission requirements, and special site characteristics, including environmental incompatibilities.

Specific siting criteria include consideration of location of the workforce and efficient, streamlined management of functions. Collocation of similar types of functions, as opposed to dispersion, permits more efficient use of equipment, vehicle, and other assets.

The Nebraska Military Department developed the following specific siting criteria: at least 15 acres; property front on at least one public road; free from low-lying areas, steep slopes, landfills, faults and other prospective nuisances; uniformly contoured terrain that is level or only slightly sloping; access to all public utilities necessary for operation;

protected by local zoning regulations to permit construction and operation of proposed AFRC and prohibit establishment of activities that would adversely affect operation of the AFRC; uncontaminated; and not located in a flood plain. Community visibility was considered a priority and weighted more heavily as a consideration factor.

Potential site locations for the AFRC and related facilities were screened for inclusion in this EA. Screening criteria consists of safety constraints, geographic and environmental constraints, and operational constraints. The Army screened three locations in McCook, Nebraska shown on Figure 3-1. The following describes the constraints considered in the evaluation process for the locations.

- **Safety Constraints** – Engineering and operational safety, vehicle traffic and circulation patterns including access roads
- **Geographic and Environmental Constraints** – Availability of sufficient land area and configuration for anticipated footprint of at least 15 acres, access, security requirements, existence of environmentally sensitive areas within the anticipated footprint, minimum width required for ATRFP requirements
- **Operational Constraints** – Infrastructure demand (water, electricity, and other needs); compatibility with neighborhood, community visibility, demolition costs (estimated costs to demolish any existing improvements)

Table 3-1 summarizes the selection criteria as applied to each location considered. Based on the screening criteria, two alternatives, the Preferred Alternative (McCook Regional Airport Site) and the No Action Alternative, were developed for evaluation in this EA. Details of these alternatives are described in Section 3.3. The No Action Alternative is required to be carried forward by CEQ. Section 3.4 discusses the sites that were eliminated from further consideration and the reasons for elimination.

### **3.3 Alternatives Evaluated**

This EA evaluates the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1) and the No Action Alternative (Alternative 2), as required by law.

#### **3.3.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

After an examination of three properties in McCook, Nebraska (see Table 3-1 and Figure 3-1), the NEARNG determined that the property identified as the McCook Regional Airport Site in this EA met all of the Nebraska Military Department's siting criteria to support the NEARNG's mission in McCook. Implementation of the Proposed Action (i.e., construction of an AFRC in McCook, Nebraska) at the McCook Regional Airport Site is the NEARNG's Preferred Alternative. The other two properties did not meet the siting criteria and are, therefore, not evaluated in this EA as explained in Section 3.4.

The Preferred Alternative is to construct the AFRC and associated facilities at Site 3, shown on Figure 3-1. This site, called the McCook Regional Airport Site in this EA, is described below along with the reasons for identifying it as the Preferred Alternative.

**Table 3-1.** Selection Criteria for Each Site.

Site	Location Description	Safety Constraints	Geographic and Environmental Constraints	Operational Constraints	Carried Forward to EA or Not Carried Forward
1	East of Highway 83 and north of W. Q Street	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prime farmland</li> <li>• Potential for residential encroachment</li> <li>• Possible floodplain issues resulting from creeks to the north and east</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoning designation could change</li> <li>• Utilities would need to be extended to the site</li> <li>• Highway 83 provides limited community visibility</li> <li>• Access to the site is limited (from the south)</li> </ul>	Not Carried Forward
2	West of the McCook Regional Airport and east of E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street	Concerns with road infrastructure to support transportation units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prime farmland</li> <li>• Possible flooding as a result of streams on both sides of the property</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of community visibility and connectivity</li> <li>• Utilities would need to be extended to the site</li> <li>• Main entrance would be from the south, but there is a large debris field in that area</li> <li>• Access to highway is not direct</li> </ul>	Not Carried Forward
3	South of the McCook Regional Airport and north of Highway 6	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prime farmland</li> <li>• Topography, drainage requires special engineering considerations</li> </ul>	Utilities would need to be extended to the site	Carried Forward



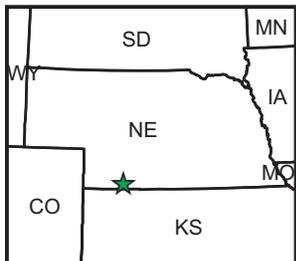
**Legend**

-  Armed Forces Reserve Center
-  Property Boundary (approximate)

0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet



0 250 500 750 1,000 Meters



Prepared For:  
 U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

Figure 3-1  
 Sites Screened for Inclusion in this  
 Environmental Assessment.



The McCook Regional Airport Site is located south of the McCook Regional Airport and north of U.S. Highway 6 on the eastern edge of McCook, Nebraska. Figure 3-2 shows an aerial photograph of the McCook Regional Airport Site. The site consists of approximately 34 acres previously planted with corn, zoned as Industrial. A small strip of land 50 feet by 100 feet was added to the original parcel in March 2009 to expand the road and allow for improved access to the facility. The Nebraska Military Department siting criteria include a parcel size of greater than 15 acres. The site is generally sloping to the south with a ditch in the central portion. No water bodies are located on the site. Ingress/egress to the site would be from U.S. Highway 6/34 to the south, which satisfies a requirement of the siting criteria.

This site is considered the Army's Preferred Alternative because it meets all of the Nebraska Military Department's siting criteria and it has fewer operational constraints than the other sites. In addition, visibility to U.S. Highway 6 is preferred over visibility to U.S. Highway 83 (Site 1) to promote exposure to the AFRC and increase recruitment as well as offer better site access. Also, property adjacent to the airport provides assurance of stable zoning designation and alleviates any potential noise concerns.

### **3.3.2 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

CEQ regulations require analysis of the No Action Alternative in an EA, for it serves as the baseline against which the impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives will be evaluated. Accordingly, the No Action Alternative is evaluated in this EA.

Under the No Action Alternative, the Army would not implement the Proposed Action. The NEARNG, Detachment 2 of the 1195<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company, and the USAR, Detachment 1 of the 1010<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Company would continue to train at and operate from their current locations which are over utilized and not properly configured to allow the most effective training of personnel to complete mission requirements. However, routine replacement or renovation actions could occur through normal military maintenance and construction procedures as circumstances independently warrant.

## **3.4 Alternatives Considered and Eliminated**

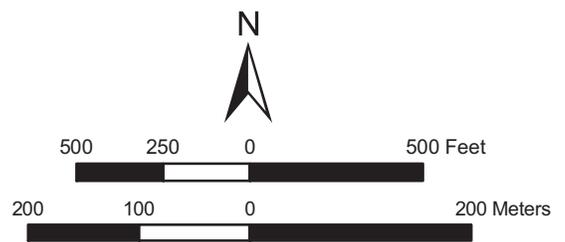
Two other alternative sites were considered in McCook, Nebraska for the construction of the proposed AFRC (Table 3-1 and Figure 3-1). Sites 1 and 2 were eliminated from further study during the screening process because they did not meet siting criteria requirements as described in more detail below.

Site 1 is located east of U.S. Highway 83 and north of W. Q Street in McCook, Nebraska. It is approximately 98 acres. The Nebraska Military Department requires protection by local zoning regulations to permit construction and operation of the AFRC and prohibit establishment of activities that would adversely affect operation of the AFRC. Site 1 was eliminated due to concerns over potential change in zoning and because visibility to U.S. Highway 6 (Site 3) is preferred over visibility to U.S. Highway 83, for recruitment purposes as well as ease of access. Commercial and industrial structures along



**Legend**

-  Approximate Property Boundary
-  Armed Forces Reserve Center



Prepared For:  
 U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

Figure 3-2  
 Aerial Photograph of the McCook Regional  
 Airport Site - Preferred Alternative.



U.S. Highway 83 obscure the site from the highway, limiting visibility. From a stationing perspective, the detachment headquarters is in Kearney, Nebraska, and U.S. Highway 6 provides a direct route to travel to Kearney. Additionally, the presence of businesses near the proposed AFRC on U.S. Highway 83 presents a traffic concern for convoys to and from the AFRC. The creeks to the north and east present possible floodplain issues.

Site 2 is located west of the McCook Regional Airport and east of E. 11th Street in McCook, Nebraska. It is approximately 93 acres. Similar to Site 3, it is adjacent to the airport which provides assurance of stable zoning designation and alleviates any potential noise concerns. However, Site 2 was eliminated based on lack of community visibility and connectivity, and concerns over road infrastructure to support transportation units. Specific siting criteria require that the site be free from conditions that would prevent or affect future operation of the facility; insufficient roads would impact operations at the site. The route to and from the AFRC would cross several streets and go through an industrial area and does not offer direct access to Highway 6, which is preferred.

## **4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

This chapter describes the existing resources that could potentially be affected by the Proposed Action and alternatives. The conditions described in this chapter represent the baseline for the consequences that are presented for each resource in Section 5.0. The region of influence (ROI), or study area for each resource category is the McCook Regional Airport Site and immediate surroundings, unless stated otherwise in the individual resource category discussion. Baseline information was taken from existing documentation and a site visit. The affected environment and baseline conditions are described for each resource in general terms for the McCook Regional Airport Site or the resource-specific ROI.

### **4.1 Location Description**

The city of McCook is located in Red Willow County in southwest Nebraska, within the Republican River Valley. As one of the larger communities in the area, McCook serves as a regional shopping and recreation area drawing citizens from the surrounding area. The city of McCook is the county seat and is located in the west-central portion of the county along U.S. Highway 6/34 (Red Willow County 2008).

The Preferred Alternative is to construct the AFRC and associated facilities on a 34-acre site near the McCook Regional Airport. The site is bordered on the south side by U.S. Highway 6/34, to the north and east by McCook Regional Airport, and to the west by the eastern edge of the city of McCook, Nebraska in Red Willow County. The legal description is “the South Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 27, Township 3, Range 29 West of the 6th Prime Meridian, Red Willow County, Nebraska, EXCEPT that part taken by the state of Nebraska by Return of appraisers, in Book 86, Page 528.”

The climate in Red Willow County is one of considerable change and unpredictability. There are no geographic barriers to the north or south of the county, however, the Rocky Mountains to the west of the county cut off any moisture that might enter the area from the west (Red Willow County 2008). Winter precipitation is in the form of light infrequent snow that generally increases through winter with the maximum amount falling in March. The summer weather is hot and afternoon temperatures can exceed more than 100 degrees Fahrenheit (Red Willow County 2008).

### **4.2 Land Use**

This section describes existing land use conditions on and surrounding the McCook Regional Airport Site. It considers natural land uses and land uses that reflect human modification. Natural land use classifications include wildlife areas, forests, and other open or undeveloped areas. Human land uses include residential, commercial, industrial, utilities, agricultural, recreational, and other developed uses. Management plans, policies, ordinances, and regulations determine the types of uses that are allowable, or protect specially designated or environmentally sensitive uses.

The ROI for land use is the land within and adjacent to the Proposed Action project areas, areas visible from the Proposed Action construction locations, and areas from which the Proposed Action construction locations are visible.

#### **4.2.1 HISTORICAL AND CURRENT LAND USE**

The city of McCook was established in 1882 as a result of an agreement between the Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company and the Lincoln Land Company to form a new railroad center. McCook quickly became the center of commerce and trade in southwest Nebraska and northwest Kansas. As the town grew and established itself as a commerce center, ranching and farming spread across the rural area. The grassland plains, previously home to the bison (*Bison bison*), dominated the landscape; however, the growing cattle industry around McCook quickly redefined the county industry (UNL 2005).

The Preferred Alternative site is located on the eastern edge of Red Willow County just south of the McCook Regional Airport. It is an irregularly-shaped parcel located north of U.S. Highway 6/34 and is undeveloped. It has been used for agricultural purposes since at least 1952 (OLSSON 2008). The land is currently used for dry land crop production and was most recently planted in corn (AGEISS 2008). Prime farmland comprises 68 percent of the site.

#### **4.2.2 SURROUNDING LAND USE**

The majority of the land surrounding the McCook Regional Airport Site is undeveloped agricultural land. To the north and east, the land is also used for the McCook Regional Airport. A trichloroethylene (TCE) remediation building is located to the west of the site. Historically, land to the south was undeveloped agricultural land, as well as U.S. Highway 6/34. Since 1976, the land to the south also includes an area of commercial development and a cattle feedlot (OLSSON 2008).

#### **4.2.3 LOCAL ZONING**

The McCook Regional Airport Site is surrounded by land zoned for agriculture. However, the zoning in a 1-square-mile area is industrial heavy with the airport situated in the middle of that square mile (Baugher 2008). The Preferred Alternative site lies in the southern corner of this zoning area.

#### **4.2.4 VISUAL AND AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

This section describes the existing aesthetic and visual resource conditions in the area of the McCook Regional Airport Site. Visual resources include natural and manmade physical features that provide the landscape its character and value as an environmental resource. Landscape features that form a viewer's overall impression about an area include landform, vegetation, water, color, adjacent scenery, scarcity, and constructed modifications to the natural setting. The ROI for aesthetics includes the areas visible from the Proposed Action construction locations and areas from which the Proposed Action construction locations are visible.

The McCook Regional Airport Site is in a rural area. The site is on agricultural land, and most views surrounding the site are of undeveloped agricultural land. Views to the north also include the McCook Regional Airport and to the south U.S. Highway 6/34 and a small commercial area. Except for trees at the southern boundary of the property, most of the land is open.

### 4.3 Air Quality

This section describes the existing air quality conditions at and surrounding the McCook Regional Airport Site. Ambient air quality conditions are discussed first, followed by emission sources in the area of the considered site.

The ambient air quality in an area can be characterized in terms of whether it complies with the primary and secondary National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The CAA (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.) requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set NAAQS for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment. National primary ambient air quality standards define levels of air quality which the EPA has determined as necessary to provide an adequate margin of safety to protect public health, including the health of “sensitive” populations such as children and the elderly. National secondary ambient air quality standards define levels of air quality which are deemed necessary to protect the public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility and damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings. NAAQS have been established for six criteria pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO); lead (Pb); nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>); ozone (O<sub>3</sub>); particulate matter (which includes both particulate matter with an aerodynamic size less than or equal to 10 microns [PM<sub>10</sub>] and particulate matter with an aerodynamic size less than or equal to 2.5 microns [PM<sub>2.5</sub>]); and sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). Table 4-1 lists the NAAQS primary standards for each criteria pollutant.

**Table 4-1.** National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Pollutant	Standard Value
<b>Carbon monoxide (CO)</b>	
8-hour average	9 ppm
1-hour average	35 ppm
<b>Lead (Pb)</b>	
Quarterly average	1.5 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
<b>Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)</b>	
Annual arithmetic mean	0.053 ppm
<b>Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>)</b>	
8-hour average (2008 standard)	0.075 ppm
<b>Particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM<sub>10</sub>)</b>	
24-hour average	150 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
<b>Particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)</b>	
Annual arithmetic mean	15.0 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
24-hour average	35 µg/m <sup>3</sup>

Pollutant	Standard Value
<b>Sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)</b>	
Annual arithmetic mean	0.03 ppm
24-hour average	0.14 ppm

Source: 40 CFR 50.4 through 50.13  
 µg/m<sup>3</sup> micrograms per cubic meter  
 ppm parts per million

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, Air Quality Division, has the responsibility and mission to protect Nebraska's air resources. Applicable regulations are set in Title 129, "Nebraska Air Quality Regulations."

General air quality monitoring is conducted in areas of high population density and near major sources of air pollutant emissions. Rural areas are typically not considered in such monitoring. Regions that are in compliance with the NAAQS are designated as attainment areas. Areas for which no monitoring data is available are designated as unclassified and are considered to be in attainment of the NAAQS. A nonattainment status is designated for areas where the applicable NAAQS are not being met. A maintenance status is designated for areas that have had a history of nonattainment, but are now consistently meeting the NAAQS. Maintenance areas have been re-designated by the EPA from "nonattainment" to "attainment with a maintenance plan."

McCook, Nebraska is located within Red Willow County. Red Willow County's air quality meets the NAAQS and is thus classified as being in attainment for all criteria pollutants: CO, Pb, NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, and O<sub>3</sub>.

Section 176(c)(1) of the CAA requires Federal agencies to ensure that their actions conform to applicable implementation plans for the achievement and maintenance of the NAAQS for criteria pollutants. To achieve conformity, a Federal action must not contribute to new violations of standards for ambient air quality, increase the frequency or severity of existing violations, or delay timely attainment of standards in the area of concern (for example, a state or a smaller air quality region). Federal agencies prepare written Conformity Determinations for Federal actions that are in or affect NAAQS nonattainment areas or maintenance areas when the total direct or indirect emissions of nonattainment pollutants (or their precursors in the case of O<sub>3</sub>) exceed specified thresholds.

Regional air pollutant emissions from reported sources are listed below in Table 4-2 for Red Willow County, Nebraska, for the year 2002, the most recent year available.

**Table 4-2.** Air Emissions Reported for Red Willow County, Nebraska, for Calendar Year 2002.

Pollutant	2002 Emissions (tpy)		
	Nonpoint Source <sup>a</sup>	Point Source <sup>b</sup>	Total
Particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	607	3.61	611
Particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM <sub>10</sub> )	3,987	7.30	3,994
Carbon monoxide (CO)	3,898	4.56	3,903
Nitrogen oxides (NO <sub>x</sub> )	989	12.5	1002
Sulfur dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	202	0.51	203

Source: EPA 2008a

tpy tons per year

- a. Any source of air pollution that is released over a relatively small area but which cannot be classified as a point source, and which may include vehicles and other small engines, small businesses, and household activities that release hydrocarbons. The category includes nonpoint and mobile source emissions.
- b. A stationary location or fixed facility from which pollutants are discharged, such as a factory smokestack.

The potential for radon gas exposure exists in Red Willow County. Radon is a radioactive gas that comes from the decay of radium and exists in varying amounts in most soils. Because radon is a gas, it can move through soil and into the atmosphere or into a building structure. Prolonged exposure to high levels of radon can lead to lung cancer. The EPA Map of Radon Zones assigns each of the counties in the United States into one of three zones based on radon potential. Red Willow County in Nebraska is assigned to Zone 1, with a predicted average indoor radon screening level greater than 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) (EPA 2008b). Zone 1 is considered to have the highest potential for radon. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has summarized radon test data from the city of McCook (DHHS 2008). The average radon concentration was 5.4 pCi/L, with the maximum concentration of 22.0 pCi/L. Radon-reducing measures are described in Section 5.2.1.

## 4.4 Noise

This section describes the existing noise conditions in the area of the McCook Regional Airport Site.

### 4.4.1 NOISE MEASUREMENT

Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound. Sound is all around us; it becomes noise when it interferes with normal activities such as speech, concentration, or sleep. Noise associated with military installations is a factor in land use planning both on- and off-post. Noise emanates from vehicular traffic associated with new facilities and from project sites during construction. Ambient noise (the existing background noise environment) can be generated by a number of noise sources, including mobile sources, such as automobiles and trucks, and stationary sources such as construction sites, machinery, or industrial operations. In addition, there is an existing and variable level of natural ambient noise from sources such as wind, streams and rivers, wildlife and other sources.

Sound is measured with instruments that record instantaneous sound levels in decibels (dB). A-weighted sound level measurements (dBA) are used to characterize sound levels that can be sensed by the human ear. The typical measurement for quieter sounds, such

as rustling leaves or a quiet room, is from 20 to 30 dBA. Conversational speech is commonly 60 dBA, and a home lawn mower measures approximately 98 dBA. All sound levels discussed in this EA are A-weighted.

#### **4.4.2 NOISE SOURCES IN THE AREA OF THE MCCOOK REGIONAL AIRPORT SITE**

Sources of noise in the area of the McCook Regional Airport Site include road traffic along U.S. Highway 6/34 and noise from the airport. In general, small towns and rural communities typically have background sound levels of 45 to 55 dBA. However, background sound levels near roadways and airports are higher. Existing noise 50 feet from a highway is typically 75 dBA. Highway noise attenuates to about 60 dBA at 400 feet and to 50 dBA at a distance of 800 feet (Hanson et al. 2006). Airport noise can be variable based on weather conditions and corresponding runway usage. However, at the McCook Regional Airport, there are only two departures and two arrivals, Monday through Friday, and one daily departure and arrival on Saturdays and Sundays.

### **4.5 Geology and Soils**

This section describes the existing geology and soil conditions in the area of the McCook Regional Airport Site. The ROI for geology and soils is the land within the Proposed Action project areas.

#### **4.5.1 GEOLOGIC AND TOPOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS**

The McCook Regional Airport Site is flat to very gently sloping towards the south. The elevation of the site ranges from 2,510 to 2,550 feet above mean sea level (MSL). The average gradient at the surface is approximately 0.03 sloping down to the south (Gravity College 2008). The bedrock at the McCook Regional Airport Site is composed of Cretaceous rocks primarily made of limestone that was deposited in shallow seas (Geology 2008).

Historical data of seismic activity indicate that damaging earthquakes in Nebraska are rare. The first significant earthquake felt in Nebraska occurred in 1867 and was centered near Lawrence, Kansas. Since then, seven earthquakes of intensity V or greater, on the Modified Mercalli Scale, were recorded, all originating in Nebraska. In addition, several earthquakes were felt in Nebraska that originated in neighboring states. None of these earthquakes caused damage (USGS 2008). The strongest earthquake in Nebraska history occurred on November 15, 1877 with an intensity of VII. The effects of this earthquake were felt in an area of approximately 140,000 square miles that included most of Nebraska and parts of Iowa, Kansas, the Dakotas, and northwestern Missouri (USGS 2008).

#### **4.5.2 SOILS**

The McCook Regional Airport Site is covered by soils represented by three mapping units. The northwestern, northern, and eastern parts of the site are covered by the Holdrege and Keith silt loams (1 to 3 percent slopes) and characterized by good drainage, moderate infiltration rate, and low susceptibility to wind erosion (USDA NRCS 2008).

The southwestern and parts of the central section of the McCook Regional Airport Site are covered by the Holdrege and Keith silt loam (1 to 3 percent slopes, eroded). This unit is also characterized by good drainage, moderate infiltration rate, and low susceptibility to wind erosion (USDA NRCS 2008). The southern and parts of the central area of the McCook Regional Airport Site are covered by the Uly silt loam (6 to 15 percent slopes, eroded) and are characterized by identical physical properties as the Holdrege and Keith silt. The Holdrege and Keith silt loams (1 to 3 percent slopes), Holdrege and Keith silt loams (1 to 3 percent slopes, eroded), and Uly silt loam (6 to 11 percent slopes, eroded) units cover approximately 48, 32, and 20 percent of the McCook Regional Airport Site, respectively (USDA NRCS 2008).

### **4.5.3 PRIME FARMLAND**

Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is also available for these uses. Prime farmland could be cultivated land, pasture land, forest land, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas (USDA NRCS 2008). Of the 34 acres considered for the AFRC at the McCook Regional Airport Site, approximately 23 acres are considered prime farmland as shown on Figure 4-1 (USDA NRCS 2008). Prime farmland is protected by the Farmland Protection Policy Act (7 CFR Parts 657 and 658).

