

Final
Finding of No Significant Impact for the
Implementation of Base Realignment and Closure 2005
Realignment Actions at Jonesboro, Arkansas

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (Title 40 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] Parts 1500–1508) for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (Title 42 of the United States Code [U.S.C.] 4321 *et seq.*) and 32 CFR Part 651 (*Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*), the U.S. Army Reserve conducted an environmental assessment (EA) of the potential environmental and socioeconomic effects associated with implementing the proposal to construct and operate an Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) at Jonesboro, Arkansas, according to the 2005 Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC Commission) recommendations.

Proposed Action

The Army proposes to close the U.S. Army Reserve Center, Jonesboro, Arkansas, and relocate units to a new AFRC in Jonesboro, Arkansas, if the Army is able to acquire suitable land for the construction of the facilities. The new AFRC would have the capability to accommodate Arkansas National Guard Units from the Arkansas Army National Guard Readiness Center, Jonesboro, the Arkansas Army National Guard Readiness Center, Paragould, Arkansas, and the Field Maintenance Site, Jonesboro, if the state decides to relocate those National Guard units. To meet the BRAC Commission's directive, the Army proposes to acquire approximately 20 acres in Jonesboro. After acquiring the property, the Army would construct an AFRC having approximately 97,400 square feet of space. The primary facilities of the new AFRC would consist of a training building, Organization Maintenance Shop, an unheated storage building, and parking area for military and privately owned vehicles. The facilities would be adequate to accommodate 400 personnel. The buildings would be of permanent construction. Because the property proposed to be acquired is undeveloped, no demolition of existing facilities would be required. Construction could begin as early as May 2009 and could be completed by February 2011.

The site proposed for the new AFRC is known as Site 7 in the Army's Available Site Identification and Validation Report (June 2008). It is at the southwest corner of the intersection of C.W. Post Road and Moore Road, which is east of central Jonesboro.

The Jonesboro AFRC would support the operations of units of the Army Reserve and the Arkansas Army National Guard. The AFRC would be used Monday through Friday by a small, full-time staff and on weekends for training by the various Reserve Component units. Approximately 400 Reservists and Guardsmen would be assigned to the units stationed at the AFRC. Daily operations would include administrative, training, and maintenance support of unit missions and requirements; recruiting; and preparation for battle assembly weekends.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide the facilities needed to support the BRAC Commission's recommendation pertaining to U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard units located in Jonesboro. The proposed action is needed to improve the nation's ability to respond rapidly to challenges of the 21st century. The proposed action also is needed because existing Army Reserve and Army National Guard facilities are substandard and inadequately sized to support the number of assigned Soldiers.

Alternatives Considered

Alternatives to the proposed action were assessed on the basis of alternative sites. In June 2008, the Army prepared an Available Site Identification and Validation Report that evaluates 14 potential sites for the AFRC. The Army considered the sites and identified five potential sites for the AFRC. Of the five sites, based on detailed examinations that included site visits, one of the five sites was eliminated from further consideration because it does not meet some of or all of the following criteria: net usable acreage; compatibility with surrounding land uses; support for intended construction and environmental compliance; ready access to public utilities; reasonable cut or fill requirements; proximity to a major roadway corridor and safe ingress and egress; reasonable purchase price, within budget; or appropriate zoning and antiterrorism (property set-back requirements) considerations. Another site was adjacent to the preferred site, and the Site Selection Team determined that of the two sites, only the preferred site would be pursued for acquisition. The EA evaluates in detail the site proposed for the AFRC as well as two alternative sites. As prescribed by the CEQ Regulations, the EA also evaluates the No Action Alternative, under which the units proposed for relocation under the proposed action would continue to operate from their current facilities.

Factors Considered in Determining That No Environmental Impact Statement is Required

The EA, which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference into this finding of no significant Impact (FNSI), examines the potential effects of the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action, including the No Action Alternative, on resource areas and areas of environmental and socioeconomic concern: land use, aesthetics and visual resources, air quality, noise, geology and soils, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, socioeconomics (including environmental justice and protection of children), transportation, utilities, and hazardous and toxic materials.

Proposed Action

No adverse effects from implementing the proposed action would be expected on the following resource areas: land use; geology and topography; water resources (including the coastal zone and floodplains); sensitive species; wetlands; cultural resources; and population, housing, quality of life, environmental justice, and the protection of children. *Short-term minor adverse* effects from implementing the proposed action would be expected on the following resource areas: the noise environment, soils, and transportation. *Short-term minor beneficial* effects from implementing the proposed action would be expected on economic development. *Long-term minor adverse* effects from implementing the proposed action would be expected on aesthetics and visual resources, air quality, prime farmland soils, vegetation, wildlife, transportation, utility systems, and hazardous and toxic substances. None of the adverse effects associated with implementing the proposed action would be significant.

Site 5 Alternative

No adverse effects from implementing the Site 5 Alternative would be expected on the following resource areas: geology; topography; prime farmland soils; water resources (including floodplains and the coastal zone); sensitive species; wetlands; population, housing, quality of life; and environmental justice. *Short-term minor adverse* effects from implementing the Site 5 Alternative would be expected on the following resource areas: air quality, the noise environment, soils, the protection of children, and transportation. *Short-term minor beneficial* effects from implementing the Site 5 Alternative would be expected on economic development. *Long-term minor adverse* effects from implementing the Site 5 Alternative would be expected on land use, aesthetics and visual resources, air quality, vegetation, wildlife, transportation, utility systems, and hazardous and toxic substances. Unknown effects would occur on cultural resources. None of the adverse effects associated with implementing the Site 5 Alternative would be significant.

Site 9 Alternative

No adverse effects from implementing the Site 9 Alternative would be expected on the following resource areas: geology; topography; prime farmland soils; water resources (including floodplains and the coastal zone); sensitive species; wetlands; population, housing, quality of life; and environmental justice. *Short-term minor adverse* effects from implementing the Site 9 Alternative would be expected on the following resource areas: air quality, the noise environment, soils, the protection of children, and transportation. *Short-term minor beneficial* effects from implementing the Site 9 Alternative would be expected on economic development. *Long-term minor adverse* effects from implementing the Site 9 Alternative would be expected on land use, aesthetics and visual resources, air quality, vegetation, wildlife, transportation, utility systems, and hazardous and toxic substances. Unknown effects would occur on cultural resources. None of the adverse effects associated with implementing the Site 9 Alternative would be significant.

No Action Alternative

No adverse effects on any resource area would be expected from implementing the No Action alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, the Army would not implement the proposed action. No land would be acquired, no facilities would be constructed, and no units would relocate from other facilities. The units proposed for relocation under the proposed action would continue to operate from their current facilities.

Public Review

The EA and draft FNSI were available for review and comment for 30 days from publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Jonesboro *Sun*. The NOA was published on April 23, 2009, and the public comment period ended on May 23, 2009. The only comment on the EA and draft FNSI received was from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which stated that no federally listed or proposed threatened or endangered species occur in the impact area of the project and that, therefore, no further consultation regarding Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act was required.

Conclusions

On the basis of the EA, which is herewith incorporated, it has been determined that implementation of the proposed action would have no significant effects on the quality of human life or the natural environment. Preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required before implementing the proposed action.



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Date