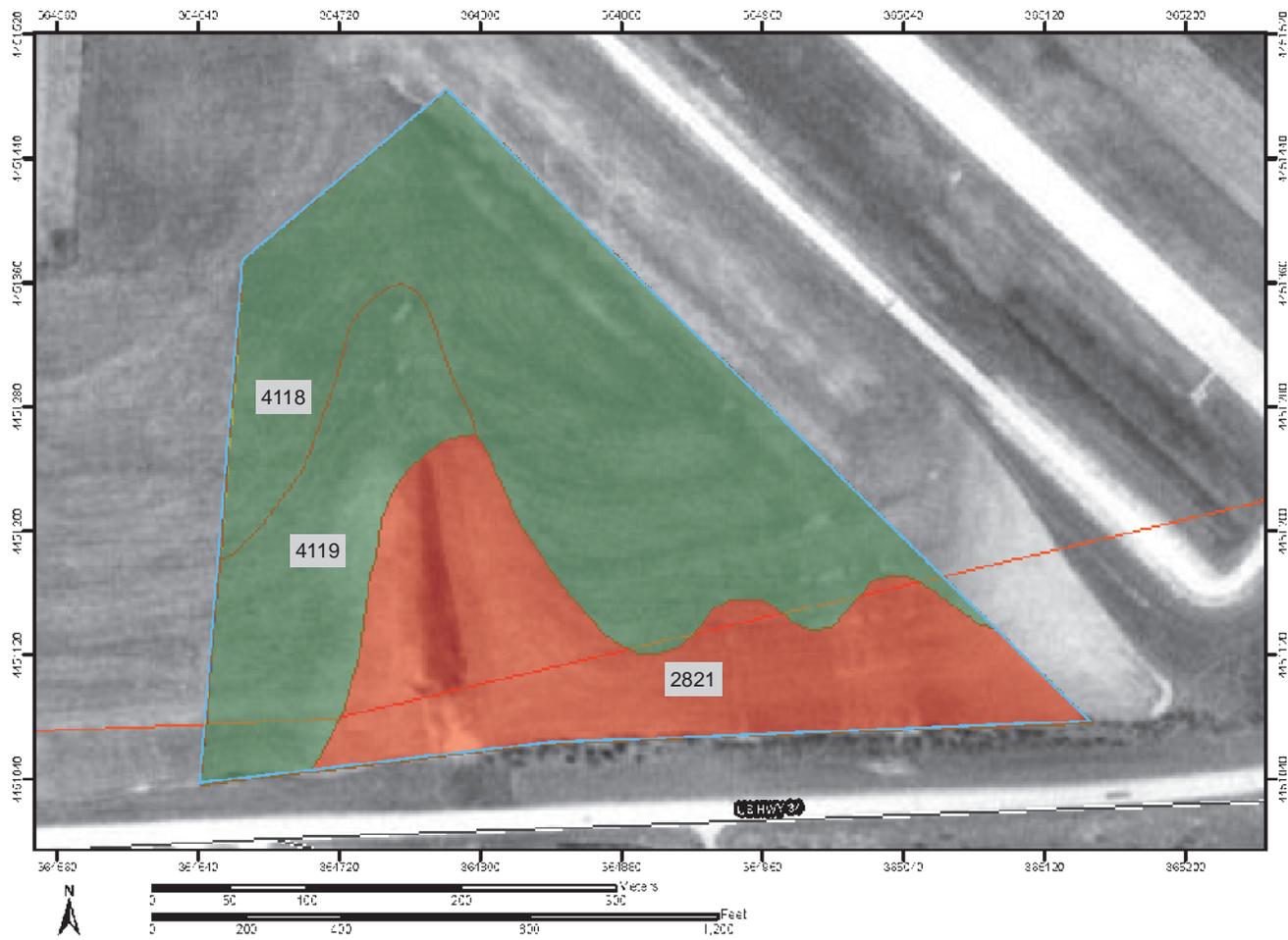
## **4.6 Water Resources**

This section describes existing water resources on and in the area of the McCook Regional Airport Site, including surface and groundwater resources. The ROI for water resources includes the McCook Regional Airport Site and areas downstream from the Proposed Action project area. Surface water includes lakes, rivers, and streams and is important for a variety of reasons, including economic, ecological, recreational, and human health. Groundwater comprises the subsurface hydrogeologic resources of the physical environment. Wetlands are discussed in Section 4.7.4.

### **4.6.1 SURFACE WATER**

A number of rivers and a limited number lakes and reservoirs occur in the vicinity of McCook, Nebraska. The McCook Regional Airport Site is located in the Republican River basin. The Republican River flows easterly until joining the Kansas River, which flow easterly and joins the Missouri River, which flows southeasterly until reaching the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River flows south into the Gulf of Mexico.

There are no surface water features on the McCook Regional Airport Site. The closest surface water feature is Kelley Creek, approximately 0.5 mile south. Kelley Creek flows easterly before joining the Republican River. There is a ditch located on the McCook Regional Airport Site, which likely serves to drain the site to the south.



**Map units**

- 2821 - Uly silt loam, 6 to 11 percent slope, eroded  
Not prime farmland
- 4118 - Holdrege and Keith silt loams, 1 to 3 percent slopes  
Prime farmland
- 4119 - Holdrege and Keith silt loams, 1 to 3 percent slopes,  
eroded; Prime farmland

**Soil Ratings**

- Not prime farmland
- All areas are prime farmland

Prepared For:  
U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

Figure 4-1  
McCook, Nebraska Farmlands - Preferred Alternative.



#### **4.6.2 HYDROGEOLOGY/GROUNDWATER**

The High Plains aquifer underlies about 174,000 square miles of eight states in the High Plains region, including Nebraska. The Ogallala Formation is the principal geologic unit of the High Plains aquifer and underlies the McCook Regional Airport Site. The unconfined Ogallala aquifer is primarily composed of unconsolidated, poorly sorted clay, silt, sand, and gravel and was formed by fluvial deposition during the Pliocene epoch. Quaternary age Dune sands, where saturated, compose part of the aquifer (USGS 1999). Well yields from the Ogallala Formation in the vicinity of the McCook Regional Airport are expected to be in the range of 750 to 1,000 gallons per minute. Recharge of the Ogallala and Dune sands High Plains aquifer is primarily through infiltration of precipitation.

Unconsolidated deposits of gravel, sand, silt, and clay (much of which is reworked Ogallala Formation material) overlay the Ogallala Formation. The Ogallala Formation is underlain by Upper Cretaceous rocks, consisting primarily of shale, chalk, limestone, and sandstone (USGS 1999).

Groundwater flow direction across the McCook Regional Airport Site is assumed to be south-southeast (OLSSON 2008). Groundwater quality of the High Plains aquifer is affected by many factors. Average dissolved-solids concentrations of the Ogallala Formation underlying the McCook Regional Airport Site are approximately 250 milligrams per liter, and generally of good quality.

Groundwater to the west of the McCook Regional Airport Site is contaminated with trichloroethylene (TCE) as a result of past operation of a TRW, Inc. electronic capacitor manufacturing facility (EPA ID NED062246616, NPDES ID NE0128562). TCE contamination was detected in 1986 at the TRW, Inc. facility. A groundwater treatment system was installed January 1993, and is in operation to remediate groundwater in the Ogallala Aquifer. The NEARNG prepared a map overlaying current TRW, Inc. facility TCE isoconcentration data on the McCook Regional Airport Site, which indicated the current extent of the TRW, Inc. facility TCE plume is approximately 0.25 mile west of the proposed site. The plume source is located approximately 0.75 mile west of the proposed site. Based on the prepared map overlays and estimated groundwater flow direction, the McCook Regional Airport Site was determined to be cross-gradient of the TCE plume. Groundwater monitoring data from 2006 indicate the groundwater under the McCook Regional Airport Site was not impacted by the TRW, Inc. TCE plume (OLSSON 2008).

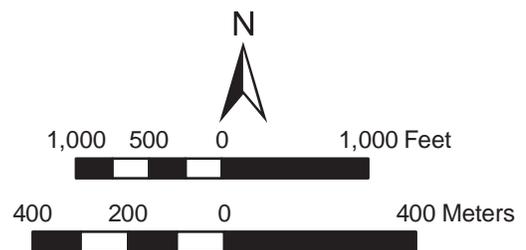
#### **4.6.3 FLOODPLAINS**

The McCook Regional Airport Site is in an area outside the 0.2 percent annual chance floodplain as shown on NDNR Flood Plain Information mapping utility (see Figure 4-2).



Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, 2008

Source: Nebraska Department of Natural Resources Floodplain Interactive Map  
<http://dnmap2.dnr.state.ne.us/website/fppublic/viewer.htm>



Prepared For:  
 U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

Figure 4-2  
 McCook, Nebraska Floodplains - Preferred Alternative.



## 4.7 Biological Resources

This section describes existing biological resources at the McCook Regional Airport Site. It focuses on plant and animal species or habitat types that are typical or are an important element of the ecosystem, are of special category importance (of special interest due to societal concerns), or are protected under state or Federal law or statute regulatory requirement. The ROI for biological resources is the land within the Proposed Action project areas.

### 4.7.1 VEGETATION

The McCook Regional Airport Site is classified as part of the Mixedgrass Prairie Ecosystem in south-central Nebraska. This ecosystem represents the transition zone between the tall and short grass prairie and contains a high diversity of flora and fauna (Schneider et al. 2005). No biologically unique landscapes within the mixed grass ecosystem occur in Red Willow County (Schneider et al. 2005). Vegetation in the recent past and currently at the McCook Regional Airport Site consists of agriculture crops, most recently, corn. Naturally occurring vegetation on the site is limited grasses along the edge of the field and the occasional lone tree (unidentified species).

### 4.7.2 WILDLIFE

Although over 350 species of resident and migratory birds, as well as many mammal species, have been documented in the Mixedgrass Prairie Ecosystem, reduced natural vegetation limits wildlife species inhabiting the area. Eastern cottontails (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) may be found in the edge habitat between the agriculture and grassland interface. Both mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and white-tailed deer (*O. virginianus*) are found in the ecoregion, with the former mostly restricted to native grasslands in the western half of the ecoregion (Schneider et al. 2005). The most abundant large predator of the region is the coyote (*Canis latrans*). Other opportunistic medium-sized species likely to exist in this agriculture-residential interface include: red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), and skunks (*Mephitis mephitis*).

### 4.7.3 SENSITIVE SPECIES

The USFWS administers the ESA of 1973 as amended. This law provides Federal protection for species designated as federally endangered or threatened. An endangered species is “in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range,” and a threatened species “is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future” (USFWS 1988). Special status species are listed as threatened or endangered, are proposed for listing, or are candidates for listing by the state and/or Federal government. No federally-listed threatened or endangered species are known to occur on the McCook Regional Airport Site. In compliance with the ESA, the USFWS was contacted. A copy of the consultation letter sent by the Nebraska Military Department to the USFWS, along with copies of scoping letters sent to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, are included in Appendix A.

One state endangered mammal, the swift fox (*Vulpes velox*), and one bird species, the whooping crane (*Grus americana*) are listed for Red Willow County (NGPC 2008).

Additionally, the whooping crane is also listed as a federally endangered species. Positive identification of swift fox is currently limited to the northwestern counties in the panhandle of Nebraska (NGPC 2008). The whooping crane distribution is limited to areas with ample water such as the Platte River north of the McCook Regional Airport Site, which is a stopover point during migration.

#### **4.7.4 WETLANDS**

Wetlands are classified by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) based on three criteria: hydrology, soil type, and vegetation. Specifically, wetlands are defined as those areas that are saturated or inundated by water that is sufficient to support vegetation typically adapted to saturated soils (USACE 1987). Wetlands and other surface water features, which may include intermittent and perennial streams, are generally considered “waters of the United States” by the USACE, and under their definition of “jurisdictional waters/features,” are protected under Section 404 of the CWA.

Freshwater emergent wetlands were identified to the south of U.S. Highway 6/34 and north of the McCook Regional Airport. No wetlands were identified on the Preferred Alternative site (USFWS 2008) (Figure 4-3).

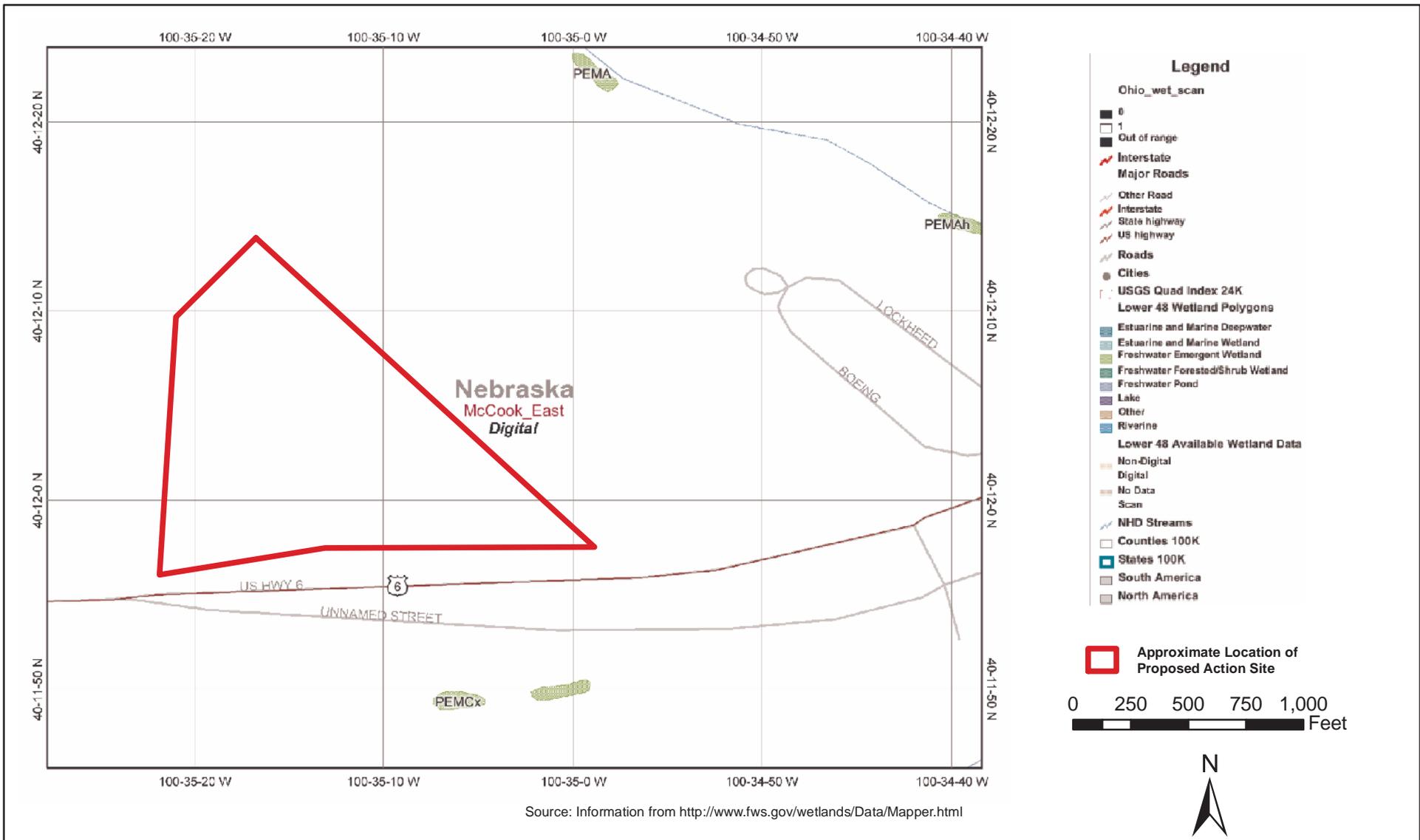
### **4.8 Cultural Resources**

This section describes the existing cultural resource conditions in the area of the McCook Regional Airport Site. Cultural Resources are defined as historic properties as defined by the NHPA, cultural items as defined by NAGPRA, archeological resources as defined by ARPA, sacred sites as defined in EO 13007 to which access is afforded under AIRFA, and collections and associated records as defined in 36 CFR 79.

#### **4.8.1 PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND**

The Nebraska State Historical Society’s website describes the prehistoric and historic background of the region in detail (NSHS 1998). The earliest documented human occupation on the Central Plains is dated at around 12,000 B.C., near the end of the last great Ice Age. These early people are called Paleoindians. This tradition is characterized by a highly mobile lifestyle that relied on the hunting of big game as a primary food source. Within this tradition, several complexes have been recognized largely on the types of chipped stone spear points. Many of these forms have been named and some that have been found in Nebraska include the Clovis, Plainview, Folsom, Hell Gap, Agate Basin, Alberta, Scottsbluff, Eden, Frederick, Lusk, and Brown's Valley types (NSHS 1998).

By 9,000 B.C., the last Ice Age had ended and the climatic patterns somewhat characteristic of the modern period became established. Many of the animals such as mammoths, camels, horses, and others which dominated the Plains during the Ice Age were extinct. People adapted their lifestyle in response to shifts in climate and available plants and animals. More diverse hunting was practiced, utilizing both large and small game species. Wild plant resources were also exploited to a greater extent than during the Paleoindian tradition. People continued a nomadic lifestyle; however it appears that



Prepared For:

U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

Figure 4-3

McCook, Nebraska Wetlands - Preferred Alternative.



the range or movement of people was more localized than during the Paleoindian period (NSHS 1998).

The Woodland tradition was a time of innovation during which many new technological, economic, and social ideas made their appearance. Among the technological innovations is the appearance of the bow and arrow, the first use of pottery for storage and cooking, and the first documented use of semi-permanent dwellings found on sites that appear to have been occupied year-around. Often near these small village sites archeologists find evidence of elaborate burials in earthen mounds. Near the end of the period, evidence of experimentation with small scale gardening is evident (NSHS 1998).

The Central Plains Villagers tradition is marked by a change in subsistence and material culture traits by local Woodland populations. The adaptation may have been caused by the ending of a moist climatic period, and consequent thinning of game and plant resources. Although horticulture was an important addition to the people's subsistence, hunting and wild plant gathering was the primary source of nutrition. Sites are usually located along streams, where suitable garden locations were available. Artifacts include a wide variety of pottery types and bow and arrow projectile points that are triangular, with hafting notches on the lower edge and occasionally on the bottom (NSHS 1998).

The Caddoan Tradition encompasses the sites of the historically documented occupations of Pawnee and possibly the Arikara peoples in Nebraska. The primary area of settlement for these tribes was in the lower portions of the Loup River drainage, but earth-lodge villages also are found in the Republican, Blue, and the eastern Platte valleys. The Siouan-speaking tribes include the Omaha, Ponca, Oto-Missouria, Ioway, and Kansa. Their villages are located along the Missouri River and its lower tributaries of eastern Nebraska. The Caddoan and Siouan groups built and lived in permanent, large earth-lodge village complexes where they tended large gardens of corn and other produce and hunted and fished. These communities sometimes consisted of hundreds of lodges housing thousands of people. Many of these tribes conducted semiannual bison hunting expeditions to central and western Nebraska and were closely involved with the Euro-american fur trade. Western Nebraska was home to tribes such as the Apache, Lakota, Crow, Kiowa, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe. These groups were much more nomadic than eastern tribes and subsisted primarily on buffalo. They lived in tipi villages which were frequently moved (NSHS 1998).

The earliest European presence in Nebraska was by Spanish and French explorers and traders coming out of the Southwest and the lower Mississippi Valley. The earliest documented incursions into the region were in the early 1700s, but there may have been occasional explorations in the late 1600s.

More sustained settlement began with fur trade, military, and missionary efforts beginning in the late 1700s and continuing through the mid-1800s. The mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century also witnessed significant presence in the region by virtue of the immigrant routes, most notably the Oregon-California Trail. The 1860s and beyond was the time of major

settlement in Nebraska characterized by urban development and emergence of agricultural development and rural communities (NSHS 1998).

McCook, Nebraska was established in 1882 as the result of an agreement between the Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company and the Lincoln Land Company to form a new railroad center near the village of Fairview. The location was chosen for its positioning directly between Denver, Colorado and Omaha, Nebraska. McCook was named after the Union Brigadier General, Alexander McDowell McCook, of the “Fighting Ohio McCooks” who were known as military leaders and Indian fighters. General McCook served the Union for 43 years against Indian uprisings in the west and against the Confederate Army during the Civil War. A traditional old west boom-town, McCook quickly became the center of commerce and trade in southwest Nebraska and northwest Kansas. Pioneers flocked in for the opportunity to create fresh profitable lives in the thriving new railroad town. As the town grew and established itself as a commercial center, farming and ranching spread across the surrounding rural area. Over one hundred years of history deeply rooted in agriculture, the railroad industry, and the spirit of the American pioneer is still prevalent in the community lifestyle of McCook today (Red Willow County Visitors Committee 2009).

#### **4.8.2 STATUS OF CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORIES AND SECTION 106 CONSULTATIONS**

Section 110 of the NHPA requires Federal agencies to locate, inventory, and nominate to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) all resources that are recommended eligible for inclusion on the NRHP.

Section 106 consultation and coordination has been initiated with the State Historic Preservation Office via the Nebraska State Historical Society. A copy of the letter the NEARNG sent to the Nebraska State Historical Society and the response received is included in Appendix A. The Nebraska State Historical Society stated that their review indicated that no recorded historic resources are located at or near the site and a Phase I Cultural Survey would not be necessary. In addition, there are no structures or buildings at or near the project area. With concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Office, the Army will not complete a Phase I Cultural Survey at the Preferred Alternative site.

#### **4.8.3 NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT (NAGPRA)**

No Native American concerns regarding the Proposed Action have been identified. A notification letter regarding the Proposed Action was sent to the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma. This tribe has judicially recognized land in Red Willow County, Nebraska, and is listed in the NEARNG’s Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan as a Tribe to be consulted with in the county. A copy of the NEARNG’s letter is included in Appendix A.

## 4.9 Socioeconomics

The following subsections identify and describe the basic attributes and resources associated with the human environment surrounding the proposed AFRC. These data are presented in order to provide an understanding of the socioeconomic forces that have shaped, and continue to shape, the area. Socioeconomic data shown in this section are presented at the city, county, and state levels to analyze baseline socioeconomic conditions in the context of local, regional, and state trends. Data have been collected from previously published documents issued by Federal, state, and local agencies and from state and national databases (for example, the U.S. Census Bureau). This section provides the framework necessary to determine the significance of the estimated socioeconomic impacts from the proposed activity at McCook, Nebraska. The most reliable socioeconomic data for Red Willow County and McCook are from the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau. More recent data are not available because of the small populations of both the county and city.

### 4.9.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The top three industry sectors within Red Willow County include educational, health, and social services (21.7 percent); retail trade (15.8 percent); and manufacturing (9.2 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). The top three occupations within the county include management, professional, and related occupations (28.5 percent), sales and office occupations (24.3 percent), and service occupations (16.8 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). The top three industry sectors within the city of McCook include educational, health, and social services (23.4 percent); retail trade (16.6 percent); and manufacturing (9.5 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). The top three occupations within the city of McCook include management, professional, and related (26.6 percent), sales and office occupations (24.9 percent), and service occupations (18.6 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

Per capita income statistics from the 2000 U.S. Census indicate that Red Willow County and the city of McCook have lower per capita incomes compared with the state of Nebraska. Median household incomes of Red Willow County and McCook are also lower and poverty levels are at or below the state average. Red Willow County and McCook both had unemployment levels below the state and nation's unemployment rates in 2000; McCook's unemployment rate was higher than the county. The average nationwide unemployment rate was 3.7 percent in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Table 4-3 presents selected regional income statistics for the project area.

**Table 4-3.** Regional Income.

Area	Number of Households	Median Household Income (\$)	Per Capita Income (\$)	Population Below Poverty Level (%)	Unemployment Rate (%)
State of Nebraska	666,184	39,250	19,613	9.7	4.0
Red Willow County	4,710	35,646	16,303	9.6	1.8
City of McCook	3,371	31,105	16,691	9.4	2.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

### 4.9.2 DEMOGRAPHICS

Red Willow County is the 25<sup>th</sup> largest county within the state of Nebraska. The population of Red Willow County in 2000 was 11,448, which was a 2.2 percent decrease from the 1990 census (Census 2000 Population Count 2000). Red Willow County has nine cities and towns within its borders. The city of McCook is the seat of Red Willow County and is the largest city within the county. The population of McCook in 2000 was 7,994, which was a 1.5 percent decrease from the 1990 census (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census statistics, Red Willow County has a lower percentage of individuals with a Bachelor's degree compared to the state of Nebraska. The percentage of individuals with a high school diploma or higher in the city of McCook is higher than the county and state. Table 4-4 provides selected 2000 statistics of educational attainment for persons 25 years and older.

**Table 4-4.** Regional Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Older.

Area	No Diploma (%)	High School Graduates (%)	Post-Secondary Graduates (%)
State of Nebraska	13.4	86.6	23.7
Red Willow County	12.1	87.9	15.2
City of McCook	12.0	88.0	15.8

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

### 4.9.3 HOUSING

The housing owner occupancy rate in the city of McCook was 66.9 percent in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Red Willow County as a whole had a higher owner-occupancy rate compared to the state. Median home value for McCook is higher than the county median, but lower than state median home values. Table 4-5 presents selected housing characteristics for year 2000.

**Table 4-5.** Regional Housing Characteristics.

Area	Housing Units Available	Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Median Value	Median Home Mortgage	Renter-Occupied	Median Contract Rent
State of Nebraska	722,668	666,184	67.4%	\$88,000	\$895	32.6%	\$412
Red Willow County	5,288	4,710	70.6%	\$58,900	\$674	29.4%	\$297
City of McCook	3,754	3,371	66.9%	\$62,100	\$659	33.1%	\$398

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

#### 4.9.4 PUBLIC SERVICES

McCook has a combination fire department comprised of city-employed and volunteer firefighters. The Fire Department has a full-time fire chief, seven full-time firefighters, a full-time administrative assistant, and 24 volunteer firefighter/EMS providers. Six of the full-time firefighters, the fire chief, and three of the volunteers are also paramedics. The EMS response area supports the Kansas-Nebraska border to approximately 16 miles north of McCook.

The McCook Police Department has police officers and civilian personnel. The Law Enforcement Division serves the community 24 hours every day, seven days a week, performing all basic police services, investigations, field operations; assisting in fire and ambulance response and community security and operating a 96-hour jail holding facility. The division is staffed with one Police Chief, four patrol sergeants, two detectives, eight patrol officers, one school resource officer, and one part-time contracted airport security officer.

McCook has one hospital, McCook Community Hospital, located at 1301 East H Street, McCook, Nebraska. Other hospitals/medical centers near the project area include Decatur County Hospital (about 27 miles away in Oberlin, Kansas), Tri Valley Health System (about 32 miles away in Cambridge, Nebraska), and Rawlins County Hospital (about 39 miles away in Atwood, Kansas).

#### 4.9.5 PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Because children may suffer disproportionately from environmental health risks and safety risks, EO 13045, *Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks*, was issued on April 21, 1997. EO 13045 was intended to prioritize the identification and assessment of environmental health risks and safety risks that may affect children and to ensure that Federal agencies' policies, programs, activities, and standards address environmental risks and safety risks to children.

The percentage of the population under 18 years of age for McCook and Red Willow County is less than the percentage in the state as a whole. Red Willow County and the city of McCook have roughly the same percentage of population under 18 years of age (see Table 4-6).

**Table 4-6.** Total Population Versus Population Under Age 18.

Area	Total Population	Population Under 18	% Population under 18
State of Nebraska	1,711,265	450,242	26.3
Red Willow County	11,448	2,847	24.9
City of McCook	7,994	1,929	24.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

There are five elementary/middle schools, and two public high schools in McCook, Nebraska. There is also one private elementary school. McCook has two institutes of higher learning, including McCook Community College and the McCook Beauty Academy. All of the schools are located more than 1 mile away from the McCook Regional Airport Site.

The McCook Parks and Recreation Department provides golf courses, sports fields, arenas, and six recreation parks. McCook is in the center of four southwest Nebraskan reservoirs and State recreation areas. Recreational activities include water skiing, swimming and boating, hunting, fishing, and camping at these locations year-round. Additionally, McCook has unique historical attractions available to the public. None of these recreational areas are within a 1-mile radius of the McCook Regional Airport Site.

## 4.10 Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is the fair treatment for people of all races, cultures, and incomes, regarding the development and implementation (or lack thereof) of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. EO 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations*, directs Federal agencies to address environmental and human health conditions in minority and low-income communities. A memorandum from former President Clinton concerning EO 12898 stated that Federal agencies would collect and analyze information concerning a project's impacts on minorities or low-income groups when required by NEPA. If such investigations find that minority or low-income groups experience a disproportionate adverse impact, then avoidance or mitigation measures are necessary. This section describes the distribution of minority and low-income populations for Red Willow County and the city of McCook.

### 4.10.1 GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF MINORITY POPULATIONS

Based upon the 2000 U.S. Census, populations in Red Willow County and the city of McCook are comprised of a low percentage of minorities, which is significantly lower than the overall Nebraska percentage of minorities. The project site is located in the city of McCook, which has a minority population similar to that of Red Willow County. Table 4-7 presents regional demographics by race. For the city of McCook, the major reported ancestries include German (42.5 percent), Irish (14 percent), English (13.6 percent), and 'Other' ancestries (6.8 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

**Table 4-7.** Regional Population by Race.

<b>Area</b>	<b>All Individuals</b>	<b>White (%)</b>	<b>African-American (%)</b>	<b>American Indian and Alaska Native (%)</b>	<b>Asian or Pacific Islander (%)</b>	<b>Other Race (%)</b>	<b>Hispanic or Latino*</b>
State of Nebraska	1,711,265	89.6	4.0	0.9	1.3	2.8	5.5
Red Willow County	11,448	97.5	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.9	2.5
City of McCook	7,994	97.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.9	2.5

\* Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

#### **4.10.2 GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS**

Detailed information regarding income for the city of McCook residents, as determined from the 2000 U.S. Census, is provided in Table 4-3. In 2000, 9.4 percent of residents in the city of McCook were at or below the poverty level, which is slightly lower than the percentage of Red Willow County residents living in poverty (9.6 percent). In 2000, the poverty guideline for a family of four was an annual income of \$17,050 in the 48 contiguous states and Washington, D.C.; for a family of three, it was \$14,150. The national rate for people living in poverty was 12.4 percent in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

As shown in Table 4-3, the median household income within the city of McCook was lower than both Red Willow County and the state median income. In addition, unemployment rate was lower in McCook than the state, but slightly higher than the county's unemployment rate.

### **4.11 Infrastructure**

This section describes both utilities and the existing transportation conditions at and surrounding the McCook Regional Airport Site. In general, the utility systems are classified as distribution and collection systems, including electrical, natural gas, telecommunications, potable water, sanitary sewer, storm drainage, and solid waste disposal.

#### **4.11.1 ENERGY SOURCES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

Electrical power to McCook is provided by Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) which is both the electric system operator and wholesale supplier. Power is delivered to McCook via McCook's 115,000 volt [115 kilovolt (kV)] transmission system. The 115 kV transmission service is stepped down to 69 kV and distributed to five substations circling McCook.

Natural gas service to McCook is supplied by SourceGas Distribution, LLC through two transmission pipelines (4 inch and 6 inch) at approximately 800 pounds per square inch

(psi) (NPPD 2008). Liquid propane and fuel oil are available in McCook from several local oil companies and one cooperative.

Telecommunications services, including ISDN and Frame Relay are provided to McCook by Pinpoint Communications and Qwest Communications. Long distance service to McCook is available from all major service providers. Internet service is provided to McCook by several commercial providers (NPPD 2008).

#### **4.11.2 POTABLE WATER SUPPLY, WASTEWATER TREATMENT, STORM WATER SYSTEM, AND SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL**

Potable water is supplied by the city of McCook municipal water system. The system consists of eight groundwater supply wells, ion exchange treatment system, storage, and distribution system which serves 100 percent of McCook's population. Treatment system capacity is 6,800,000 gallons per day (GPD). Storage capacity of the McCook municipal water system is 6,000,000 gallons. Peak pumping capacity to McCook from the treatment system is 4,722 gallons per minute. Average system demand is 2,390,000 GPD, and peak demand is 5,300,000 GPD. System static water pressure varies from approximately 40 to 80 psi with a residual pressure of approximately 50 psi. The water supply undergoes chlorine disinfection prior to distribution (NPPD 2008).

Wastewater collection and treatment is provided by the city of McCook municipal treatment system which serves approximately 95 percent of McCook's population. Treatment is accomplished by biological treatment with ultraviolet light disinfection prior to discharge to the Republican River. Treatment system capacity is 1,750,000 GPD, with current flows approximately 1,000,000 GPD. System flows are modeled to monitor and determine localized system flows, allowing the city to address current and expected future system flows and capacity (NPPD 2008). The city of McCook operates the storm water collection system.

Solid waste collection and recycling services are provided by the city of McCook or are available through local commercial haulers. Collected waste is hauled 103 miles northwest to the J Bar Land, Inc. Landfill, a permitted municipal solid waste landfill in Ogallala, Nebraska (NPPD 2008). For the period of July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008, the average quarterly volume of waste disposed of in the J Bar Land, Inc. Landfill was 26,464 tons (NDEQ 2009). The J Bar Land, Inc. Landfill is privately owned and has a remaining lifespan of 20 years (NPPD 2007).

#### **4.11.3 TRANSPORTATION**

The principal four-lane arteries for travel to and from McCook, Nebraska are U.S. Highways 6/34 (east-west), and 83 (north-south) (NDOR 1997). Interstate 80 is accessible 65 miles to the north and Interstate 70 is accessible 80 miles to the south of McCook. The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) maintains a district headquarters in McCook; including a fleet of maintenance and snow and ice control equipment. The most recent available NDOR traffic count data from 2007 indicates an average daily traffic count of approximately 3,740 on U.S. Highway 6/34 east of U.S. Highway 83. The average daily traffic count on U.S. Highway 6/34 west of U.S. Highway 83 was

approximately 4,580 for the same period. Average daily traffic flow on U.S. Highway 83 was 2,540 north of U.S. Highway 6/34 and 2,915 south of U.S. Highway 6/34 (NDOR 2007).

BNSF Railway Company services McCook with an average of 14 to 17 freight trains daily on its main line. Daily passenger rail service is provided to McCook by Amtrak, with service east to Chicago and west to Denver and San Francisco/Oakland.

Many licensed motor carriers are based in Nebraska, serving businesses throughout the United States, with worldwide connections. Locally, Don Hagan & Sons Trucking is located 10 miles west of McCook. The company offers short- and long-haul service to the lower 48 states.

The McCook Regional Airport is located in McCook, providing air transportation via daily flights with Great Lakes Aviation, Ltd. The nearest international airports are Omaha Eppley International (292 miles), Kansas City International (395 miles), and Denver International (257 miles).

Bus service by Dashabout Roadrunner provides daily trips to Denver, Lincoln, and Omaha. Dial-a-ride public transportation within the city of McCook is provided by McCook Public Transit System. Local or long distance taxi service in McCook is provided by High Plains Cab Service. High Plains Cab Service also provides courier service and parcel delivery.

## **4.12 Hazardous and Toxic Substances**

This section describes the existing conditions of hazardous and toxic substances at and in the vicinity of the McCook Regional Airport Site.

### **4.12.1 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

Hazardous materials are those useable corrosive, toxic, flammable, and reactive materials that, when spilled or released, are dangerous to public health or the environment. Hazardous materials are required to be handled, managed, treated, or stored properly by trained personnel under the following regulations: Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials, 49 CFR 172.101; EPA, 40 CFR 260 et seq.; and Occupational Safety and Health Administration Hazardous Communication, 29 CFR 1900.1200 and 29 CFR 1926.59.

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was completed to assist the NEARNG and USAR in evaluating environmental risk relative to the McCook Regional Airport Site, McCook, Nebraska. The assessment was conducted in conformance with American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standards for Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ASTM E 1527-05). The assessment included environmental regulatory records review, visual site inspection of the McCook Regional Airport Site, and interviews with applicable persons. Relevant issues included site history, adjacent properties and their potential impact on the McCook Regional Airport Site, above and underground storage tanks (AST and UST), CERCLA/ Comprehensive Environmental

Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) involvement and spills, presence of asbestos-containing materials, radon, polychlorinated byphenyls, lead-based paint, lead in drinking water, wetlands, un-exploded ordnances, use of pesticides, and environmental impact studies. Radon findings are discussed in Section 4.3 of this EA.

The Phase I Environmental Site Assessment noted there were no ASTs or USTs on the site; however two USTs were identified approximately 0.25 mile north-northwest of the site at Red Willow Aviation Spraying, Inc. Both USTs are in use and include one 10,000-gallon gasoline and one 10,000-gallon jet fuel UST. Twenty-seven unmapped sites were identified in the vicinity of the McCook Regional Airport Site, but were determined to be outside the ASTM standard search distance. Although no wells were identified on the McCook Regional Airport Site, several groundwater monitoring wells were identified on adjacent farmland to the west of the site. These wells were determined to be associated with the TRW, Inc. TCE plume.

Detectable amounts of lead can be found in the municipal water supply. McCook achieves compliance with Federal Maximum Contaminant Level requirements through operation of the McCook Ion Exchange Water Treatment System (OLSSON 2008).

A recognized environmental condition is the “presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products into structures on the property or into the ground, ground water, or surface water of the property” (OLSSON 2008). No recognized environmental conditions were identified on the McCook Regional Airport Site by the site assessment. Furthermore, there were no historic recognized environmental conditions identified on the McCook Regional Airport Site. The text of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment is provided in Appendix B.

#### **4.12.2 HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL**

Hazardous wastes are generated when substances, usually originating as hazardous materials, are disposed of and are no longer useable or recyclable and exhibit hazardous characteristics as defined by the EPA. Household hazardous waste disposal is available through a Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality supported collection facility maintained in McCook. Commercial hazardous waste transport, storage, and disposal providers serve the McCook area for non-household generators.

## 5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter describes potential impacts for each resource. An impact is defined as a consequence from modification to the existing environment due to a proposed action or alternative. Impacts can be beneficial or adverse, can be a primary result of an action (direct) or a secondary result (indirect), and can be permanent or long lasting (long term) or temporary and of short duration (short term). Impacts can vary in degree from a slightly noticeable change to a total change in the environment.

For this EA, short-term impacts are defined as those impacts resulting from construction, renovation, or demolition activities (e.g., those that are of temporary duration), whereas long-term impacts are those resulting from the presence of new facilities and operation of the proposed new facilities once they are constructed and commissioned for operation.

Significance criteria were developed for the affected resource categories, and for many resource categories, are necessarily qualitative in nature. Quantitative criteria can be established when there are specific numerical limits established by regulation or industry standard. These criteria are based on existing regulatory standards, scientific and environmental documentation, and/or professional judgment. Impacts are classified as significant or not significant based on the significance criteria detailed below for each resource. Significant impacts are those which would exceed the quantitative or qualitative limits of the established criteria, such as actions that would threaten a violation of Federal, state or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment, or that would have adverse impacts upon public health or safety. Impacts do not necessarily mean negative changes, and any detectable change is not, in and of itself, considered to be negative. In the following discussions, to highlight adverse impacts for the decision maker, the impacts are considered adverse unless identified as beneficial.

Potential impacts from the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1) and the No Action Alternative (Alternative 2) are described below for each resource area. The ROI or study area for each resource category is the McCook Regional Airport Site and immediate surroundings, unless stated otherwise in the individual resource category discussion.

### 5.1 Land Use

Considerations for impacts to land use include the land on and adjacent to each Proposed Action project area, the physical features that influence current or proposed uses, pertinent land use plans and regulations, and land availability. Conformity with surrounding land use is of utmost importance. Potential impacts to land use are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Conflict with applicable ordinances and/or permit requirements;
- Cause nonconformance with the current general plans and land use plans, or preclude adjacent or nearby properties from being used for existing activities;
- Conflict with established uses of an area requiring mitigation; or

- Substantially degrade the natural or constructed physical features in the area of the McCook Regional Airport Site that provide the area its character and value as an environmental resource. The magnitude of any impact would be primarily determined by the number of viewers affected, viewer sensitivity to changes, distance of viewing, and compatibility with existing land use.

### **5.1.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Potential impacts to land use from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant even though land use would change under the Preferred Alternative and the impacts, therefore, would be long-term. The site would be converted from agricultural use to industrial use which is still consistent with surrounding land use. Over 95 percent of Red Willow County, or approximately 436,360 acres, are being utilized for agricultural purposes (Red Willow County 2008). The remaining 5 percent is divided between non-agricultural uses, urban areas, local roads and highways and public/recreational facilities within the county (Red Willow County 2008). The main development within the county has been agriculture, including farmsteads, and urban development has been confined to the city of McCook. Red Willow County's Future Land Use Plan calls for use of the land that reflects current land use but is flexible in nature in order to meet the changing needs of its citizens and to encourage expansion of the local economy whenever possible (Red Willow County 2008). When converting agriculture land to another use, the Future Land Use Plan calls for limited development in those soil types which have crop production capacities. The McCook Regional Airport Site contains 68 percent prime farmland; however, conversion of 23 acres of farmland would not significantly impact the surrounding land use and would be compatible with the development around the McCook Regional Airport. Additionally, the 1-mile square area that contains the McCook Regional Airport is already zoned Industrial Heavy, and would be compatible with the Proposed Action site that would fall within this boundary.

Under the Preferred Alternative, there would be an irretrievable commitment of the land resources required for construction and operation of new facilities; this commitment of land resources is irreversible because the land likely cannot be completely restored to its original condition and other uses would be precluded during the time the land is being used for the proposed use. However, land use changes would be more consistent with the surrounding land use of the area.

Potential impacts to visual and aesthetic resources from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. The Preferred Alternative would cause minor short-term visual impacts resulting from ground disturbance and the presence of workers, vehicles, and equipment and the generation of dust and vehicle exhaust associated with construction of the proposed facilities. However, once construction is complete, the reclamation of disturbed areas would remove these visual impacts.

Construction of the AFRC at the McCook Regional Airport Site would result in some long-term visual impacts to the site. Buildings and parking areas would replace agricultural land. However, the AFRC would be compatible with surrounding land use (airport and commercial area); therefore, viewers would likely be less sensitive to the

visual impact of the new AFRC. Aesthetic resources would be considered during the design of the facilities. The AFRC would not be visible from any residential area.

Operations at the AFRC would result in minor adverse aesthetic impacts, including increased traffic and nighttime light on weekends when the facilities are in use. The maximum number of individuals reporting on any given weekend is expected to be approximately 93; only two full-time personnel would commute to the site daily.

### **5.1.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes or impacts would occur to land use.

## **5.2 Air Quality**

Potential impacts to air quality are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Increase ambient air pollution above any NAAQS;
- Contribute to an existing violation of any NAAQS;
- Interfere with or delay timely attainment of NAAQS; or
- Impair visibility within any federally mandated Prevention of Significant Deterioration Class I area.

### **5.2.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Overall, potential impacts to air quality from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. Short-term air quality impacts would occur from construction activities associated with the movement of heavy equipment. Construction activities would be temporary and would occur in a localized area. Contaminants generated from construction would include particulate matter, vehicle emissions, and increased wind-borne dust (i.e. fugitive dust). Best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented to minimize generation of fugitive dust. Within the construction site, appropriate BMPs would be identified that would provide optimum dust suppression. BMPs typically utilize (but are not limited to) either wind speed reduction or water suppression strategies (or both) during construction by fencing or wetting areas of soil disturbance. Vehicular and construction equipment exhaust would be a source of pollutant emissions, but would have a negligible impact on air quality. The emissions from construction activities and workers traveling to and from the site would be minor compared to the existing total vehicular emissions in the area.

Long-term impacts associated with operation of the proposed AFRC training building, flammable materials facility, and controlled waste facility are not likely to occur. No fueling facilities, USTs, or paint booths would be required for the Proposed Action. The standard HVAC system would not significantly contribute to air emissions. The vehicles associated with the use of these facilities by the estimated 93 reservists per weekend would not be expected to result in significant impacts to air quality because the incremental increase in motor vehicle emissions would not increase criteria pollutant concentrations above the NAAQS. Similarly, the emissions produced by the approximately 22 vehicles and 27 flat bed, cargo, and specialty trailers kept on-site would

not be high enough to increase criteria pollutant concentrations above the NAAQS. Because the Proposed Action in Red Willow County, Nebraska is located in an area that is attainment for all criteria pollutants, the Proposed Action would meet conformity rules.

Because Red Willow County and the McCook vicinity are in Zone 1 for radon potential, the potential exists for radon screening levels greater than 4 pCi/L within any building in the region. This estimated radon level is a county-wide potential based on regional factors such as geologic provinces. The Nebraska DHHS has determined that for buildings with long-term radon concentrations between 4 and 10 pCi/L, action should be taken to reduce radon exposures within the next few years. For buildings with long-term radon concentrations between 10 and 100 pCi/L, action should be taken to reduce exposures within the next few months. According to recommendations by the DHHS, radon concentrations can be reduced by sealing radon entry routes into the building, creating better ventilation in any basement, or providing exhaust appliances such as furnaces with their own source of intake air. The DHHS recommends that the most effective method for reducing radon levels is by installing a fan driven ventilation system under a building. These systems remove the radon from below the foundation before it enters the building, draws it into pipes, and exhausts the radon into the atmosphere. Because the structures described by the Proposed Action would have concrete floor slabs, the potential build-up of radon gas would be less than if the structures contained a basement. The Army would incorporate radon-reducing measures into the construction of the AFRC to minimize potential exposure to Army personnel. Radon monitoring would also be conducted on a regular basis.

### **5.2.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes or impacts would occur to air quality.

However, because the radon level described in Section 5.2.1 of this EA is a county-wide potential based on regional factors such as geologic provinces, radon monitoring should be considered at the existing facilities being used by the NEARNG and USAR in McCook. Routine replacement and renovation actions could occur to existing facilities under the No Action Alternative as described in Section 3.3.2.

## **5.3 Noise**

Potential noise impacts resulting from the Proposed Action are evaluated with respect to the potential for:

- Annoyance – noise can impact the performance of various every day activities such as communication and watching television in residential areas. Sound levels that cause annoyance vary greatly by individual and background conditions.
- Hearing loss – one-time exposure to an intense “impulse” sound such as an explosion or by long or repeated exposure to sounds at or above 85 dBA can cause hearing loss (NIDCD 2007).
- Sleep interference, which is of great concern in residential areas.

### **5.3.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Potential noise impacts from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. Minor adverse short-term noise impacts related to the construction of the AFRC and associated facilities would occur. There are no residences adjacent to the site. Short-term noise impacts during construction would include noise from large machinery such as bulldozers, graders, excavators, dump trucks, and cement trucks. This type of construction equipment generates noise levels of about 85 dBA at 50 feet (Hanson et al. 2006). Noise and sound levels would be typical of new construction activities and would be intermittent. Impacts of construction noise could be reduced by employing BMPs, such as confining construction activities to normal working hours and employing noise-controlled construction equipment to the extent possible.

Once the facilities become operational, adverse long-term noise impacts would not be expected from their day-to-day use. Once facilities are constructed, noise would be generated by facility operations and the vehicles associated with these facilities. Aside from negligible HVAC-related noise, the facilities would not generate high levels of noise themselves. During power outages, operation of emergency generators could cause minor, short-term noise impacts. Most noise is usually created by vehicles associated with these facilities, including organizational vehicles used for training and operations, government and private delivery vehicles, commuter shuttles or buses, and personal vehicles used for commuting purposes. Again, however, the noise impact created by facility and vehicle operations would not be significant compared to existing traffic and airport noise.

Under the Proposed Action, approximately 103 personnel would use the AFRC. However, as a reserve center, the majority of these individuals would report to the site on weekends and not all would report on the same weekend. The maximum number of individuals reporting on any given weekend is expected to be approximately 93 and only two full-time personnel would commute to the site daily. This use would contribute negligible amounts of traffic noise to the current noise environment.

### **5.3.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes or impacts would occur to noise levels on or surrounding the McCook Regional Airport Site.

## **5.4 Geology and Soils**

Potential impacts to geology or soils are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Expose people or structures to major geologic hazards;
- Cause substantial erosion or siltation;
- Cause substantial land sliding; or
- Cause substantial damage to project structures/facilities.

#### **5.4.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Potential impact to geology and soils from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. The total site improvements associated with the AFRC would occupy about 25 acres, resulting in approximately 3.25 acres of impervious surface. The impact of this on the regional infiltration at the vicinity of the site would not be significant.

Damaging earthquakes are infrequent in Nebraska as discussed in Section 4.5.1. However, risk from future earthquakes that may result in serious damage as a result of collapsing walls, chimneys of buildings, or other structures should not be ignored. In order to avoid the risks to buildings associated with earthquakes, the state of Nebraska adopted the International Building Code, 2000 Edition (IBC). The IBC was adopted in 2003 and went into effect in January 2004 (Nebraska 2008). The AFRC would have to be constructed in accordance with the seismic requirements identified in the IBC.

The construction of the AFRC would involve excavation, grading, and movement of heavy equipment in the McCook Regional Airport Site. A shallow drainage ditch, approximately 2 feet deep, that runs north-south in the eastern part of the site would have to be backfilled. These activities would disturb the surface soil, thereby increasing the potential for soil erosion by wind and runoff. Wind and water erosion of soil can be mitigated by implementing BMPs. The construction contract would state that BMPs for erosion control, top soil management, and revegetation would be required. Erosion control during construction activities would be undertaken with the use of hay bales and silt fencing, as appropriate, to prevent the movement of soils into low-lying areas, and could also include scheduling construction activities for periods of lowest precipitation. Once the facilities are operational and new vegetation is in place, additional erosion of topsoil would be minimal and would be limited or mitigated through adherence to a storm water management plan.

The construction of the AFRC would affect approximately 23 acres of prime farmland. The NRCS was consulted regarding the prime farmland. The NRCS scored the value of the prime farmland at the Preferred Alternative Site as low, considering zoning, the size of the parcel, and other factors; therefore, no significant impact would occur to prime farmland and no mitigation is required. The letter sent to the NRCS and the NRCS rating form are provided in Appendix A.

#### **5.4.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes or impacts would occur to geologic or soil resources.

### **5.5 Water Resources**

Potential impacts to water resources, including surface water and groundwater are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Irreversibly diminish water resource availability, quality, and beneficial uses;
- Reduce water availability or interfere with a potable supply or water habitat;

- Create or contribute to overdraft of groundwater or exceed a safe annual yield of water supply sources;
- Result in an adverse impact on water quality or an endangerment to public health by creating or worsening adverse health hazard conditions;
- Result in a threat or damage to unique hydrological characteristics; or
- Violate an established law or regulation that has been adopted to protect or manage water resources of an area.

Potential impacts that would be considered significant related to floodplain management include:

- Potential damage to structures located in the floodplain; and
- Changes to the extent, elevation, or other features of the floodplain as a result of flood protection measures or other structures being silted in or removed from the floodplain.

### **5.5.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Potential impacts to water resources from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. There would be no measurable reduction in surface water quality or availability. Additional runoff to surface water would occur as a result of an increase in impermeable surfaces associated with buildings, roads, and parking lots. Storm water collection measures incorporated in the design of the proposed AFRC would direct runoff to a storm water management area for temporary storage and eventual discharge to surface water. If required, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would address the management of runoff water at the AFRC.

Local groundwater recharge would be slightly reduced due to the addition of impermeable surfaces and subsequent reduction of infiltrating precipitation. However, the reduction in groundwater recharge would not have a significant impact on the regional groundwater supply. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative would not result in a local increase of groundwater use, as a groundwater supply well would not be necessary to supply water to the proposed AFRC.

Construction of the proposed AFRC would result in disturbance of ground cover, increasing potential soil erosion due to runoff. Implementation of BMPs and standard construction erosion control measures would reduce potential impacts of eroded soil carried to surface water via runoff, such that they would not be significant.

Activities at the proposed AFRC would not impact groundwater quality beneath or in the area surrounding the proposed AFRC. Potential nonpoint storm water impacts would not be significant with implementation of BMPs, and as should be described in a SWPPP, if required. Point discharges of wastewater are prohibited by existing National Pollution Discharge Elimination System requirements under the CWA. Spills would be mitigated using BMPs or procedures identified in a Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures

Plan, if required, to reduce potential impacts to surface water or groundwater. Therefore, the Preferred Alternative would not impact groundwater resources.

Because the Proposed Action does not entail construction within the 100-year floodplain, there would be no impacts to the floodplains from the Proposed Action, and there are no impacts to the Proposed Action structures caused by building in a floodplain.

### **5.5.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes or impacts would occur to water resources.

## **5.6 Biological Resources**

Potential impacts to biological resources are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Affect a threatened or endangered species;
- Substantially diminish habitat for a plant or animal species;
- Substantially diminish a regionally or locally important plant or animal species;
- Interfere substantially with wildlife movement or reproductive behavior;
- Result in a substantial infusion of exotic plant or animal species; or
- Destroy, lose, or degrade jurisdictional wetlands (as defined by Section 404 of the CWA).

EO 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*, requires Federal agencies to avoid actions, to the extent practicable, which would result in the location of facilities in wetlands.

### **5.6.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Potential impacts to biological resources from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. Although the area proposed for the Preferred Alternative is already zoned Heavy Industrial, the habitat would be altered with the construction of the AFRC. These impacts would be minimal due to the lack of naturally occurring vegetation in the area and the reliance of wildlife on this vegetation.

Wildlife currently using the agricultural crop for forage would be able to find other naturally occurring forage. Minimal short-term impacts to wildlife would result from disturbance from construction of the new facilities. The Preferred Alternative would not cause adverse impacts to any federally-listed threatened or endangered species, for no such species are known to occur on the McCook Regional Airport Site. The USFWS concurred with the assessment that no federally endangered or threatened species would be impacted, nor would adverse modification to federally designated critical habitat occur from the Proposed Action (Appendix A). The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission also determined that the Proposed Action would not cause any adverse effects on resources within the agencies' areas of concern (Appendix A).

## **5.6.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes or impacts would occur to biological resources.

## **5.7 Cultural Resources**

Potential impacts to historic properties and/or archaeological resources are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Physically destroy, damage, or alter all or part of the property;
- Physically destroy, damage, alter or remove items from archaeological contexts without a proper mitigation plan;
- Isolate the property from or alter the character of the property's setting when that character contributes to the property's qualification for the NRHP;
- Introduce visual, audible, or atmospheric elements that are out of character with the property or alter its setting;
- Neglect a property resulting in its deterioration or destruction; or
- Transfer, lease, or sell the property (36 CFR 800.9[b]) without a proper preservation plan.

### **5.7.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

With concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Office, the Army will not complete a Phase I Cultural Survey at the Preferred Alternative site (see Appendix A). The State Historic Preservation Office determined no NRHP-eligible, potentially eligible, or listed historic archaeological properties occur at or near the site. A Memorandum for the Record describing tribal consultation for this EA is also included in Appendix A.

If, during construction, any potential historic or archaeological resource is uncovered or Native American human remains, associated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are discovered, the Cultural Resources Manager for the NEARNG would be contacted, in accordance with NEARNG's typical standard operating procedure from its Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan for the accidental discovery of archaeological resources or Native American artifacts.

### **5.7.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes or impacts would occur to cultural and archaeological resources.

## **5.8 Socioeconomics**

Potential socioeconomic impacts are considered significant if the Proposed Action would cause:

- Substantial gains or losses in population and/or employment; or

- Disequilibrium in the housing market, such as severe housing shortages or surpluses, resulting in substantial property value changes; or
- Disproportionate impacts on children.

### **5.8.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Potential socioeconomic impacts from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. Socioeconomic impacts are discussed below in terms of construction of an AFRC on the McCook Regional Airport Site; and operating the AFRC as a training facility for NEARNG and USAR units.

The economic impacts of the construction phase of the Proposed Action were estimated using the Economic Impact Forecast System (EIFS) model, a computer-based economic tool that calculates multipliers to estimate the direct and indirect impacts resulting from a given action. Changes in spending and employment associated with the construction represent the direct impacts of the action. Based on the input data and calculated multipliers, the model estimates changes in sales volume, income, employment, and population in the ROI, accounting for the direct and indirect impacts of the action. For purposes of this analysis, a change is considered significant if it falls outside the historical range of ROI economic variation. To determine the historical range of economic variation, the EIFS model calculates a rational threshold value (RTV) profile for the ROI. This analytical process uses historical data for the ROI and calculates fluctuations in sales volume, income, employment, and population patterns. The historical extremes for the ROI become the thresholds of significance (i.e., the RTVs) for social and economic change. If the estimated impact of an action falls above the positive RTV or below the negative RTV, the impact is considered to be significant. For this analysis, the ROI is Red Willow County, Nebraska and the change in local expenditures refers to the estimated construction spending for the new AFRC (\$3,760,000).

Based on the EIFS model, the Proposed Action would generate about 23 direct and 18 indirect jobs in the economic ROI during construction activities. This increase in employment would represent a 0.58 percent increase in the region's employment levels and would fall short of the positive RTV of 9.45 percent to make any significant positive difference. It should be noted that the increased employment and any other economic benefits associated with construction would only be short-term and would be spread out over the lifespan of the project construction. The Proposed Action would also generate positive changes in the other economic indicators estimated by the EIFS model, including a 2.07 percent increase in sales volume, and a 0.51 percent increase in regional personal income. However, these increases are not significant because they do not exceed the positive RTVs for their respective categories (8.69 percent and 15.13 percent). The EIFS model output for the proposed BRAC actions at McCook may be found in Appendix C.

Incoming personnel under the Proposed Action would be from one NEARNG unit and one USAR unit. The units to be housed at the new facilities are the NEARNG, Detachment 2 of the 1195<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company, and the USAR, Detachment 1 of the 1010<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Company. Units would be at the new facilities only for

weekend training, resulting in no influx of personnel on a permanent basis into the ROI beyond two permanent administrative personnel. The facility would serve about 103 personnel on a rotating basis, mostly on weekends. The maximum expected use of the new facility would be about 93 members per weekend. On training weekends, reservists would either commute to the AFRC or stay in local hotels. No significant economic impact in the ROI would be expected during the operations phase of the Proposed Action.

Children would not be disproportionately affected, as the McCook Regional Airport Site is not in the vicinity of areas where children are prevalent (i.e., schools, parks, or recreational areas).

### **5.8.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Implementation of the No Action Alternative would result in no construction and no increased revenue through military spending for the general area, and an expansion of the existing facility for other potential joint members would likely not occur. The project area would remain undeveloped and available for agricultural use; however, the site is zoned appropriately for an AFRC. It is likely this site would be developed at sometime in the future.

## **5.9 Environmental Justice**

Potential environmental justice impacts are considered significant if the Proposed Action would cause disproportionate impacts on low-income and/or minority populations.

### **5.9.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Potential environmental justice impacts from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. The city of McCook has a significantly lower percentage of minorities than the state of Nebraska. Given that minority populations are lower than state levels and the percentage of the population below the poverty level is lower than the for the state, no adverse impacts to disadvantaged segments of the population are anticipated under the Preferred Alternative.

Regional construction businesses would likely build the proposed AFRC. Hiring regional businesses that may employ minority and low-income employees would provide jobs for these workers within the region. This would constitute a minor, short-term positive impact to minority and low-income populations. However, the extent of this benefit would be dependent upon the degree to which minority or low-income persons are employed in these activities.

There would be no environmental justice impacts at McCook or in the surrounding area, as impacts from the Proposed Action identified in this EA would not be localized or placed primarily on minority and/or low-income populations.

### **5.9.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes or impacts to environmental justice would occur.

## 5.10 Infrastructure

Impacts on infrastructure are considered in terms of increases in demands on systems and the ability of existing systems to meet those demands. Potential impacts to the environment could occur if the existing systems are insufficient to handle the increased demands requiring construction and operation of a new system. Utility demands include both construction and operations usage. Utility demands during the operations of the Proposed Action are based on the facility square footage and personnel requirements. Transportation impacts are also considered in terms of both construction and operations requirements. Individual segments that comprise the totality of the infrastructure are discussed below.

Potential impacts to the electrical systems are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Change regional electricity demands requiring major new components such as transmission lines, transformers, and substations; or
- Cause long-term disruptions in available electrical services.

Potential impacts to liquid fuel systems are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Cause unsafe, inadequate, or noncompliant temporary or long-term storage or distribution systems; or
- Cause unreliable distribution of liquid fuels that cannot meet the mission and support requirements.

Potential impacts to the potable water system are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Reduce potable water availability;
- Disrupt potable water distribution systems;
- Change water demands that affect regional potable supplies; or
- Generate contaminants that cause negative impacts on water quality.

Potential impacts to the wastewater system are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Cause additional inflow, infiltration, and increased loads on the wastewater treatment that cannot be adequately treated; or
- Change wastewater composition that would alter wastewater treatment processes or consistently cause upsets of the wastewater treatment system.

Potential impacts to storm water conveyance systems are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Cause flow obstructions and increases to the storm water drainage system;
- Accelerate deterioration of the storm water drainage system; or

- Cause long-term interruptions of storm water drainage system components.

Potential impacts to solid waste are considered significant if the Proposed Action would increase solid waste such that it overwhelms local landfills.

Potential impacts to transportation are evaluated with respect to the potential for the Proposed Action to:

- Disrupt or improve current transportation patterns and systems;
- Deteriorate or improve existing levels of service; or
- Change existing levels of safety.

### 5.10.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Potential impacts to infrastructure from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. The new AFRC would be built to LEED Silver standards. The incorporation of green building design principles will help to promote energy efficiency and reduce operational maintenance costs throughout the life of the AFRC.

**Energy Sources and Telecommunications** – Electrical service and natural gas service is readily available throughout McCook and of sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the proposed AFRC on the McCook Regional Airport Site. Extension of the utilities from the site boundary would likely be necessary. Fuel oil is available for the McCook Regional Airport Site; however, it likely would not be required as natural gas service is preferred and available. Telecommunication services are also available throughout McCook to meet the needs of the proposed AFRC.

**Potable Water Supply, Wastewater Treatment, Storm Water System, and Solid Waste Disposal** – Potable water is available throughout McCook of sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the proposed AFRC at the McCook Regional Airport Site. Wastewater collection sanitary mains are available throughout McCook and likely of sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the proposed AFRC at the McCook Regional Airport Site. Storm water would be intercepted by an onsite conveyance system consisting of pipes and ditches or channels and likely conveyed to an onsite retention pond prior to discharge off site. Solid waste collection and recycling services are sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed AFRC.

**Transportation** – Traffic flow along U.S. Highway 6/34 would be minimally impacted by the increased traffic associated with construction and operation of the proposed AFRC, primarily on weekends. The Preferred Alternative would not impact operations of the McCook Regional Airport. Requirements of the lease agreement between the city of McCook and the Nebraska Military Department include compliance with law. Therefore, the NEARNG is required to comply with all applicable statutes, charters, laws, ordinances, building and maintenance codes, rules, regulations, requirements and orders of duly constituted public authorities in any manner affecting the McCook Regional Airport Site.

Specifically, the NEARNG is required to comply with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and McCook Regional Airport required clearance issues and permit requirements. The Property Lease Agreement between the city of McCook and the Department of Administrative Services, State Building Division, an agent of the state of Nebraska, acting on behalf of the Nebraska Military Department identifies the boundaries of the proposed lease property. Care was taken by the city of McCook to match the parcel boundary of the proposed lease property closest to the McCook Regional Airport to what is known as the Building Restriction Line (BRL). The BRL is located 750 feet from the centerline of the main runway and 495 feet from the grass runway. At the BRL, the maximum allowed building height is 35 feet. The proposed AFRC site is approximately 1,000 feet from the main runway centerline. As a result of height restrictions decreasing with distance from the main runway centerline, the building height restriction at the proposed AFRC building will be somewhat greater than 35 feet (Wolford 2009b). The NEARNG will submit FAA Form 7460-I, *Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration* (Wolford 2009a). FAA Form 7460-I must be submitted 30 days prior to start of construction or application for construction permit, if necessary (FAA 1999).

### **5.10.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes or impacts would occur to infrastructure.

## **5.11 Hazardous and Toxic Substances**

Potential impacts to hazardous materials management are considered significant if the Proposed Action would:

- Result in noncompliance with applicable Federal and state regulations; or
- Increase the amounts generated or procured hazardous materials beyond current permitted capacities or management capabilities.

### **5.11.1 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Potential impacts to hazardous and toxic substances from the Preferred Alternative would not be significant. Construction activities would pose minimal adverse impacts due to the potential for spills and leaks from construction equipment. Potential adverse impacts associated with construction would be mitigated by contractor spill management plans and response equipment.

The proposed AFRC would consist primarily of administrative and office areas. Hazardous materials use would be minimal for routine facilities maintenance and would likely be limited to cleaning products, paint, and adhesives. General purpose detergents would be used on the wash platform. Handling and storage of any hazardous materials would follow applicable regulations and label precautions. Facility plans are yet to be finalized, but the vehicle wash platform would likely flow through an oil/water separator (OWS).

Small volumes of hazardous wastes would be generated by operation of the AFRC and could include used cleaning products, unused paints, unused adhesives, and used light

bulbs. Additionally, periodic cleaning of OWS may result in limited amounts of waste oil, waste grease, and heavy sediments. Although no vehicle fluid changes would occur at the proposed AFRC, the possibility of limited volumes of waste fluids resulting from vehicle use is a possibility. Waste vehicle fluids could include gasoline, diesel, hydraulic fluid, antifreeze, and motor oil.

Minor amounts of hazardous wastes generated from the Preferred Alternative would be temporarily stored on site and collected by a contracted commercial transport, storage, and disposal operator for transportation to permitted disposal sites which may include special industrial landfills, hazardous waste facilities, and licensed recyclers.

An emergency standby generator and associated fuel source (diesel or liquid propane) supply would likely be used to ensure continued operation of the proposed AFRC while operating on emergency power.

The Preferred Alternative would likely result in negligible short- and long-term adverse impacts, based on the potential for small spills and the overall use of hazardous materials and disposal of hazardous wastes from the proposed AFRC.

### **5.11.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts would occur to hazardous and toxic substances.

## **5.12 Mitigation Summary**

Mitigation measures are actions required for the specific purpose of reducing the significant environmental impacts of implementing a proposed or alternative action. An EA may specify mitigation measures that, if implemented, would prevent significant impacts that would otherwise require an environmental impact statement. No mitigation measures are required for the Proposed Action discussed in this EA because resulting impacts would not meet the significance criteria described for each resource in Section 5.0; that is, the impacts would not be significant. Additionally, BMPs where applicable for each affected resource, would be initiated to minimize impacts.

## **5.13 Cumulative Impacts**

Cumulative impacts are those environmental impacts that result from the incremental impacts of other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions when combined with the Proposed Action. CEQ regulations stipulate that the cumulative impacts analysis within an EA consider the potential environmental impacts resulting from the “incremental impacts of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such actions” (40 CFR 1508.7). Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively substantial, actions undertaken over a period of time by various agencies (Federal, state, and local) or individuals.

The scope of the cumulative impact analysis involves evaluating impacts to environmental resources by geographic extent of the impacts and the time frame in which the impacts are expected to occur. NEPA requires the analysis of cumulative environmental impacts of a Proposed Action, or set of actions, on resources that may often be manifested only at the cumulative level, such as traffic congestion, air quality, noise, biological resources, cultural resources, socioeconomic conditions, utility system capacities, and others. In order to fully capture the cumulative impacts associated with the Proposed Action, the “checklist” analysis methodology set forth in *Considering Cumulative Effects under the NEPA* (CEQ 1997) was used. This qualitative cumulative impacts analysis is based on the potential impacts of the Proposed Action when added to similar impacts from other projects in the region. The ROI considered for the cumulative impacts analysis is Red Willow County and the city of McCook in particular.

Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions are identified first, followed by the cumulative impacts that could result from these actions when combined with the Proposed Action. Irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources are also discussed in this section.

### **5.13.1 PAST, PRESENT, AND REASONABLY FORESEEABLE ACTIONS**

Like most Nebraska counties, Red Willow County was formed around agriculture and agriculture is the most important enterprise in the county since its establishment in 1871. Heavy immigration west beginning in 1873 quickly boosted populations in cities such as McCook and gave Red Willow County and its population the definition that it has today (Red Willow County 2008). By the 1880s, the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad selected McCook as the site for a division point for the railroads continually westward expansion further expanding the counties’ regional importance (UNL 2005). In 1892, McCook became the county seat. Through the next several decades the county economy declined and boomed from natural catastrophes and World War II respectively. McCook is the major trade center for southwest Nebraska and northwest Kansas (UNL 2005). Major industries for the McCook area include not only agriculture, but also oil, the railroad, and manufacturing (Fritsch 2008).

Past actions in the Red Willow County area were mainly associated with the conversion of farmland into residential and industrial uses; although changes have been minimal. In 1950, 863 farms existed in the county and approximately 458,000 acres were in agriculture (U.S. Department of Commerce 1950). By the 1997 agriculture census, farm numbers had decreased to 438, and the acreage in agriculture production to 451,000 acres in the county (Red Willow County 2008). Only a small percentage of the county is considered prime farmland (Red Willow County 2008). These changes have resulted in long-term adverse impacts to the land use, soils, and potentially the flora and fauna of the county. Large past and present actions in the ROI include but are not limited to: Nebraska Department of Correction Work Ethic Camp; expansion of Valmont Manufacturing (Sughrone 2009); and the development of a new fire and police facility (Fritsch 2008). No new large construction projects or major additions are planned for the city of McCook in the near future (Wolford 2008).

### 5.13.2 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY

The Proposed Action when combined with past projects would result in cumulative long-term adverse impacts to land use, aesthetics, biological resources, geology and soils, water resources, noise, and transportation from the conversion of additional land resources from rural/agriculture to urban and industrial. Cumulative impacts would not be significant as described below.

The conversion of additional land resources from rural/agriculture to urban and industrial would constitute an irreversible impact to land use because the land likely cannot be completely restored to its original condition. The Proposed Action would cause incremental impacts to aesthetics and visual resources as additional natural and agricultural areas would be converted to more developed areas. Incremental impacts to biological resources would occur but would be minimal due to the lack of naturally occurring vegetation in the area. Cumulative impacts would not substantially diminish the quality or quantity of habitat for plants and animals, nor would they substantially diminish regional or local populations of plant or animal species.

Cumulative impacts to geology and soils would result from the addition of impervious surfaces to the general vicinity of the AFRC and conversion of additional prime farmland to other uses, but the impacts would not be significant due to the size of the area relative to average size farms in Red Willow County. Cumulative impacts on ground water recharge from the addition of impervious surfaces also would not be significant since a large portion of the surrounding land still remains undeveloped or in agricultural production.

Incremental impacts to noise and transportation generated from additional traffic in the area would occur; however, traffic as a result of the Proposed Action would be mostly confined to weekends. Cumulative impacts to noise and transportation would not be significant.

The construction of the AFRC at the McCook Regional Airport Site would not cause significant impacts to the resources identified in Section 4.0 and outlined above. The proposed AFRC is compatible with the current land zoning surrounding the McCook Regional Airport and cumulative impacts would not be significant due to the current and near future lack of development in the area. In addition, the Army's decision to use LEED Silver design standards will provide a more sustainable facility and will serve as a model for other new construction projects in the area that may be inspired to consider "green building" features. The incorporation of green building design principles will help to promote water and energy efficiency, reduce impacts to human health and productivity, and reduce operational maintenance costs throughout the life of the AFRC.

Under the No Action Alternative, cumulative impacts would not occur, as construction of the AFRC would not occur. However, construction or conversion of the farmland on this property is inevitable as zoning is currently established around the airport for industrial use.

Environmental impacts for all resources potentially affected by the Proposed Action when combined with the past and present projects in the area are summarized in Table 5-1. No reasonably foreseeable projects were identified.

**Table 5-1.** Potential Cumulative Impacts Associated with the Proposed Action.

Potential Impact Area	Proposed Action	Past Actions	Other Present Actions	Cumulative Impact
Land Use	S <sup>-</sup> , L <sup>-</sup>	L <sup>-</sup>	*	L <sup>-</sup>
Air Quality	S <sup>-</sup>	L <sup>-</sup>	*	L <sup>-</sup>
Noise	S <sup>-</sup>	L <sup>-</sup>	*	L <sup>-</sup>
Soils	L <sup>-</sup>	L <sup>-</sup>	*	L <sup>-</sup>
Water Resources	S <sup>-</sup>	L <sup>-</sup>	*	L <sup>-</sup>
Biological Resources	S <sup>-</sup>	L <sup>-</sup>	*	L <sup>-</sup>
Cultural Resources	*	*	*	*
Socioeconomics	S <sup>+</sup>	L <sup>+</sup>	*	L <sup>+</sup>
Environmental Justice	S <sup>+</sup>	*	*	*
Infrastructure	S <sup>-</sup>	L <sup>-</sup>	*	L <sup>-</sup>
Hazardous and Toxic Substances	S <sup>-</sup> , L <sup>-</sup>	L <sup>-</sup>	*	L <sup>-</sup>

S<sup>-</sup> short-term adverse impact

L<sup>-</sup> long-term adverse impact

\* no impact

S<sup>+</sup> short-term beneficial impact

L<sup>+</sup> long-term beneficial impact

Note: All identified impacts have been determined to be less than significant.

## **6.0 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES AND CONCLUSIONS**

Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the Preferred Alternative and the No Action Alternative have been considered. The evaluation performed within this EA concludes that there would be *no significant adverse impact*, either individually or cumulatively, to the local environment or quality of life as a result of the implementation of the Preferred Alternative, provided that BMPs specified in this EA are implemented. Positive impacts to the local socioeconomic environment would be anticipated. Therefore, the issuance of a FNSI is warranted, and preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required. Implementation of the No Action Alternative is not feasible because the BRAC actions are required by law to be implemented if the Army is able to acquire land suitable for the construction of the facilities.

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*Environmental Assessment for Construction of an  
Armed Forces Reserve Center and  
Implementation of BRAC 05 Recommendations at  
McCook, Nebraska*

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*APPENDIX A*

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**CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION**

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## **APPENDIX A. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION**

This appendix contains Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning correspondence. The following letters sent by the Nebraska Military Department are included:

- Letter to the Nebraska State Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, dated December 17, 2008
- Letter to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS), dated December 17, 2008
- Letter to the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, dated December 17, 2008
- Letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, dated December 17, 2008
- Letter to Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, dated December 17, 2008
- Letter to Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, dated December 17, 2008

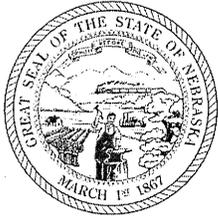
All letters sent by the Nebraska Military Department contained attachments showing the project location and an aerial photograph. Examples of these are shown as attachments to the letter to the USDA NRCS, dated December 17, 2008 which also contained an attachment for the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating form.

All responses received are also included in this appendix.

- Response received from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, including the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form, dated December 30, 2008
- Letter from the Nebraska State Historical Society, dated January 2, 2009
- Email from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, dated March 10, 2009
- Letter from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, dated January 16, 2009

This appendix also contains a Memorandum for the Record from the Nebraska Military Department regarding tribal consultation, dated March 12, 2009.

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
Governor

MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
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December 17, 2008

Jill Dolberg  
Nebraska State Historical Society  
Post Office Box 82554  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68501

SUBJECT: Intergovernmental and Interagency Environmental Planning Consultation for Proposed Armed Forces Reserve Center in McCook, Red Willow County, Nebraska

Dear Ms. Dolberg,

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) and the Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG) are preparing environmental documentation for the proposed Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) near McCook, Red Willow County, Nebraska (**Attachment 1**) as part of the restructuring of military bases recommended by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act (BRAC). The AFRC would be located on approximately 34 acres of undeveloped farmland located south of the McCook Regional Airport and north of Highway 6 on the eastern edge of McCook, Nebraska. The proposed site, known as the McCook Regional Airport Site, is shown in the aerial photograph in **Attachment 2** and does not contain any standing structures or buildings.

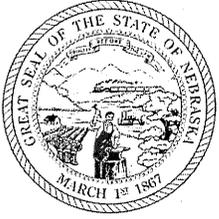
The proposed AFRC training facility (approximately 34,539 square feet) would house one NEARNG and one United States Army Reserve (USAR) unit. It would include administration, education, assembly, library, learning center, vault, weapons simulator, and physical fitness areas for approximately 55 NEARNG personnel and approximately 48 USAR personnel. Outside supporting facilities would include military and personally-owned vehicle parking, a 100-square-foot flammable materials facility, a 300-square-foot controlled waste facility, fencing, sidewalks, outside lighting, access roads, facility sign, and a flagpole. Anti-terrorism/Force Protection (ATFP) safety and security regulation would be incorporated into the facility designs.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) document will evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts associated with the proposed construction and operation of the McCook AFRC, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 et seq.); the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508); and 32 CFR Part 651; as well as the NGB NEPA Manual – *Guidance on Preparing Environmental Documentation for Army National Guard Actions in Compliance with NEPA* (NGB, June 2006).

Information Request: Information you may be able to provide on any of the following environmental issue areas (at or in the vicinity of the project area) would be appreciated:

- Potential environmental concerns or issues;
- Surface and groundwater resources, including streams, wetlands, floodplains, open water features, wells, and local aquifers;
- State or Federally listed threatened or endangered species, or any species proposed for such listing, or critical habitat for such species that may occur within a one-mile radius around the project area;
- Parks, nature preserves, conservation areas, designated wild or scenic rivers, migratory bird habitats or special wildlife issues;
- Natural resource issues;
- Soils and geologic data, including lists of hydric soils
- Prime and unique farmland (Natural Resources Conservation Services only); and

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
*Governor*

MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
Timothy J. Kadavy  
*Director*  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090  
Phone: (402) 309-7210

- Additional environmental, cultural, land use or socioeconomic information or concerns your agency may have with regard to the referenced project area.

Data that you make available will provide input to the NEPA evaluation. As part of the NEPA process, local citizens, groups, and agencies, among others, will have ample future opportunity to review and comment on the information and alternatives addressed in the document.

We look forward to and welcome your participation in this study. If possible, please return on or before **January 16, 2009** to enable us to complete this phase of the project within the scheduled timeframe. Please direct any issues, questions, or concerns to Mr. Dustin Huenink, the Cultural Resources Liaison for the NEARNG, at 402-309-7469 or at:

CFMO Environmental  
ATTN: Mr. Dustin Huenink  
1300 Military Rd  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Thank you for taking the time to review this letter. The NEARNG looks forward to working with you on this and future projects.

Sincerely,

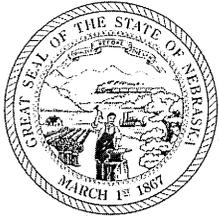
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Vrtiska".

LARRY A. VRTISKA  
CIV, NEARNG  
Environmental Program Manager

## ATTACHMENTS:

- 1 – McCook, Nebraska Location Map
- 2 – Aerial Photograph of the Proposed Site

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



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17 December 2008

Steve Chick, State Conservationist  
USDA/NRCS  
100 Centennial Mall N  
Lincoln, NE 68508

On September 8, 2005, the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC Commission) recommended that certain realignment actions occur at McCook, Nebraska. These recommendations were approved by the President on September 23, 2005, and forwarded to Congress. The BRAC Commission made the following recommendations concerning McCook, Nebraska:

*"Close the United States Army Reserve Center in McCook, NE, and relocate units to a new Armed Forces Reserve Center in McCook, NE, if the Army is able to acquire suitable land for the construction of the facilities. The new AFRC shall have the capability to accommodate Nebraska National Guard units from the Nebraska ARNG Readiness Center, McCook, NE, if the State decides to relocate those National Guard units."*

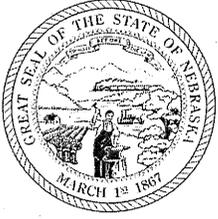
To implement these recommendations, the Army National Guard (ARNG) proposes to construct a new Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) and related facilities at a site in McCook, Nebraska to support the changes in force structure. The project area is located in McCook, Red Willow County, Nebraska, south of McCook Regional Airport and north of Highway 6, on the eastern edge of McCook, Nebraska. The facility would employ approximately 2 permanent full-time personnel, and would serve about 55 Nebraska Army National Guard (NEANG) and 48 USAR personnel on a rotating basis, mostly on weekends. The maximum expected use of the new facility would be about 93 members per weekend, and there would be parking for 84 privately-owned vehicles.

The Army's Preferred Alternative is to construct the AFRC and associated facilities at the McCook Regional Airport site (**Attachment 1**) which consists of approximately 34 acres of irregularly-shaped farmland located south of McCook Regional Airport and north of Highway 6, approximately 1.5 miles east of McCook, Nebraska. The site is currently zoned Industrial. Based on the environmental site assessment (2008), the predominant soil types of the site are Holdrege and Keith silt loam and Uly silt loam. Further preliminary analyses using the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) web soil survey identified the site to be composed of approximately 47.9% Holdrege and Keith silt loam (1-3% slope), 20.6% Holdrege and Keith silt loam (1-3% slope, eroded), and 31.5% Uly silt loam (6-11% slope, eroded). The Holdrege and Keith silt loams represent 27 acres of prime farmland. The other acreage is not considered to be prime farmland.

Although the Farmland Protection Policy Act (7 CFR Parts 657 and 658) exempts urban lands and lands that are used for national defense purposes [7 CFR 658.3(b)] from the provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy Act, we are including a Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form (**Attachment 2**), for your consideration. The purpose of this letter and attached evaluation form is to request input and/or concurrence from the NRCS on the proposed federal action. An aerial photograph is enclosed that indicates the area of the proposed project (**Attachment 3**).

# STATE OF NEBRASKA

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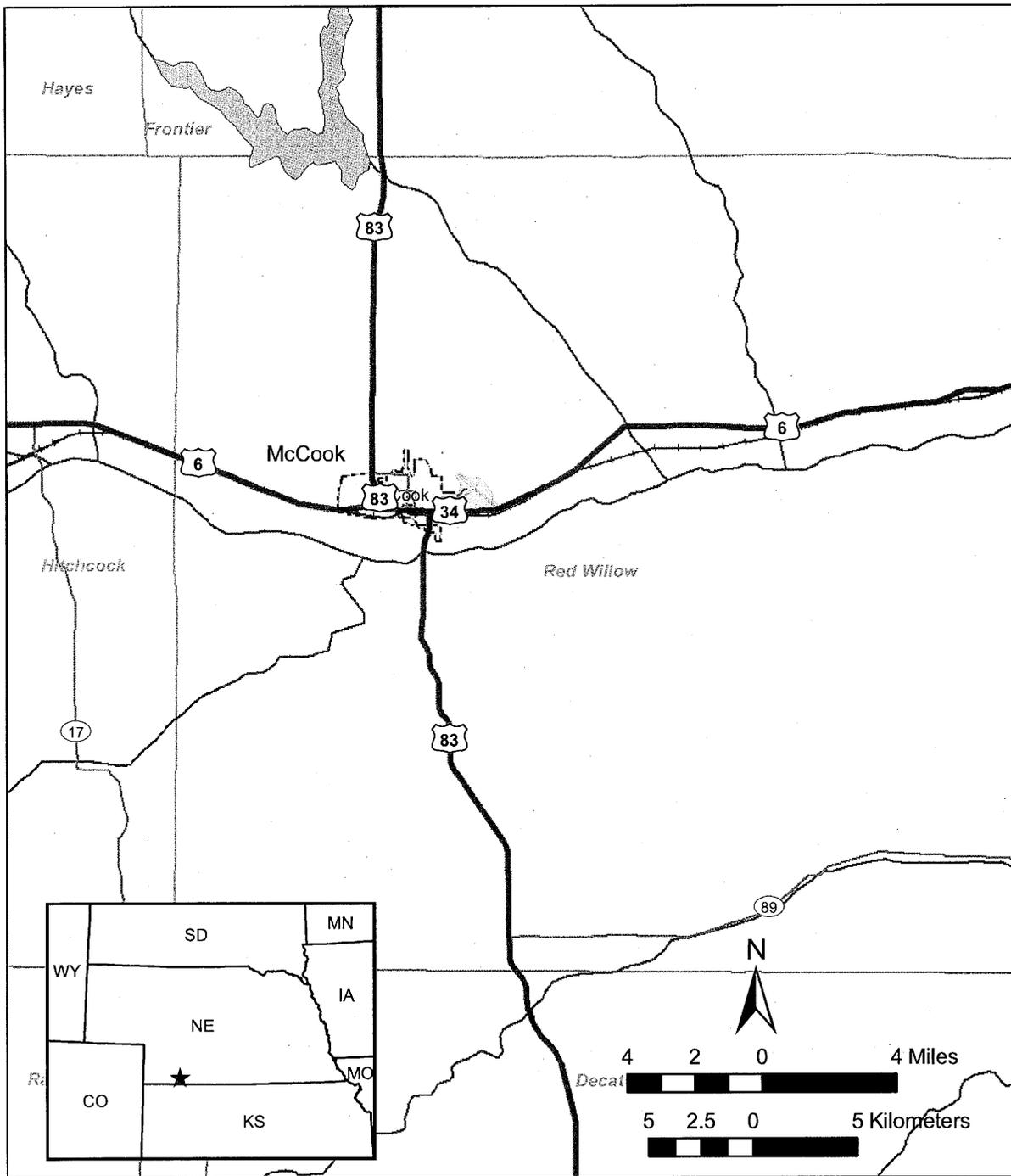
We feel the conversion of the 34 acres at the McCook Regional Airport site is consistent with the Farmland Protection Policy Act and look forward to your assessment. AGEISS Inc. has been contracted by the NEARNG to assist with the environmental documentation. If you have questions or require further information, please contact Ms. Cynthia Bell at (210) 533-5100 or [cyndib@ageiss.com](mailto:cyndib@ageiss.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry A. Vrtiska".

LARRY A. VRTISKA  
CIV, NEARNG  
Environmental Program Manager  
402-309-7457 (Phone)  
402-309-7480 (Fax)  
[larry.vrtiska@us.army.mil](mailto:larry.vrtiska@us.army.mil)

Attachment 1: McCook, Nebraska Location Map  
Attachment 2: Farmland Conversion Impact Rating  
Attachment 3: Aerial Photograph of the Proposed Site



Prepared For:  
 U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

Figure 1-1  
 McCook, Nebraska Location Map



U.S. Department of Agriculture

# FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING

<b>PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency)</b>	Date Of Land Evaluation Request 12/10/08
Name Of Project Armed Forces Reserve Center	Federal Agency Involved U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Proposed Land Use Armed Forces training facility	County And State City of McCook, Red Willow County, Nebraska

<b>PART II (To be completed by NRCS)</b>		Date Request Received By NRCS	
Does the site contain prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland? <i>(If no, the FPPA does not apply -- do not complete additional parts of this form).</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Major Crop(s)	Farmable Land In Govt. Jurisdiction Acres: %	Acres Irrigated	Average Farm Size
Name Of Land Evaluation System Used	Name Of Local Site Assessment System	Amount Of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: %	
		Date Land Evaluation Returned By NRCS	

<b>PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)</b>	Alternative Site Rating			
	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	34.0			
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly	0.0			
C. Total Acres In Site	34.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

<b>PART IV (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information</b>	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland				
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland				
C. Percentage Of Farmland In County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted				
D. Percentage Of Farmland In Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value				

<b>PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Criterion</b>	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
Relative Value Of Farmland To Be Converted (Scale of 0 to 100 Points)	0	0	0	0

<b>PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency)</b>	Maximum Points		Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
Site Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(b))						
1. Area In Nonurban Use	15	15				
2. Perimeter In Nonurban Use	10	10				
3. Percent Of Site Being Farmed	20	20				
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	0				
5. Distance From Urban Builtup Area	15	10				
6. Distance To Urban Support Services	15	10				
7. Size Of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	0				
8. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	10	10				
9. Availability Of Farm Support Services	5	5				
10. On-Farm Investments	20	0				
11. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	10	0				
12. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	0				
<b>TOTAL SITE ASSESSMENT POINTS</b>	160	80	0	0	0	0

<b>PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)</b>	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	0	0	0
Total Site Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	80	0	0
<b>TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)</b>	260	80	0	0

Site Selected:	Date Of Selection	Was A Local Site Assessment Used? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Reason For Selection:

## STEPS IN THE PROCESSING THE FARMLAND AND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

Step 1 – Federal agencies involved in proposed projects that may convert farmland, as defined in the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) to nonagricultural uses, will initially complete Parts I and III of the form.

Step 2 – Originator will send copies A, B and C together with maps indicating locations of site(s), to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) local field office and retain copy D for their files. (Note: NRCS has a field office in most counties in the U.S. The field office is usually located in the county seat. A list of field office locations are available from the NRCS State Conservationist in each state).

Step 3 – NRCS will, within 45 calendar days after receipt of form, make a determination as to whether the site(s) of the proposed project contains prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland.

Step 4 – In cases where farmland covered by the FPPA will be converted by the proposed project, NRCS field offices will complete Parts II, IV and V of the form.

Step 5 – NRCS will return copy A and B of the form to the Federal agency involved in the project. (Copy C will be retained for NRCS records).

Step 6 – The Federal agency involved in the proposed project will complete Parts VI and VII of the form.

Step 7 – The Federal agency involved in the proposed project will make a determination as to whether the proposed conversion is consistent with the FPPA and the agency's internal policies.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

**Part I:** In completing the "County And State" questions list all the local governments that are responsible for local land controls where site(s) are to be evaluated.

**Part III:** In completing item B (Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly), include the following:

1. Acres not being directly converted but that would no longer be capable of being farmed after the conversion, because the conversion would restrict access to them.
2. Acres planned to receive services from an infrastructure project as indicated in the project justification (e.g. highways, utilities) that will cause a direct conversion.

**Part VI:** Do not complete Part VI if a local site assessment is used.

Assign the maximum points for each site assessment criterion as shown in § 658.5 (b) of CFR. In cases of corridor-type projects such as transportation, powerline and flood control, criteria #5 and #6 will not apply and will be weighed zero, however, criterion #8 will be weighed a maximum of 25 points, and criterion #11 a maximum of 25 points.

Individual Federal agencies at the national level, may assign relative weights among the 12 site assessment criteria other than those shown in the FPPA rule. In all cases where other weights are assigned relative adjustments must be made to maintain the maximum total weight points at 160.

In rating alternative sites, Federal agencies shall consider each of the criteria and assign points within the limits established in the FPPA rule. Sites most suitable for protection under these criteria will receive the highest total scores, and sites least suitable, the lowest scores.

**Part VII:** In computing the "Total Site Assessment Points" where a State or local site assessment is used and the total maximum number of points is other than 160, adjust the site assessment points to a base of 160. Example: if the Site Assessment maximum is 200 points, and alternative Site "A" is rated 180 points:

Total points assigned Site A =  $\frac{180}{200} \times 160 = 144$  points for Site "A."

Maximum points possible      200

### Site Assessment Scoring for the Twelve Factors Used in FPPA

The Site Assessment criteria used in the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) rule are designed to assess important factors other than the agricultural value of the land when determining which alternative sites should receive the highest level of protection from conversion to non agricultural uses.

Twelve factors are used for Site Assessment and ten factors for corridor-type sites. Each factor is listed in an outline form, without detailed definitions or guidelines to follow in the rating process. The purpose of this document is to expand the definitions of use of each of the twelve Site Assessment factors so that all persons can have a clear understanding as to what each factor is intended to evaluate and how points are assigned for given conditions.

In each of the 12 factors a number rating system is used to determine which sites deserve the most protection from conversion to non-farm uses. The higher the number value given to a proposed site, the more protection it will receive. The maximum scores are 10, 15 and 20 points, depending upon the relative importance of each particular question. If a question significantly relates to why a parcel of land should not be converted, the question has a maximum possible protection value of 20, whereas a question which does not have such a significant impact upon whether a site would be converted, would have fewer maximum points possible, for example 10.

The following guidelines should be used in rating the twelve Site Assessment criteria:

**1. How much land is in non-urban use within a radius of 1.0 mile from where the project is intended?**

More than 90 percent:	15 points
90-20 percent:	14 to 1 points
Less than 20 percent:	0 points

This factor is designed to evaluate the extent to which the area within one mile of the proposed site is non-urban area. For purposes of this rule, "non-urban" should include:

- Agricultural land (crop-fruit trees, nuts, oilseed)
- Range land
- Forest land
- Golf Courses
- Non paved parks and recreational areas
- Mining sites
- Farm Storage
- Lakes, ponds and other water bodies
- Rural roads, and through roads without houses or buildings
- Open space
- Wetlands
- Fish production
- Pasture or hayland

Urban uses include:

- Houses (other than farm houses)
- Apartment buildings
- Commercial buildings
- Industrial buildings
- Paved recreational areas (i.e. tennis courts)
- Streets in areas with 30 structures per 40 acres
- Gas stations

- Equipment, supply stores
- Off-farm storage
- Processing plants
- Shopping malls
- Utilities/Services
- Medical buildings

In rating this factor, an area one-mile from the outer edge of the proposed site should be outlined on a current photo; the areas that are urban should be outlined. For rural houses and other buildings with unknown sizes, use 1 and 1/3 acres per structure. For roads with houses on only one side, use one half of road for urban and one half for non-urban.

The purpose of this rating process is to insure that the most valuable and viable farmlands are protected from development projects sponsored by the Federal Government. With this goal in mind, factor S1 suggests that the more agricultural lands surrounding the parcel boundary in question, the more protection from development this site should receive. Accordingly, a site with a large quantity of non-urban land surrounding it will receive a greater number of points for protection from development. Thus, where more than 90 percent of the area around the proposed site (do not include the proposed site in this assessment) is non-urban, assign 15 points. Where 20 percent or less is non-urban, assign 0 points. Where the area lies between 20 and 90 percent non-urban, assign appropriate points from 14 to 1, as noted below.

Percent Non-Urban Land within 1 mile	Points
90 percent or greater	15
85 to 89 percent	14
80 to 84 percent	13
75 to 79 percent	12
70 to 74 percent	11
65 to 69 percent	10
60 to 64 percent	9
55 to 59 percent	8
50 to 54 percent	7
45 to 49 percent	6
40 to 44 percent	5
35 to 39 percent	4
30 to 24 percent	3
25 to 29 percent	2
21 to 24 percent	1
20 percent or less	0

**2. How much of the perimeter of the site borders on land in non-urban use?**

More than 90 percent:	10 points
90 to 20 percent:	9 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent:	0 points

This factor is designed to evaluate the extent to which the land adjacent to the proposed site is non-urban use. Where factor #1 evaluates the general location of the proposed site, this factor evaluates the immediate perimeter of the site. The definition of urban and non-urban uses in factor #1 should be used for this factor.

In rating the second factor, measure the perimeter of the site that is in non-urban and urban use. Where more than 90 percent of the perimeter is in non-urban use, score this factor 10 points. Where less than 20 percent, assign 0 points. If a road is next to the perimeter, class the area according to the

use on the other side of the road for that area. Use 1 and 1/3 acre per structure if not otherwise known. Where 20 to 90 percent of the perimeter is non-urban, assign points as noted below:

Percentage of Perimeter Bordering Land	Points
90 percent or greater	10
82 to 89 percent	9
74 to 81 percent	8
65 to 73 percent	7
58 to 65 percent	6
50 to 57 percent	5
42 to 49 percent	4
34 to 41 percent	3
27 to 33 percent	2
21 to 26 percent	1
20 percent or Less	0

**3. How much of the site has been farmed (managed for a scheduled harvest or timber activity) more than five of the last ten years?**

More than 90 percent:	20 points
90 to 20 percent:	19 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent:	0 points

This factor is designed to evaluate the extent to which the proposed conversion site has been used or managed for agricultural purposes in the past 10 years.

Land is being farmed when it is used or managed for food or fiber, to include timber products, fruit, nuts, grapes, grain, forage, oil seed, fish and meat, poultry and dairy products.

Land that has been left to grow up to native vegetation without management or harvest will be considered as abandoned and therefore not farmed. The proposed conversion site should be evaluated and rated according to the percent, of the site farmed.

If more than 90 percent of the site has been farmed 5 of the last 10 years score the site as follows:

Percentage of Site Farmed	Points
90 percent or greater	20
86 to 89 percent	19
82 to 85 percent	18
78 to 81 percent	17
74 to 77 percent	16
70 to 73 percent	15
66 to 69 percent	14
62 to 65 percent	13
58 to 61 percent	12
54 to 57 percent	11
50 to 53 percent	10
46 to 49 percent	9
42 to 45 percent	8
38 to 41 percent	7
35 to 37 percent	6
32 to 34 percent	5
29 to 31 percent	4
26 to 28 percent	3

23 to 25 percent	2
20 to 22 percent percent or Less	1
Less than 20 percent	0

**4. Is the site subject to state or unit of local government policies or programs to protect farmland or covered by private programs to protect farmland?**

Site is protected:	20 points
Site is not protected:	0 points

This factor is designed to evaluate the extent to which state and local government and private programs have made efforts to protect this site from conversion.

**State and local policies and programs to protect farmland include:**

**State Policies and Programs to Protect Farmland**

1. Tax Relief:

A. Differential Assessment: Agricultural lands are taxed on their agricultural use value, rather than at market value. As a result, farmers pay fewer taxes on their land, which helps keep them in business, and therefore helps to insure that the farmland will not be converted to nonagricultural uses.

1. Preferential Assessment for Property Tax: Landowners with parcels of land used for agriculture are given the privilege of differential assessment.
2. Deferred Taxation for Property Tax: Landowners are deterred from converting their land to nonfarm uses, because if they do so, they must pay back taxes at market value.
3. Restrictive Agreement for Property Tax: Landowners who want to receive Differential Assessment must agree to keep their land in - eligible use.

B. Income Tax Credits

Circuit Breaker Tax Credits: Authorize an eligible owner of farmland to apply some or all of the property taxes on his or her farmland and farm structures as a tax credit against the owner's state income tax.

C. Estate and Inheritance Tax Benefits

Farm Use Valuation for Death Tax: Exemption of state tax liability to eligible farm estates.

2. "Right to farm" laws:

Prohibits local governments from enacting laws which will place restrictions upon normally accepted farming practices, for example, the generation of noise, odor or dust.

3. Agricultural Districting:

Wherein farmers voluntarily organize districts of agricultural land to be legally recognized geographic areas. These farmers receive benefits, such as protection from annexation, in exchange for keeping land within the district for a given number of years.

4. Land Use Controls: Agricultural Zoning.

Types of Agricultural Zoning Ordinances include:

- A. Exclusive: In which the agricultural zone is restricted to only farm-related dwellings, with, for example, a minimum of 40 acres per dwelling unit.
- B. Non-Exclusive: In which non-farm dwellings are allowed, but the density remains low, such as 20 acres per dwelling unit.

Additional Zoning techniques include:

- A. Sliding Scale: This method looks at zoning according to the total size of the parcel owned. For example, the number of dwelling units per a given number of acres may change from county to county according to the existing land acreage to dwelling unit ratio of surrounding parcels of land within the specific area.

- B. Point System or Numerical Approach: Approaches land use permits on a case by case basis.

LESA: The LESA system (Land Evaluation-Site Assessment) is used as a tool to help assess options for land use on an evaluation of productivity weighed against commitment to urban development.

- C. Conditional Use: Based upon the evaluation on a case by case basis by the Board of Zoning Adjustment. Also may include the method of using special land use permits.

5. Development Rights:

- A. Purchase of Development Rights (PDR): Where development rights are purchased by Government action.

Buffer Zoning Districts: Buffer Zoning Districts are an example of land purchased by Government action. This land is included in zoning ordinances in order to preserve and protect agricultural lands from non-farm land uses encroaching upon them.

- B. Transfer of Development Rights (TDR): Development rights are transferable for use in other locations designated as receiving areas. TDR is considered a locally based action (not state), because it requires a voluntary decision on the part of the individual landowners.

6. Governor's Executive Order: Policy made by the Governor, stating the importance of agriculture, and the preservation of agricultural lands. The Governor orders the state agencies to avoid the unnecessary conversion of important farmland to nonagricultural uses.

7. Voluntary State Programs:

- A. California's Program of Restrictive Agreements and Differential Assessments: The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly known as the Williamson Act, allows cities, counties and individual landowners to form agricultural preserves and enter into contracts for 10 or more years to insure that these parcels of land remain strictly for agricultural use. Since 1972 the Act has extended eligibility to recreational and open space lands such as scenic highway corridors, salt ponds and wildlife preserves. These contractually restricted lands may be taxed differentially for their real value. One hundred-acre districts constitute the minimum land size eligible.

Suggestion: An improved version of the Act would state that if the land is converted after the contract expires, the landowner must pay the difference in the taxes between market value for the land and the agricultural tax value which he or she had been

paying under the Act. This measure would help to insure that farmland would not be converted after the 10 year period ends.

- B. Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Program: Agricultural landowners within agricultural districts have the opportunity to sell their development rights to the Maryland Land Preservation Foundation under the agreement that these landowners will not subdivide or develop their land for an initial period of five years. After five years the landowner may terminate the agreement with one year notice.

As is stated above under the California Williamson Act, the landowner should pay the back taxes on the property if he or she decides to convert the land after the contract expires, in order to discourage such conversions.

- C. Wisconsin Income Tax Incentive Program: The Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program of December 1977 encourages local jurisdictions in Wisconsin to adopt agricultural preservation plans or exclusive agricultural district zoning ordinances in exchange for credit against state income tax and exemption from special utility assessment. Eligible candidates include local governments and landowners with at least 35 acres of land per dwelling unit in agricultural use and gross farm profits of at least \$6,000 per year, or \$18,000 over three years.

#### 8. Mandatory State Programs:

- A. The Environmental Control Act in the state of Vermont was adopted in 1970 by the Vermont State Legislature. The Act established an environmental board with 9 members (appointed by the Governor) to implement a planning process and a permit system to screen most subdivisions and development proposals according to specific criteria stated in the law. The planning process consists of an interim and a final Land Capability and Development Plan, the latter of which acts as a policy plan to control development. The policies are written in order to:
- prevent air and water pollution;
  - protect scenic or natural beauty, historic sites and rare and irreplaceable natural areas; and
  - consider the impacts of growth and reduction of development on areas of primary agricultural soils.
- B. The California State Coastal Commission: In 1976 the Coastal Act was passed to establish a permanent Coastal Commission with permit and planning authority. The purpose of the Coastal Commission was and is to protect the sensitive coastal zone environment and its resources, while accommodating the social and economic needs of the state. The Commission has the power to regulate development in the coastal zones by issuing permits on a case by case basis until local agencies can develop their own coastal plans, which must be certified by the Coastal Commission.
- C. Hawaii's Program of State Zoning: In 1961, the Hawaii State Legislature established Act 187, the Land Use Law, to protect the farmland and the welfare of the local people of Hawaii by planning to avoid "unnecessary urbanization". The Law made all state lands into four districts: agricultural, conservation, rural and urban. The Governor appointed members to a State Land Use Commission, whose duties were to uphold the Law and form the boundaries of the four districts. In addition to state zoning, the Land Use Law introduced a program of Differential Assessment, wherein agricultural landowners paid taxes on their land for its agricultural use value, rather than its market value.
- D. The Oregon Land Use Act of 1973: This act established the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) to provide statewide planning goals and guidelines.

Under this Act, Oregon cities and counties are each required to draw up a comprehensive plan, consistent with statewide planning goals. Agricultural land preservation is high on the list of state goals to be followed locally.

If the proposed site is subject to or has used one or more of the above farmland protection programs or policies, score the site 20 points. If none of the above policies or programs apply to this site, score 0 points.

**5. How close is the site to an urban built-up area?**

The site is 2 miles or more from an urban built-up area	15 points
The site is more than 1 mile but less than 2 miles from an urban built-up area	10 points
The site is less than 1 mile from, but is not adjacent to an urban built-up area	5 points
The site is adjacent to an urban built-up area	0 points

This factor is designed to evaluate the extent to which the proposed site is located next to an existing urban area. The urban built-up area must be 2500 population. The measurement from the built-up area should be made from the point at which the density is 30 structures per 40 acres and with no open or non-urban land existing between the major built-up areas and this point. Suburbs adjacent to cities or urban built-up areas should be considered as part of that urban area.

For greater accuracy, use the following chart to determine how much protection the site should receive according to its distance from an urban area. See chart below:

<b>Distance From Perimeter of Site to Urban Area</b>	<b>Points</b>
More than 10,560 feet	15
9,860 to 10,559 feet	14
9,160 to 9,859 feet	13
8,460 to 9,159 feet	12
7,760 to 8,459 feet	11
7,060 to 7,759 feet	10
6,360 to 7,059 feet	9
5,660 to 6,359 feet	8
4,960 to 5,659 feet	7
4,260 to 4,959 feet	6
3,560 to 4,259 feet	5
2,860 to 3,559 feet	4
2,160 to 2,859 feet	3
1,460 to 2,159 feet	2
760 to 1,459 feet	1
Less than 760 feet (adjacent)	0

**6. How close is the site to water lines, sewer lines and/or other local facilities and services whose capacities and design would promote nonagricultural use?**

None of the services exist nearer than 3 miles from the site	15 points
Some of the services exist more than one but less than 3 miles from the site	10 points
All of the services exist within 1/2 mile of the site	0 points

This question determines how much infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.) is in place which could facilitate nonagricultural development. The fewer facilities in place, the more difficult it is to develop an area. Thus, if a proposed site is further away from these services (more than 3 miles distance away), the site should be awarded the highest number of points (15). As the distance of the parcel of land to services decreases, the number of points awarded declines as well. So, when the site is equal to or further than 1 mile but less than 3 miles away from services, it should be given 10 points. Accordingly, if this distance is 1/2 mile to less than 1 mile, award 5 points; and if the distance from land to services is less than 1/2 mile, award 0 points.

Distance to public facilities should be measured from the perimeter of the parcel in question to the nearest site(s) where necessary facilities are located. If there is more than one distance (i.e. from site to water and from site to sewer), use the average distance (add all distances and then divide by the number of different distances to get the average).

Facilities which could promote nonagricultural use include:

- Water lines
- Sewer lines
- Power lines
- Gas lines
- Circulation (roads)
- Fire and police protection
- Schools

**7. Is the farm unit(s) containing the site (before the project) as large as the average-size farming unit in the county? (Average farm sizes in each county are available from the NRCS field offices in each state. Data are from the latest available Census of Agriculture, Acreage of Farm Units in Operation with \$1,000 or more in sales.)**

As large or larger:	10 points
Below average: Deduct 1 point for each 5 percent below the average, down to 0 points if 50 percent or more is below average	9 to 0 points

This factor is designed to determine how much protection the site should receive, according to its size in relation to the average size of farming units within the county. The larger the parcel of land, the more agricultural use value the land possesses, and vice versa. Thus, if the farm unit is as large or larger than the county average, it receives the maximum number of points (10). The smaller the parcel of land compared to the county average, the fewer number of points given. Please see below:

Parcel Size in Relation to Average County Size	Points
Same size or larger than average (100 percent)	10
95 percent of average	9
90 percent of average	8
85 percent of average	7
80 percent of average	6
75 percent of average	5
70 percent of average	4
65 percent of average	3
60 percent of average	2
55 percent of average	1
50 percent or below county average	0

State and local Natural Resources Conservation Service offices will have the average farm size information, provided by the latest available Census of Agriculture data

**8. If this site is chosen for the project, how much of the remaining land on the farm will become non-farmable because of interference with land patterns?**

Acreage equal to more than 25 percent of acres directly converted by the project	10 points
Acreage equal to between 25 and 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project	9 to 1 point(s)
Acreage equal to less than 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project	0 points

This factor tackles the question of how the proposed development will affect the rest of the land on the farm. The site which deserves the most protection from conversion will receive the greatest number of points, and vice versa. For example, if the project is small, such as an extension on a house, the rest of the agricultural land would remain farmable, and thus a lower number of points is given to the site. Whereas if a large-scale highway is planned, a greater portion of the land (not including the site) will become non-farmable, since access to the farmland will be blocked; and thus, the site should receive the highest number of points (10) as protection from conversion.

**Conversion uses of the Site Which Would Make the Rest of the Land Non-Farmable by Interfering with Land Patterns**

Conversions which make the rest of the property nonfarmable include any development which blocks accessibility to the rest of the site. Examples are highways, railroads, dams or development along the front of a site restricting access to the rest of the property.

The point scoring is as follows:

<b>Amount of Land Not Including the Site Which Will Become Non-Farmable</b>	<b>Points</b>
25 percent or greater	10
23 - 24 percent	9
21 - 22 percent	8
19 - 20 percent	7
17 - 18 percent	6
15 - 16 percent	5
13 - 14 percent	4
11 - 12 percent	3
9 - 11 percent	2
6 - 8 percent	1
5 percent or less	0

**9. Does the site have available adequate supply of farm support services and markets, i.e., farm suppliers, equipment dealers, processing and storage facilities and farmer's markets?**

All required services are available	5 points
Some required services are available	4 to 1 point(s)
No required services are available	0 points

This factor is used to assess whether there are adequate support facilities, activities and industry to keep the farming business in business. The more support facilities available to the agricultural

landowner, the more feasible it is for him or her to stay in production. In addition, agricultural support facilities are compatible with farmland. This fact is important, because some land uses are not compatible; for example, development next to farmland can be dangerous to the welfare of the agricultural land, as a result of pressure from the neighbors who often do not appreciate the noise, smells and dust intrinsic to farmland. Thus, when all required agricultural support services are available, the maximum number of points (5) are awarded. When some services are available, 4 to 1 point(s) are awarded; and consequently, when no services are available, no points are given. See below:

Percent of Services Available	Points
100 percent	5
75 to 99 percent	4
50 to 74 percent	3
25 to 49 percent	2
1 to 24 percent	1
No services	0

**10. Does the site have substantial and well-maintained on farm investments such as barns, other storage buildings, fruit trees and vines, field terraces, drainage, irrigation, waterways, or other soil and water conservation measures?**

High amount of on-farm investment	20 points
Moderate amount of non-farm investment	19 to 1 point(s)
No on-farm investments	0 points

This factor assesses the quantity of agricultural facilities in place on the proposed site. If a significant agricultural infrastructure exists, the site should continue to be used for farming, and thus the parcel will receive the highest amount of points towards protection from conversion or development. If there is little on farm investment, the site will receive comparatively less protection. See-below:

Amount of On-farm Investment	Points
As much or more than necessary to maintain production (100 percent)	20
95 to 99 percent	19
90 to 94 percent	18
85 to 89 percent	17
80 to 84 percent	16
75 to 79 percent	15
70 to 74 percent	14
65 to 69 percent	13
60 to 64 percent	12
55 to 59 percent	11
50 to 54 percent	10
45 to 49 percent	9
40 to 44 percent	8
35 to 39 percent	7
30 to 34 percent	6
25 to 29 percent	5
20 to 24 percent	4
15 to 19 percent	3
10 to 14 percent	2
5 to 9 percent	1
0 to 4 percent	0

**11. Would the project at this site, by converting farmland to nonagricultural use, reduce the support for farm support services so as to jeopardize the continued existence of these support services and thus, the viability of the farms remaining in the area?**

Substantial reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted	10 points
Some reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted	9 to 1 point(s)
No significant reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted	0 points

This factor determines whether there are other agriculturally related activities, businesses or jobs dependent upon the working of the pre-converted site in order for the others to remain in production. The more people and farming activities relying upon this land, the more protection it should receive from conversion. Thus, if a substantial reduction in demand for support services were to occur as a result of conversions, the proposed site would receive a high score of 10; some reduction in demand would receive 9 to 1 point(s), and no significant reduction in demand would receive no points.

Specific points are outlined as follows:

<b>Amount of Reduction in Support Services if Site is Converted to Nonagricultural Use</b>	<b>Points</b>
Substantial reduction (100 percent)	10
90 to 99 percent	9
80 to 89 percent	8
70 to 79 percent	7
60 to 69 percent	6
50 to 59 percent	5
40 to 49 percent	4
30 to 39 percent	3
20 to 29 percent	2
10 to 19 percent	1
No significant reduction (0 to 9 percent)	0

**12. Is the kind and intensity of the proposed use of the site sufficiently incompatible with agriculture that it is likely to contribute to the eventual conversion of the surrounding farmland to nonagricultural use?**

Proposed project is incompatible with existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland	10 points
Proposed project is tolerable of existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland	9 to 1 point(s)
Proposed project is fully compatible with existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland	0 points

Factor 12 determines whether conversion of the proposed agricultural site will eventually cause the conversion of neighboring farmland as a result of incompatibility of use of the first with the latter. The more incompatible the proposed conversion is with agriculture, the more protection this site receives from conversion. Therefore, if the proposed conversion is incompatible with agriculture, the site receives 10 points. If the project is tolerable with agriculture, it receives 9 to 1 points; and if the proposed conversion is compatible with agriculture, it receives 0 points.

## **CORRIDOR - TYPE SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

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The following criteria are to be used for projects that have a linear or corridor - type site configuration connecting two distant points, and crossing several different tracts of land. These include utility lines, highways, railroads, stream improvements, and flood control systems. Federal agencies are to assess the suitability of each corridor-type site or design alternative for protection as farmland along with the land evaluation information.

For Water and Waste Programs, corridor analyses are not applicable for distribution or collection networks. Analyses are applicable for transmission or trunk lines where placement of the lines are flexible.

(1) How much land is in nonurban use within a radius of 1.0 mile from where the project is intended?

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| (2) More than 90 percent | (3) 15 points         |
| (4) 90 to 20 percent     | (5) 14 to 1 point(s). |
| (6) Less than 20 percent | (7) 0 points          |

(2) How much of the perimeter of the site borders on land in nonurban use?

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| (3) More than 90 percent | (4) 10 point(s)   |
| (5) 90 to 20 percent     | (6) 9 to 1 points |
| (7) less than 20 percent | (8) 0 points      |

(3) How much of the site has been farmed (managed for a scheduled harvest or timber activity) more than five of the last 10 years?

- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| (4) More than 90 percent | (5) 20 points        |
| (6) 90 to 20 percent     | (7) 19 to 1 point(s) |
| (8) Less than 20 percent | (9) 0 points         |

(4) Is the site subject to state or unit of local government policies or programs to protect farmland or covered by private programs to protect farmland?

- |                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Site is protected     | 20 points |
| Site is not protected | 0 points  |

(5) Is the farm unit(s) containing the site (before the project) as large as the average - size farming unit in the County? (Average farm sizes in each county are available from the NRCS field offices in each state. Data are from the latest available Census of Agriculture, Acreage of Farm Units in Operation with \$1,000 or more in sales.)

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| As large or larger  | 10 points     |
| Below average deduct 1 point for each 5 percent below the average, down to 0 points if 50 percent or more below average | 9 to 0 points |

(6) If the site is chosen for the project, how much of the remaining land on the farm will become non-farmable because of interference with land patterns?

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Acreage equal to more than 25 percent of acres directly converted by the project         | 25 points        |
| Acreage equal to between 25 and 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project | 1 to 24 point(s) |
| Acreage equal to less than 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project      | 0 points         |

- (7) Does the site have available adequate supply of farm support services and markets, i.e., farm suppliers, equipment dealers, processing and storage facilities and farmer's markets?

All required services are available	5 points
Some required services are available	4 to 1 point(s)
No required services are available	0 points

- (8) Does the site have substantial and well-maintained on-farm investments such as barns, other storage building, fruit trees and vines, field terraces, drainage, irrigation, waterways, or other soil and water conservation measures?

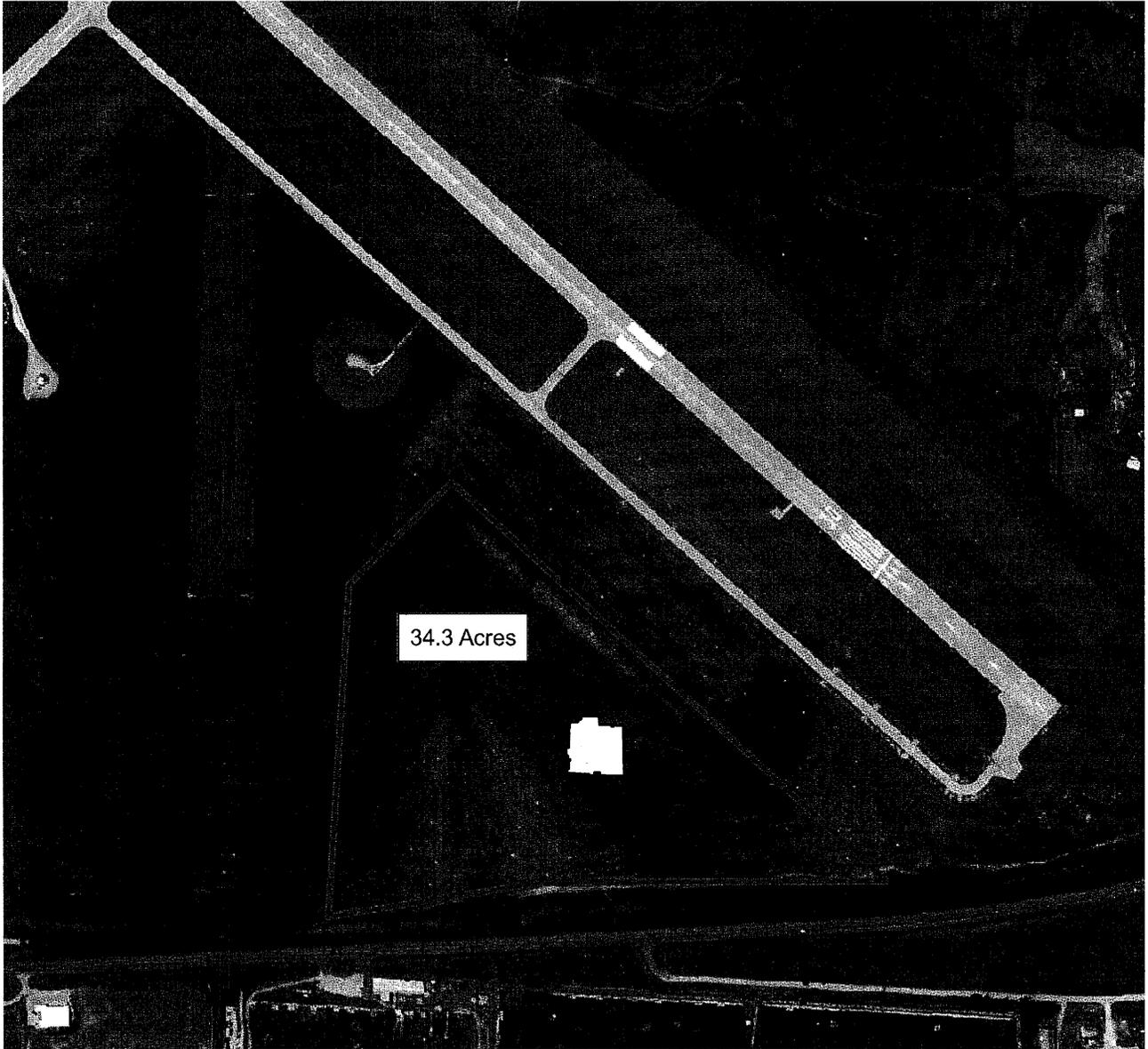
High amount of on-farm investment	20 points
Moderate amount of on-farm investment	19 to 1 point(s)
No on-farm investment	0 points

- (9) Would the project at this site, by converting farmland to nonagricultural use, reduce the demand for farm support services so as to jeopardize the continued existence of these support services and thus, the viability of the farms remaining in the area?

Substantial reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted	25 points
Some reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted	1 to 24 point(s)
No significant reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted	0 points

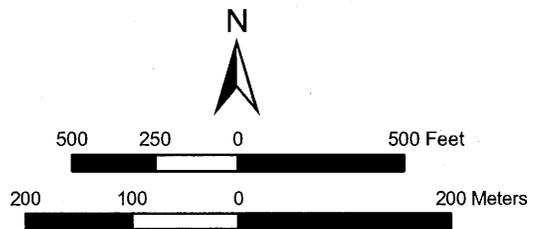
- (10) Is the kind and intensity of the proposed use of the site sufficiently incompatible with agriculture that it is likely to contribute to the eventual conversion of surrounding farmland to nonagricultural use?

Proposed project is incompatible to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland	10 points
Proposed project is tolerable to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland	9 to 1 point(s)
Proposed project is fully compatible with existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland	0 points



**Legend**

-  Approximate Property Boundary
-  Armed Forces Reserve Center



Prepared For:  
 U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

Figure 3-2  
 Aerial Photograph of the McCook Regional  
 Airport Site - Preferred Alternative.



# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
Governor

MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
Timothy J. Kadavy  
Director  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090  
Phone: (402) 309-7210

December 17, 2008

Mr. Francis Morris  
Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma  
Pawnee National Business Council  
Post Office Box 470  
Pawnee, Oklahoma 74058

Dear Mr. Morris,

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) and the Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG) are preparing environmental documentation for the proposed Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) near McCook, Red Willow County, Nebraska (**Attachment 1**) as part of the restructuring of military bases recommended by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act (BRAC). The AFRC would be located on approximately 34 acres of undeveloped farmland located south of the McCook Regional Airport and north of Highway 6 on the eastern edge of McCook, Nebraska. The proposed action would consist of construction of an AFRC training facility (34,539 square feet) and would house one NEARNG and one United States Army Reserve (USAR) unit. The training facility would include administration, education, assembly, library, learning center, vault, weapons simulator, and physical fitness areas for approximately 55 NEARNG personnel and approximately 48 USAR personnel. Supporting facilities would include military and personally-owned vehicle parking, a 100-square-foot flammable materials facility, a 300-square-foot controlled waste facility, fencing, sidewalks, outside lighting, access roads, facility sign, and a flagpole. Anti-terrorism/Force Protection (ATFP) safety and security regulations would be incorporated into the facility designs. **Attachment 2** shows an aerial photograph of the proposed McCook AFRC site.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) document will evaluate the environmental, cultural, and social impacts associated with the proposed construction and operation of the McCook AFRC, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 et seq.); the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508); and 32 CFR Part 651; as well as the NGB NEPA Manual – *Guidance on Preparing Environmental Documentation for Army National Guard Actions in Compliance with NEPA* (NGB, June 2006).

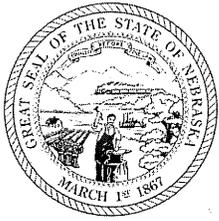
The NEARNG will conduct archaeological investigations at the proposed location for the McCook AFRC to identify historic properties. The investigations are being conducted pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (Section 106) and the (16 USC 470 et seq.), Protection of Historic Properties (36 CFR Part 800), and Army Regulation 200-4 (Cultural Resources Management).

The NEARNG is requesting that you review the attached figures and determine if you would like to be considered a consulting party for the EA process. If so, please notify the NEARNG of your interest as soon as possible. If you are able to identify any historic significance in your review, please provide us with your findings as soon as possible.

If you respond that you would like to be a consulting party, the NEARNG will forward you a copy of the archaeological report and may request to initiate Section 106 consultation based on the results of the report and/or your response to this letter.

As per Army Regulation 200-4 and other state and federal guidelines, the NEARNG will protect information you provide regarding the existence of sacred or religious historic properties and the locations of Native American archaeological sites and will not make that information available to the public during the NEPA or Section 106 consultation process.

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
Governor

MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
Timothy J. Kadavy  
Director  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090  
Phone: (402) 309-7210

We look forward to and welcome your participation in this study. If possible, please respond on or before **January 16, 2009** to enable us to complete this phase of the project within the scheduled timeframe. Please direct any issues, questions, or concerns to Mr. Dustin Huenink, the Native American Liaison for the NEARNG, at 402-309-7469 or at:

CFMO Environmental  
ATTN: Mr. Dustin Huenink  
1300 Military Rd.  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Thank you for taking the time to review this letter. The NEARNG looks forward to working with you on this and future projects.

Sincerely,

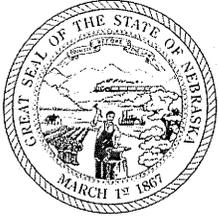
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Vrtiska".

LARRY A. VRTISKA  
CIV, NEARNG  
Environmental Program Manager

## ATTACHMENTS:

- 1 – McCook, Nebraska Location Map
- 2 – Aerial Photograph of the Proposed Site

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
Governor

MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
Timothy J. Kadavy  
Director  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090  
Phone: (402) 309-7210

December 17, 2008

Robert Harms  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
203 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Grand Island, NE 68801

SUBJECT: Intergovernmental and Interagency Environmental Planning Consultation for Proposed Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) near McCook, Nebraska

Dear Mr. Anschutz:

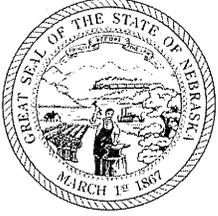
The National Guard Bureau (NGB) and the Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG) are preparing environmental documentation for the proposed AFRC near McCook, Nebraska (**Attachment 1**) as part of the restructuring of military bases recommended by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act (BRAC). The AFRC would be located on approximately 34 acres of undeveloped farmland located south of the McCook Regional Airport and north of Highway 6 on the eastern edge of McCook, Nebraska. The proposed action would consist of construction of an AFRC training facility (34,539 square feet) and would house one NEARNG and one United States Army Reserve (USAR) unit. The training facility would include administration, education, assembly, library, learning center, vault, weapons simulator, and physical fitness areas for approximately 55 NEARNG personnel and approximately 48 USAR personnel. Supporting facilities would include military and personally-owned vehicle parking, a 100-square-foot flammable materials facility, a 300-square-foot controlled waste facility, fencing, sidewalks, outside lighting, access roads, facility sign, and a flagpole. Anti-terrorism/Force Protection (ATFP) safety and security regulations would be incorporated into the facility designs. **Attachment 2** shows the aerial photo of the proposed McCook AFRC site layout.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) will evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts associated with the proposed construction and operation of the McCook AFRC, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 et seq.); the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508); and 32 CFR Part 651; as well as the NGB NEPA Manual – *Guidance on Preparing Environmental Documentation for Army National Guard Actions in Compliance with NEPA* (NGB, 2006).

Information Requested: Any information you can provide on the following environmental issue areas (at or in the vicinity of the project area) is appreciated:

- Potential environmental concerns or issues;
- Surface and groundwater resources, including streams, wetlands, floodplains, open water features, wells, and local aquifers;
- State and Federally listed threatened or endangered species, or any species proposed for such listing, or critical habitat for such species that may occur within a 1-mile radius around the project area;

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
Governor

MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
Timothy J. Kadavy  
Director  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090  
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- Parks, nature preserves, conservation areas, designated wild or scenic rivers, migratory bird habitats, or special wildlife issues;
- Natural resources issues;
- Soils and geological data, including lists of hydric soils;
- Prime and unique farmland (National Resources Conservation Services [(NRCS) only]; and
- Additional environmental, cultural, land use or socioeconomic information or concerns your agency may have with regard to the project area.

Data that you make available will provide input to the NEPA evaluation. As part of the NEPA process, local citizens, groups, and agencies, among others, will have ample future opportunity to review and comment on the information and alternatives addressed in the document.

We look forward to and welcome your participation in this study. Please respond on or before **16 January 2009** to enable us to complete this phase of the project within the scheduled timeframe. AGEISS Inc. has been contracted by the NEARNG to assist with the environmental documentation. Please send your responses to:

AGEISS Inc.  
ATTN: Dr. Wendy Arjo  
5225 Deerfield Park CT, NE  
Olympia, WA 98516

If you have any questions or concerns with regard to this request, please direct them to Dr. Arjo at (360) 628-8748. Thank you for taking the time to review this letter. The NEARNG looks forward to working with you on this and future projects.

Sincerely,

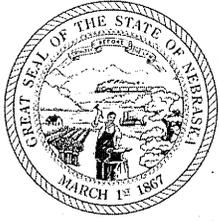
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LARRY A. VRTISKA  
CIV, NEARNG  
Environmental Program Manager

## ATTACHMENTS:

- 1 – McCook, Nebraska Location Map
- 2 – Location of Proposed Site

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
Governor

MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
Timothy J. Kadavy  
Director  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090  
Phone: (402) 309-7210

December 17, 2008

NE Game and Parks Commission  
2200 N. 33<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Lincoln NE 68503

SUBJECT: Intergovernmental and Interagency Environmental Planning Consultation for Proposed Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) near McCook, Nebraska

To Whom It May Concern:

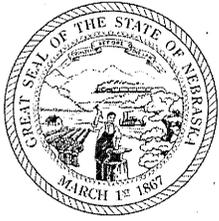
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An Environmental Assessment (EA) will evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts associated with the proposed construction and operation of the McCook AFRC, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 et seq.); the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508); and 32 CFR Part 651; as well as the NGB NEPA Manual – *Guidance on Preparing Environmental Documentation for Army National Guard Actions in Compliance with NEPA* (NGB, 2006).

Information Requested: Any information you can provide on the following environmental issue areas (at or in the vicinity of the project area) is appreciated:

- Potential environmental concerns or issues;
- Surface and groundwater resources, including streams, wetlands, floodplains, open water features, wells, and local aquifers;
- State and Federally listed threatened or endangered species, or any species proposed for such listing, or critical habitat for such species that may occur within a 1-mile radius around the project area;
- Parks, nature preserves, conservation areas, designated wild or scenic rivers, migratory bird habitats, or special wildlife issues;

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
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MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
Timothy J. Kadavy  
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1300 Military Road  
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- Natural resources issues;
- Soils and geological data, including lists of hydric soils;
- Prime and unique farmland (National Resources Conservation Services [(NRCS) only]); and
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Data that you make available will provide input to the NEPA evaluation. As part of the NEPA process, local citizens, groups, and agencies, among others, will have ample future opportunity to review and comment on the information and alternatives addressed in the document.

We look forward to and welcome your participation in this study. Please respond on or before **January 16, 2009** to enable us to complete this phase of the project within the scheduled timeframe. AGEISS Inc. has been contracted by the NEARNG to assist with the environmental documentation. Please send your responses to:

CFMO Environmental  
ATTN: Mr. Dustin Huenink  
1300 Military Rd  
Lincoln, NE 68508

If you have any questions or concerns with regard to this request, please direct them to Mr. Huenink at (402) 309-7469. Thank you for taking the time to review this letter. The NEARNG looks forward to working with you on this and future projects.

Sincerely,

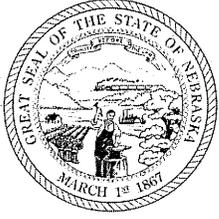
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LARRY A. VRTISKA  
CIV, NEARNG  
Environmental Program Manager

#### ATTACHMENTS:

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- 2 – Location of Proposed Site

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
Governor

MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
Timothy J. Kadavy  
Director  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090  
Phone: (402) 309-7210

December 17, 2008

Director NDEQ  
P.O. box 98922  
Lincoln NE 68509

SUBJECT: Intergovernmental and Interagency Environmental Planning Consultation for Proposed Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) near McCook, Nebraska

To Whom It May Concern:

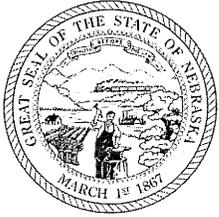
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- Surface and groundwater resources, including streams, wetlands, floodplains, open water features, wells, and local aquifers;
- State and Federally listed threatened or endangered species, or any species proposed for such listing, or critical habitat for such species that may occur within a 1-mile radius around the project area;
- Parks, nature preserves, conservation areas, designated wild or scenic rivers, migratory bird habitats, or special wildlife issues;

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
Governor

MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
Timothy J. Kadavy  
Director  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090  
Phone: (402) 309-7210

- Natural resources issues;
- Soils and geological data, including lists of hydric soils;
- Prime and unique farmland (National Resources Conservation Services [(NRCS) only]; and
- Additional environmental, cultural, land use or socioeconomic information or concerns your agency may have with regard to the project area.

Data that you make available will provide input to the NEPA evaluation. As part of the NEPA process, local citizens, groups, and agencies, among others, will have ample future opportunity to review and comment on the information and alternatives addressed in the document.

We look forward to and welcome your participation in this study. Please respond on or before **January 16, 2009** to enable us to complete this phase of the project within the scheduled timeframe. AGEISS Inc. has been contracted by the NEARNG to assist with the environmental documentation. Please send your responses to:

CFMO Environmental  
ATTN: Mr. Dustin Huenink  
1300 Military Rd  
Lincoln, NE 68508

If you have any questions or concerns with regard to this request, please direct them to Mr. Huenink at (402) 309-7469. Thank you for taking the time to review this letter. The NEARNG looks forward to working with you on this and future projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Vrtiska".

LARRY A. VRTISKA  
CIV, NEARNG  
Environmental Program Manager

#### ATTACHMENTS:

- 1 – McCook, Nebraska Location Map
- 2 – Location of Proposed Site



December 30, 2008

Larry Vrtiska  
CIV, NEARNG

Cynthia Bell  
AGEISS Inc.

I have reviewed the information regarding the Armed Forces Reserve Center; McCook, Red Willow County, Nebraska Project for which you requested review of impacts to prime and important farmlands as per the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA). This review only covers FPPA concerns and does not include any other environmental concerns such as wetlands or endangered species. For general conservation concerns or questions relating to wetlands under the jurisdiction of the Food Security Act, contact your county Natural Resources Conservation Service office.

I concur with your action on this project, and have attached the completed AD-1006 form for your files. No further action is needed for this project.

**Steve Scheinost**  
**Asst. State Soil Scientist**  
**USDA-NRCS**  
**Fed. Bldg. Rm. 152**  
**100 Centennial Mall North**  
**Lincoln, NE. 68508-3866**  
**402.437.4117**



# FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING

<b>PART I</b> (To be completed by Federal Agency)	Date Of Land Evaluation Request 12/10/08
Name Of Project Armed Forces Reserve Center	Federal Agency Involved U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Proposed Land Use Armed Forces training facility	County And State City of McCook, Red Willow County, Nebraska

<b>PART II</b> (To be completed by NRCS)		Date Request Received By NRCS 12/23/08	
Does the site contain prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply -- do not complete additional parts of this form).		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Acres Irrigated 44,528	Average Farm Size 1,129
Major Crop(s) Wheat/Corn	Farmable Land In Govt. Jurisdiction Acres: -- %	Amount Of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: 268,736 % 59	
Name Of Land Evaluation System Used SRPG (Soil Rating for Plant Growth)	Name Of Local Site Assessment System --	Date Land Evaluation Returned By NRCS 12/30/08	

<b>PART III</b> (To be completed by Federal Agency)		Alternative Site Rating			
		Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	34.0				
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly	0.0				
C. Total Acres In Site	34.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

<b>PART IV</b> (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information					
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	27.0				
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland					
C. Percentage Of Farmland In County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted					
D. Percentage Of Farmland In Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value					

<b>PART V</b> (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Criterion Relative Value Of Farmland To Be Converted (Scale of 0 to 100 Points)	92	0	0	0
--	----	---	---	---

<b>PART VI</b> (To be completed by Federal Agency) Site Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(b))	Maximum Points				
1. Area In Nonurban Use	15	15			
2. Perimeter In Nonurban Use	10	10			
3. Percent Of Site Being Farmed	20	20			
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	0			
5. Distance From Urban Builtup Area	15	10			
6. Distance To Urban Support Services	15	10			
7. Size Of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	0			
8. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	10	10			
9. Availability Of Farm Support Services	5	5			
10. On-Farm Investments	20	0			
11. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	10	0			
12. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	0			
<b>TOTAL SITE ASSESSMENT POINTS</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>PART VII</b> (To be completed by Federal Agency)					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	92	0	0	0
Total Site Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	80	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Site Selected:	Date Of Selection	Was A Local Site Assessment Used? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
----------------	-------------------	--

Reason For Selection:



NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1500 R STREET, P.O. BOX 82554, LINCOLN, NE 68501-2554  
(402) 471-3270 Fax: (402) 471-3100 1-800-833-6747 www.nebraskahistory.org

Michael J. Smith, Director/CEO

2 January 2009

LARRY A. VRTISKA  
CFMO ENVIRONMENTAL  
1300 MILITARY RD.  
LINCOLN, NE 68508

Re: Reserve Center  
Columbus, NE  
Platte Co.  
H.P. #0812-065-01

Reserve Center  
McCook, NE  
Red Willow Co.  
H.P. #0812-064-01

Dear Mr. Vrtiska:

A review of our files indicates that the referenced project does not contain recorded historic resources. It is our opinion that no survey for unrecorded cultural resources will be required. Your undertaking, in our opinion, will have no effect for archaeological, architectural, or historic properties. This review does not constitute the opinions of any Tribes that may have an interest in Traditional Cultural Properties potentially affected by this project.

There is, however, always the possibility that previously unsuspected archaeological remains may be uncovered during the process of project construction. We therefore request that this office be notified immediately under such circumstances so that an evaluation of the remains may be made, along with recommendations for future action.

Sincerely,

Terry Steinacher  
H.P. Archaeologist

Concurrence:

L. Robert Puschendorf  
Deputy NeSHPO

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert\_Harms@fws.gov [mailto:Robert\_Harms@fws.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2009 8:04 AM

To: Wendy Arjo

Cc: 'C. Lee Major'; 'Cyndi Bell'; melissar@ageiss.com

Subject: Re: Biological consultation for McCook and Columbus EAs

Wendy:

We have completed our review of the information provided in your E-mail and concur that the proposed projects in Columbus and McCook will not have any adverse affects on federally listed threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification to federally designated critical habitat.

Please call or E-mail me if you have any questions.

Bob

Robert R. Harms  
Fish and Wildlife Biologist  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
203 West Second Street  
Grand Island, Nebraska 68801  
Phone: 308-382-6468, Extension 17  
Fax: 308-384-8835  
[robert\\_harms@fws.gov](mailto:robert_harms@fws.gov)



## Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

2200 N. 33rd St. / P.O. Box 30370 / Lincoln, NE 68503-0370

Phone: 402-471-0641 / Fax: 402-471-5528 / [www.OutdoorNebraska.org](http://www.OutdoorNebraska.org)

January 16, 2009

Dustin Huenink  
CFMO Environmental  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, NE 68508

**RE: Proposed Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) near McCook, Red Willow County**

Dear Mr. Huenink:

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) staff members have reviewed the information for the proposal identified above. The project would involve construction, on a 34 acre parcel, of an AFRC facility that would house one NEARNG and one United States Army Reserve units.

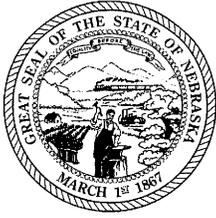
Based on our review, the project as described is not likely to have an adverse affect on resources within our agency's areas of concern, including state-listed threatened and endangered species, other fish and wildlife resources, streams and wetlands, or NGPC properties.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this proposal. If you have any questions regarding these comments, or require additional information, please contact me at (402) 471-5423.

Sincerely,

Carey Grell  
Environmental Analyst  
Realty and Environmental Services Division

# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
Governor

**MILITARY DEPARTMENT**  
Timothy J. Kadavy  
Director  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090  
Phone: (402) 309-7210

NEARNG-CFMO-ENV

12 March 2009

## MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Tribal consultation on NEARNG Columbus and McCook BRAC EA's

The Nebraska Army National Guard Environmental office is currently participating the National Environmental Policy Act process with the proposed construction of two Armed Forces Readiness Centers in McCook and Columbus Nebraska. These Armed Forces Readiness Centers were directed under the federal DoD BRAC guidance. The Omaha Nation and Pawnee Nation were the two tribes contacted based on these federally recognized Native American Tribes having judicially recognized lands in these two counties. Tribal consultation was initiated by mail on 17 December 2008. As of 12 March 2009, NEARNG has received no correspondence from these two tribes.

The POC for this issue is the undersigned at 402-309-7457.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Vrtiska".

Larry Vrtiska  
NEARNG  
Natural Resource Manager

Copy:

Ageiss Inc.

---

*Environmental Assessment for Construction of an  
Armed Forces Reserve Center and  
Implementation of BRAC 05 Recommendations at  
McCook, Nebraska*

---

*APPENDIX B*

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**ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT**

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## **APPENDIX B. ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT**

This appendix provides the text portion of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for the McCook Regional Airport Site.

**PHASE I  
ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT**

**McCook RC PROPOSED SITE  
S 1/2 OF THE NW 1/4, SECTION 15, TOWNSHIP 3  
NORTH, RANGE 29 WEST**

---

**McCook, NE**

**PREPARED FOR  
NEARNG  
USAR**

**APRIL 1, 2008**

**OLSSON PROJECT No. 008-0294**

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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section summarizes the findings of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) conducted for the McCook RC Proposed Site, located north of Highway 6/34 and south of the airport, in McCook, Nebraska.

The Phase I ESA performed for this assessment property has revealed the following:

- The assessment property is currently and has historically been used for agricultural purposes.
- The surrounding land has historically and currently been used for agricultural purposes. Further to the north, the McCook Municipal airport was present.
- No *recognized environmental conditions* occur on or within the assessment property.

This report should be read in its entirety.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

This report was completed on April 1, 2008 and describes the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) performed by Olsson Associates (OLSSON) for McCook AFRC Proposed Site, located north of Highway 6/34 and south of the airport in the south ½ of the northwest ¼, Section 15, T 3 N, R 29 W, in McCook, Nebraska (hereinafter referred to as “assessment property”) (see Appendix A). OLSSON has been contracted to perform this work by the Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG).

### 2.1 Purpose

This ESA has been performed in accordance with American Society of Testing Materials (ASTM) Practice E 1527-05 (ASTM, 2005). The purpose of this ESA is intended to:

- 1) Satisfy one of the requirements to qualify for the *innocent landowner, contiguous property owner, or bona fide prospective purchaser* limitations on CERCLA liability; that is, the practice that constitutes “all appropriate inquiry into the previous ownership and uses of the property consistent with good commercial or customary practice” as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 9601(35)(B).
- 2) Identify *recognized environmental conditions* (REC) and *historical recognized environmental conditions* (HREC) in connection with the assessment property.

The term REC refers to the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products on the property under conditions indicating an existing release, a past release or a material threat of a release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products into structures on the property or into the ground, ground water, or surface water of the property. The term includes hazardous substances or petroleum substances, even under conditions in compliance with regulatory laws.

The term HREC is a condition which in the past would have been considered an REC, but may no longer be considered a REC. One example of a HREC would be a release site that has been remediated to acceptable limits of the responsible regulatory agency.

RECs and HRECs are not intended to include *de minimis* conditions that generally do not present a material risk of harm to the public health or the environment and that generally would not be the subject of an enforcement action if brought to the attention of appropriate governmental agencies (ASTM, 2005).

## **2.2 Detailed Scope-of-Services**

The scope-of-services for this ESA include the following four major components to identify *RECs* and *HRECs* in connection with the assessment property, to the extent feasible pursuant to ASTM Practice E 1527-05.

### *2.2.1 Records Review*

Review of physical setting sources;  
Review of federal and state environmental records;  
Review of historical information.

### *2.2.2 Site Reconnaissance*

Conduct a walk-through of the assessment property;  
Document site setting, land use of assessment property and adjoining properties;  
Documented site reconnaissance with photographs.

### *2.2.3 Interviews*

Interview current landowner, occupant, and others as applicable;  
Interview local government officials;

### *2.2.4 Report-of-Findings*

The findings of the records review, site reconnaissance, and interviews are documented herein (this report).

Additional services beyond the scope of ASTM 1527-05 include a review of environmental liens as requested by the client in addition to a preliminary evaluation of the presence of asbestos containing materials, radon, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), lead-based paint, lead in drinking water, wetlands, known occurrences of un-exploded ordinances (UXO), use of pesticides, environmental impact studies, and requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

## **2.3 Significant Assumptions**

OLSSON's conclusions regarding the assessment property are based on observations of existing site conditions conducted on February 27, 2008, regulatory search, our interpretation of site history, and site usage information. Site history and usage information is obtained primarily from the current landowner, previous landowner(s), and occupants through verbal and/or written communication. Our interpretation assumes that landowners are providing truthful and accurate information to OLSSON.

## **2.4 Limitations and Exceptions**

Conclusions regarding the condition of the site do not represent that all areas within the site and within or beneath structures are of the same quality as may be inferred from observable site conditions and readily-available site history. The provided information is prepared to be responsive to the requirements of CERCLA (42 U.S.C. § 9601, et. seq.). No other warranty, expressed or implied, is given. If additional information becomes available concerning this site, it should be provided to OLSSON so that our conclusions and recommendations may be reviewed and modified as necessary.

The results of this study must be further qualified by the fact that no soil and/or ground water sampling has been conducted by OLSSON. An evaluation of business environmental risk associated with a parcel of commercial real estate would require investigation beyond that identified in the scope of work.

## 2.5 Special Terms and Conditions

Per ASTM 1527-05 the contents of this report are valid provided the records review, site reconnaissance, and declaration of the environmental professional are performed within 180 days of the date of purchase or the date of intended transaction.

## 2.6 User Reliance

This report-of-findings has been prepared for and maybe relied upon by NEARNG and United States Army Reserve (USAR). The contents of this report may be conveyed to an affiliate, related entity, subsidiary, lender, title insurer, regulatory/city agency or current property owner(s) and their agents, but further dissemination requires prior written approval of OLSSON.

## 3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 3.1 Location and Legal Description

The assessment property lies south of the McCook Regional Airport on the eastern edge of McCook, Nebraska. Please refer to the Location Map and Site Map in Appendix A. The property did not have a physical street address at the time of the site reconnaissance, as it was used for agricultural purposes.

The legal description for the assessment property is as follows:

The South Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 27, Township 3 North, Range 29 West of the 6<sup>th</sup> Prime Meridian, Red Willow County, Nebraska, EXCEPT that part taken by the State of Nebraska by Return of appraisers, in Book 86, Page 528.

### 3.2 Site and Vicinity General Characteristics

The Location Map (Appendix A) indicates that the assessment generally slopes to the south. The assessment property has a ditch in the central portion of the site which is the likely drainage path for the property. The elevations of the site range from 2,600 feet above sea level (ASL) on the northwestern portion of the site to 2,510 ASL on the south-central portion of the property.

No water bodies were noted on-site. Kelley Creek was located approximately 1,200 feet to the south and generally flows to the south-southeast to the Republican River. Based upon topography, the assumed ground water flow direction in the vicinity of the assessment property would be south-southeast. Without having specific information such as on-site ground water measurements the depth to ground water and the flow direction cannot be directly determined.

The site appeared to lie in a mixed agricultural and commercial setting. Commercial properties were to the north of the assessment property, while the site lies within an agricultural area. The zip code for the assessment property and 1-mile radius of the assessment property was 69001.

### 3.3 Current Use of the Assessment Property

The assessment property is used for dry land crop production. The property was occupied by Milo stubble at the time of the site reconnaissance.

### 3.4 Description of Improvements on the Assessment Property

There were no improvements noted at the assessment property at the time of the site reconnaissance. The site can be accessed through the McCook Regional Airport.

### 3.5 Current Uses of the Adjoining Properties

Property uses adjacent to the assessment property include:

North: Undeveloped Agricultural Land, McCook Regional Airport

East: Undeveloped Agricultural Land, McCook Regional Airport

South: Undeveloped Agricultural Land, Highway 6/34, cattle feedlot

West: Undeveloped Agricultural Land, Trichloroethylene (TCE) remediation building

#### 4.0 USER PROVIDED INFORMATION

Mr. Clayton Stryker, Master Planner with Nebraska Army National Guard, user representative of this report, completed a user questionnaire for the assessment property. The completed questionnaire is provided in Appendix B. The responses to the questionnaire are summarized in the following sections.

##### 4.1 Title Records, Environmental Liens, and Activity and Use Limitations

Mr. Stryker indicated that he was not aware of any environmental cleanup liens or activity and use limitations for the assessment property. He indicated since this area was near the McCook Regional Airport, it is assumed there are airspace and zoning regulations in place that will affect this facility.

As part of the scope of work for this assessment, the user requested OLSSON to perform a title search for environmental liens and activity and use limitations. The results of the search are described in Section 5.2.

##### 4.2 Specialized Knowledge

Mr. Stryker, to the best of his knowledge, indicated he does not have any specialized knowledge or experience of the property that is material to determining *recognized environmental conditions* in connection with the assessment property.

Mr. Dustin Heunink, CPMO, with the NEARNG, provided OLSSON with copies of several reports which are summarized below: copies of this report are presented as part of Appendix B.

- Agreement between TRW, Inc. and the City of McCook for the discharge of treated ground water, dated July 11, 1994.
  - This is a permit to discharge treated wastewater from the operation of a ground water remediation system located north of Highway 6/34, on the east side of Airport Road. This system is used to remove TCE from ground water beneath the former TRW plant.

The agreement read that treated water will be discharged into the City of McCook's sewer system. No TCE free product will be allowed be discharged into the sewer system.
- Ogallala Aquifer Ground Water Remediation Progress Report, dated October 3, 1994.
  - This report describes the construction, operation and performance status of the ground water treatment facility for the TRW site. It indicated that the TCE concentrations are following a decreasing trend from samples collected in January 1993 to December 1993.
- ANI-530/580-05-02, Finding of No Significant Impact, for the Installation of a Localizer/Distance Measuring Equipment Facility and a Glide Slope Facility of the Instrument Landing System, Runway 12, McCook Municipal Airport, McCook, Nebraska.
  - This report indicates that an Environmental Assessment conducted for the installation and operation of the facility in the proposed area had a Finding of No Significant Impact.
- In-Situ Soil Gas Survey, Prepared for Valley Pork, McCook, Nebraska.

- This report was prepared by ATC Environmental with Plains Environmental to determine if TCE contamination from the TRW facility has impacted the soil and/or ground water in the location that Valley Pork Company's property.

As part of this investigation ATC used a geoprobe to install soil borings to collect soil gas samples for analysis using an on-site laboratory. This report did not include a map of the Valley Pork Company's site in relation to other streets or notable structures, to enable OLSSON to determine the location of Valley Pork Site in relation to the assessment property. The laboratory analysis did indicate no traces of TCE in the soil or water.

- McCook RC Proposed Site Map with TCE Overlay
  - This map was created by NEARNG by overlaying a TRW TCE Isoconcentration Map from samples collected in October 2002 in relation to the proposed site location. This map indicates that the suspected assessment property is approximately 1,250 feet east of the TCE Plume contour line for 10  $\mu\text{g/L}$  TCE. The plume originates approximately 0.75 miles west of the assessment property. The plume generally trends from northwest to southeast. Based on the plume orientation, groundwater flow direction is expected to be to the southeast, making the assessment property cross-gradient from the release area and estimated plume.

The TRW facility and associated contaminant plume are further discussed in Section 5.2.2.

#### **4.3 Valuation Reduction for Environmental Issues**

According to Mr. Stryker, he was not aware of the price of the property.

#### **4.4 Commonly Known or Reasonably Ascertainable Information**

Mr. Stryker was not aware of the past uses of the property.

#### **4.5 Owner, Property Manager, and Occupant Information**

Mr. Stryker was not aware of property owner, property manager, and occupant information.

#### **4.6 Reason for Performing the Phase I**

Mr. Stryker indicated that the Phase I ESA is being performed to satisfy environmental requirements for facilitate in the completion of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) federal construction projects.

### **5.0 RECORDS REVIEW**

OLSSON and Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR®) conducted a review of available environmental records as part of this ESA.

For each of the databases and sites listed below, their relevance to the assessment property is limited to their ability to have caused or cause in the future contamination of the soil or ground water beneath the assessment property. Spills that are soluble in the ground water typically move with the flow of the ground water. As a result, for most releases or possible releases, sites that could affect the assessment property are those in which the spill – actual or possible occurred on either the assessment property or “upgradient” of the assessment property.

As used in this report “upgradient” refers only to the direction from which ground water generally moves to cross beneath the assessment property. Upgradient to the assessment property is believed to be northwest based upon Configuration of the Water Table, Spring 1979, McCook Quadrangle Map. This means that actual or potential releases occurring northwest of the assessment property have the potential to affect the assessment property

### 5.1 Standard Environmental Record Sources

EDR® completed a search of ASTM required environmental records covering the ASTM minimum search distances around the assessment property. Table 5-1 is a brief description of sites found within the specific search radii. The EDR report is presented in Appendix C of this report.

**Table 5-1: Environmental Records Review Data**

Database Record	Minimum Search Distance (Miles)	Total Sites Found
NPL	1	0
Delisted NPL	½	0
CERCLIS	½	0
CERCLIS NFRAP	½	0
RCRA CORRACTS	1	0
RCRA TSD	½	0
RCRA Large Quantity Generator	Assessment Property/Adjoining Property	0
RCRA Small Quantity Generator	Assessment Property/Adjoining Property	0
Federal Institutional Controls	Assessment Property	0
Federal Engineering Controls	Assessment Property	0
ERNS	Assessment Property	0
State/Tribal NPL**	1	NR
State/Tribal CERCLIS**	½	NR
State/Tribal Hazardous Waste	½	0
State/Tribal Licensed Landfill List	½	0
LUST	½	0
USTs	Assessment Property/Adjoining Property	1
State/Tribal Institutional Controls	Assessment Property	0
State/Tribal Engineering Controls	Assessment Property	0
State/Tribal Voluntary Cleanup Sites	½	0
State/Tribal Brownfield Sites	½	0

\*\* = This state does not maintain the database

NR = Not Reported

#### 5.1.1 Underground Storage Tanks

The NDEQ and Nebraska State Fire Marshal's office have a listing of all registered underground storage tanks. The EDR® report indicated there was one (1) facility located adjacent to the assessment property that was listed as a UST site. The table below describes this facility.

**Table 5-2: Summary of UST Facility Information**

Site Name	Address	Distance/Direction	Site Status
Red Willow Aviation Spraying Inc.	1900 Airport Road	0.249-mile to the NNW (upgradient)	1 - 10,000 gallon gasoline and 1-10,000 gallon jet fuel UST, installed in 1998; currently in use.

The above referenced property has USTs currently in-use. These tanks have the potential to release their contents into the subsurface. Due to the distance of this facility from the assessment property, if a release from the USTs were to occur, it would not likely impact the subsurface of the assessment property. The UST facility is not evidence of a REC in connection with the assessment property.

#### 5.1.2 Unmapped Sites

The EDR® report lists sites that appear on the databases searched but could not be mapped due to poor or inadequate address information. 27 unmapped sites were identified by EDR®.

Based on the brief address description and site reconnaissance, these sites are not located within the ASTM standard search distances from the assessment property.

## **5.2 Additional Environmental Record Sources**

### **5.2.1 Registered Well Information**

Water well records from the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NDNR) were obtained from the NDNR website and reviewed to determine if there are any on-site or adjacent registered wells. A copy of a well location map and registered well information is presented in Appendix C.

- There were no wells located on the assessment property.
- Ground water monitoring wells were noted on the farm land to the west of the assessment property. These wells were registered to Northrop Grumman Space and Mission Systems Corp, in connection with TWR TCE contamination site.

The presence of this ground water monitoring wells is evidence that ground water is contaminated in connection with the TCE plume. Please reference section 5.2.2 for information concerning the TCE plume.

### **5.2.2 TWR Info from NDEQ**

OLSSON obtained a copy of the most recent Annual Ground Water Monitoring Report from the NDEQ for the TRW site. A copy of this map is presented in Appendix C. Included in this report is a copy of the most recent TCE Isoconcentration map. This map indicates that in October of 2006, the TCE plume had not impacted the subsurface of the assessment property. Based on this information and ground water flow direction, the TCE Plume is not considered a REC in connection with the assessment property.

## **5.3 Information Beyond ASTM 1527-05**

At the request of the USER, OLSSON performed a preliminary review of items beyond the scope of the ASTM 1527-05. These items are discussed in the following subsections and those in Section 5.4.

Based upon historical and current assessment property use, there were no structures or other improvements. Therefore, the following areas of concern are not applicable: asbestos containing material, lead-based paint, industrial hyglene, health and safety, and indoor air quality. Historical land use also would indicate that UXO would not be concern at the assessment property. Use of pesticides is discussed in Section 7.2 and PCB containing materials are discussed in Section 6.2.1.

### **5.3.1 Environmental Lien Search**

OLSSON reviewed the title records provided by McCook Title Company for environmental liens. Please refer to Appendix D for a copy of the title search. There were no records of environmental liens or activity and use limitations listed in the title documents.

### **5.3.2 Lead in Drinking Water**

Potable water is to be supplied by the City of McCook. The DHHS reports for the City of McCook indicated that there are detectable concentrations of lead noted in some of the municipal wells during 2007, with the highest reading of 26.3 micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ ). The DHHS also indicated that there was a lead and copper violation in 1998. Compliance actions were taken and compliance has been achieved. A copy of the DHHS documentation is presented in Appendix E.

According to the EPA's Drinking Water Contaminants list with their Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) the MCL for Lead is 0.0. With a treatment system in place, the MCL can be 15 micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ ).

OLSSON contacted the McCook's Utility Director, Jesse Dutcher, concerning the levels of lead found in the drinking water. Mr. Dutcher indicated the current sampling for Lead completed on 9-20-2007 yielded the following: Lead 90th percentile 6.29  $\mu\text{g/l}$ . These were the results from a 20 sample run (reduced round of sampling). The 2006 sampling (collected 10-25-06) which was a full round of sampling (40 samples collected) had 12.8  $\mu\text{g/l}$  for lead.

Mr. Dutcher stated that the reduced round that McCook sampled in 2007 was done to meet the startup requirements of the ion exchange water treatment plant and 2 new wells that came on line in 2006. No concerns were found and McCook will return to a 3 year schedule of sampling.

The reportable lead levels found in the drinking water for McCook appears to be addressed by the addition of new wells and an ion exchange water treatment plant.

### 5.3.3 Radon

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Association of American State Geologist (AASG) worked together in 1993 to product the EPA Map of Radon Zones. This map is presented in Appendix E, which identifies on a county-by-county basis, the potential for indoor radon levels. This EPA Radon Map indicated that Red Willow county lies within Zone 1, which indicated that there is the potential to have a greater than 4 pCi/L of radon indoors.

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has a radon map for Red Willow County which shows that the average radon reading in the McCook vicinity is 4.0 pCi/L to 9.9 pCi/L. This information is presented in Appendix E.

The DHHS recommends that a non-permeable barrier coupled with vent pipes to allow air exchange with the atmosphere be installed below the base of the floor and the ground surface. The DHHS also indicated that the heating, ventilation and cooling system could be designed to provide adequate air exchange to mitigate radon gas accumulation.

## 5.4 Requirements of NEPA

OLSSON and EDR® conducted a NEPA check which involves a preliminary review of requirements of NEPA. The complete report is included in Appendix F and the findings are discussed below.

### 5.4.1 Wetlands

No wetland areas or waters were depicted on the assessment property based upon a review of the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Map (refer to Appendix F, EDR® NEPA Report, Map Findings Summary, Page 2).

### 5.4.2 Cultural, Archeological and Historic Resources

The National Register of Historic Places was reviewed for sites within a 1-mile radius of the assessment property (please refer to the EDR® NEPA Report in Appendix F, Map of Findings Summary, page 2). No mapped sites were located within the search distance.

### 5.4.3 Ecological Resources

Databases maintained by the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Forest Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service were reviewed by EDR®. No officially designated wilderness areas, wildlife preserves, sanctuaries, refuges, or wild and scenic

rivers occur within a 1-mile radius of the assessment property (refer to EDR® NEPA Report, Map Findings Summary, Page 2, Appendix F).

**5.4.4 Endangered Species and Wildlife Sanctuaries**

Federal lands databases maintained by the Bureau of Land Management, National Park service, Forest Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service were reviewed by EDR®. Endangered species listed for Red Willow County, Nebraska include the Bald Eagle, Whooping Crane, and the black-footed ferret (refer to EDR NEPA Report, Map of Findings Summary, Page 4, and Appendix F).

**5.4.5 High Voltage Power Lines**

No high voltage power lines occur on or near the assessment property (refer to EDR® NEPA Report, Map Findings Summary Page 2, and Appendix F).

**5.4.6 Flood Plain**

The assessment property is not located in the 100-year or 500-year flood plain (see EDR® NEPA Report, Map Findings Summary, page 2, Appendix F).

**5.4.7 FCC & FAA Sites**

There are no FCC or FAA sites on the assessment property, but there is an airport located within the search distance (see EDR® NEPA Report, Map Findings Summary, page 2, Appendix F).

**5.5 Historical Use Information on Assessment and Adjacent Property**

OLSSON conducted interviews and reviewed information sources to determine historical use of the assessment property and adjacent properties. Information sources include aerial photographs and Sanborn Maps.

No Sanborn Maps or City Directories depicting the assessment property were available. Historical Aerial Photographs depicting the assessment property from 1952, 1976, 1993, 1999, 2003, and 2007 were reviewed. Copies of the Historic Aerial Photographs are presented in Appendix G.

The historical information is summarized in Tables 5-3, 5-4, and the discussion below.

**Table 5-3: Historical Use of the Assessment Property**

Year	Property Use	Reference
1952 to Present	Undeveloped Agricultural Land	Aerial Photograph, Site Reconnaissance

**Table 5-4: Historical Use of the Adjacent Property**

Year	Property Use	Reference
North		
1952 to Present	Undeveloped Agricultural Land, Airport	Aerial Photograph, Site Reconnaissance
East		
1952 to Present	Undeveloped Agricultural Land, Airport	Aerial Photograph, Site Reconnaissance
South		
1952	Highway 6/34, Undeveloped Agricultural Land	Aerial Photograph,
1976 to	Highway 6/34, Commercial Developments, Undeveloped	Aerial Photograph,

Year	Property Use	Reference
Present	Agricultural Land	Site Reconnaissance
West		
1952 to Present	Undeveloped Agricultural Land, Airport	Aerial Photograph, Site Reconnaissance

The historical use of the assessment property and adjacent properties did not reveal evidence of any REC's in connection with the assessment property.

**6.0 SITE RECONNAISSANCE**

OLSSON conducted a walk-through of the assessment property on February 27, 2008. This section provides a summary of the observations noted during the walk-through. Mr. Dustin Huenink, NEARNG CFMO Environmental, and Mr. Ken Vontz with the City of McCook were present with OLSSON during the walk-through. Photographs (PH) were taken during the walk-through and are presented in Appendix H.

**6.1 Methodology and Limiting Conditions**

During the walk-through, the assessment property and adjoining properties were visually surveyed by walking the assessment property grounds and searching for RECs.

**6.2 Observations**

Table 6-2.1 below summarizes observations at the assessment property which could potentially indicate the likelihood of a REC. The significance of these observations is discussed below the table.

**Table 6-2.1: Summary of Observations**

On-site	Adjacent	Observed Conditions
		Hazardous Substances In Connection with the Property Use
		Petroleum Products In Connection with Property Use
		AST's and/or UST's
		Strong, Pungent, or Noxious Odors
		Storage Drums
		Hazardous Substance Containers
		Petroleum Product Substance Containers
		Unidentified Substance Containers
X	X	Electrical and/or Mechanical Equipment Potentially Containing PCB's
	N/A	Interior Heating/Cooling
	N/A	Interior Stains and/or Corrosion
	N/A	Interior Drains and/or Sumps
		Pits, Ponds, or Lagoons
		Stained Soil or Pavement
		Stressed vegetation
		Solid Waste
	X	Wells
		Other

NA = Not Applicable

### 6.2.1 Electrical Equipment Potentially Containing PCB's

OLSSON did not notice any transformers on-site or adjacent to the assessment property at the time of the site reconnaissance.

OLSSON contacted McCook Public Power District concerning transformers that contain PCB's in the vicinity of the assessment property. Mr. Jim Phinney, General Manager with the MPPD indicated that the assessment property was out of the service area for the McCook Public Power District, that it lies within the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD).

OLSSON also contacted NPPD about PCB containing transformers in the vicinity of the assessment property. Mr. Jeffrey Raymond with the NPPD indicated that the NPPD records did not indicate any oil field equipment in the vicinity of the assessment property. Please refer to Appendix I for a copy of the correspondence with the power officials.

### 6.2.2 Wells

OLSSON noted two (2) ground water monitoring wells on the adjacent property west of the assessment property. Mr. Ken Vontz with the City of McCook, indicated that these monitoring wells were associated with the TRW facility. Please refer to Section 5.2.1 for additional information concerning the wells.

## 7.0 INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted and/or written questionnaires were sent to the following persons associated with the assessment property:

- Mr. Dustin Huenink, CFMO Environmental, EPAS Manager, user of the Phase I ESA (see Section 4.0)
- Mr. Kurt Fritsch, City Manager for the City of McCook, current property owner (see Section 6.2.1)
- Mr. Ken Vontz, with the City of McCook (See Section 6.2.1)
- Ms. Shirley Wellbarger with Red Willow Aviation
- Margaret Swanda, Health Director for McCook, Nebraska
- Mr. Marc Harpham, Fire Chief for the City of McCook

### 7.1 Interview with Owner

OLSSON sent two questionnaires to the current and former owner of the property to assist in completion of this report (see Appendix J). The historical information questionnaire is typically used to provide information on the historic use of the property. The ASTM Phase I ESA questionnaire has questions regarding environmental issues such as underground storage tanks, environmental liens, hazardous material storage and disposal.

Mr. Kurt Fritsch, City Manager for the City of McCook, current property owner, completed the ASTM Phase I Questionnaire, for the assessment property. Mr. Fritsch stated that the airport was located to the north of the assessment property was used for commercial aviation purposes. He noted that the airport stored and used aviation fuel, and repaired aircraft.

Mr. Fritsch stated that the property was currently used as agricultural land. As part of this agricultural use, pesticides had been applied to the property. Mr. Frisch was not aware of the type or amount of pesticides applied as the land was rented out.

### 7.2 Interview with Adjacent Property Managers

Mr. Ken Vontz, with the City of McCook accompanied OLSSON during the site reconnaissance. Mr. Vontz indicated that the assessment property has been used for agricultural purposes. The farmer that rents the property is Steve Fritz. Mr. Vontz stated from his observations, Mr. Fritz did not spend much time farming this parcel of land. It is Mr. Vontz's opinion that Mr. Fritz did use agricultural chemicals, not much was applied.

OLSSON interviewed the administrative assistant, with Red Willow Aviation, Ms. Shirley Wellbarger, concerning chemicals stored and used by Red Willow Aviation. Red Willow Aviation is located to the north of the assessment property, and was reported to have USTs in-use. Ms. Wellbarger stated the USTs were on the west side of the building, and contained aviation fuel and the other stored gasoline fuel. She indicated there were no reports of leaks from these tanks.

OLSSON asked Ms. Wellbarger if agricultural chemicals were stored and used by this facility. She indicated that the chemicals were stored off site until they are ready for use then brought on-site in smaller quantities. Ms. Wellbarger was not aware of any releases of the agricultural chemicals onto the ground surface during the filling of the spray planes.

Ms. Wellbarger was asked if there were any plane crashes or other reports of planes having to release their loads, during take off. She indicated there were no records of any planes crashing or releases in connection with this spraying service. She also called the McCook Municipal airport's office and asked if there were any reports of plane crashes. The airport didn't have any plane crashes to report either. She was not aware of any chemicals released into the surface of the Red Willow aviation site.

### **7.3 Interview with Occupants**

OLSSON associates attempted to contact Mr. Steve Fritz, the assessment property farmer, on several occasions to discuss the use of the assessment property. At the time this report was published OLSSON had not been able to contact Mr. Fritz.

### **7.4 Interviews with Local Government Officials**

Ms. Margret Swanda, the Health Director for the City of McCook, indicated that she has been with the health department for the past 13 years. She stated that she is not aware of any reports or complaints of illegal dumping or releases of hazardous substances or petroleum products in connection with the assessment property. Ms. Swanda stated that the health department doesn't have anything on file that would indicate a health concern, and there are no industrial properties located on-site or adjacent to the assessment property.

Olsson also interviewed Mr. Marc Harpham, fire chief for the City of McCook for 18 years. Mr. Harpham was not aware of any release of chemicals or dumping of hazardous substances at the assessment property. He was not aware of any health concerns associated with the assessment property. Mr. Harpham stated there were chemical storage buildings located at the 400 block of Airport Road, which are occupied by United Suppliers and Red Willow Chemical Fertilizer. A copy of the city officials correspondence information is presented in Appendix K of this report.

The interview with the local government officials did not reveal evidence of a REC in connection with the assessment property.

## **8.0 FINDINGS AND OPINION**

The Phase I ESA performed for this assessment property has revealed the following.

### **8.1 Recognized Environmental Conditions**

This ESA has revealed no RECs in connection with the assessment property. Many sites of environmental concern were identified in the regulatory records review. However, these sites are not considered RECs in association with the assessment property. Site specific reasoning is discussed in the text of the report as the sites of concern are identified.

### **8.2 Historical Recognized Environmental Conditions**

This ESA has revealed no HRECs in connection with the assessment property.

**8.3 De minimis Conditions**

This ESA has revealed no de minimus conditions in connection with the assessment property.

**8.4 Data Gaps**

One data gap was encountered for this assessment. The current renter of the property did not respond to OLSSON's attempts to discuss the agricultural use of the assessment property. It is OLSSON's opinion that the data gap did not compromise the interpretations made regarding this property. Other sources of information on land use were available to complete this report including the EDR database search, interviews with the current owner and local government officials.

**9.0 CONCLUSIONS**

OLSSON has performed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment in conformance with the scope and limitations of ASTM Practice E 1527-05 for the McCook RC Proposed Site, located north of Highway 6/34 and south of the airport, in McCook, Nebraska. Any exceptions to, or deletions from, this practice are described in Section 10.0 of this report.

**10.0 DEVIATIONS**

There were no deviations from the ASTM standard. The report was completed in accordance with ASTM Practice E 1527-05.

**11.0 ADDITIONAL SERVICES**

Additional services requested by the user of this report, in addition to the scope of ASTM Practice E 1527-05, include a title search to identify environmental liens and activity and use limitations recorded in the register of deeds. Also OLSSON did a preliminary review of asbestos containing materials, radon, PCB's, lead-based paint, lead in the drinking water, wetlands, known occurrences of UXO, uses of pesticides, environmental impact studies, and requirements of the NEPA.

**12.0 REFERENCES**

Annual Groundwater Monitoring Report, October 2006. Northrop Grumman, 209 North Airport Road, McCook, Nebraska. March 2007.

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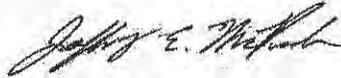
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- Personal Communication, Ms. Margaret Swanda, February 20, 2008.
- Personal Communication, Ms. Shirley Wellbarger, February 27, 2008.
- Personal Communication, Mr. Kurt Fritsch, March 19, 2008.
- Personal Communication, Mr. Clayton Stryker, February 21, 2008.
- Personal Communication, Chief Mark Harpham, February 22, 2008.
- Personal Communication, Mr. Jeffery O. Raymond, February 21, 2008.
- Personal Communication, Mr. Jesse Dutcher, February 26, 2008.
- Personal Communication, Mr. Jim Phinney, March 4, 2008.
- University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Conservation and Survey Division, Historical Aerial Photographs. (2003, 1999, 1993, 1976, and 1952).
- USGS Topographic Map, Red Willow County Topographic Mosaic, 1971.

**13.0 SIGNATURE(S) OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONAL(S)**

Questions or requests for further information should be directed to our office.

Prepared by,

Reviewed by,



Elysha W. Hartman  
Project Scientist

Jeff McPeak, IE  
Environmental Engineer

I, Elysha Hartman, declare that, to the best of my professional knowledge and belief, I meet the definition of *Environmental Professional* as defined in §312.10 of 40 CFR 312 and I have the specific qualifications based on education, training, and experience to assess a *property* of the nature, history, and setting of the subject *property*. I have developed and performed all appropriate inquiries in conformance with the standards and practices set forth in 40 CFR Part 312.

**14.0 QUALIFICATION(S) OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONAL(S)**

The abovementioned *environmental professionals* meet the requirements of ASTM Practice E 1527-05 and resumes are included in Appendix L.

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*Environmental Assessment for Construction of an  
Armed Forces Reserve Center and  
Implementation of BRAC 05 Recommendations at  
McCook, Nebraska*

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*APPENDIX C*

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**ECONOMIC IMPACT FORECAST SYSTEM REPORT**

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## APPENDIX C. ECONOMIC IMPACT FORECAST SYSTEM REPORT

This appendix provides the Economic Impact Forecast System Report for the McCook, Nebraska Proposed Action.

### EIFS REPORT

#### PROJECT NAME

**McCook, Red Willow County, Nebraska**

#### FORECAST INPUT

Change In Local Expenditures	\$3,760,000
Change In Civilian Employment	0
Average Income of Affected Civilian	\$0
Percent Expected to Relocate	0
Change In Military Employment	0
Average Income of Affected Military	\$0
Percent of Military Living On-post	0

#### FORECAST OUTPUT

Employment Multiplier	1.79	
Income Multiplier	1.79	
Sales Volume - Direct	\$3,760,000	
Sales Volume - Indirect	\$2,970,400	
Sales Volume - Total	\$6,730,400	2.07%
Income - Direct	\$687,674	
Income - Indirect	\$543,262	
Income – Total (place of work)	\$1,230,936	0.51%
Employment - Direct	23	
Employment - Indirect	18	
Employment - Total	42	0.58%
Local Population	0	
Local Off-base Population	0	0.00%

#### RTV SUMMARY

	Sales Volume	Income	Employment	Population
<b>Positive RTV</b>	8.69 %	15.13 %	9.45 %	2.38 %
<b>Negative RTV</b>	-8.54 %	-7.4 %	-3.73 %	-0.96 %