



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, U. S. ARMY AIR DEFENSE ARTILLERY CENTER AND FORT BLISS
1733 PLEASANTON ROAD
FORT BLISS, TEXAS 79916-6816

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

ATZC-DOE-C (200-2)

20 September 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Record Of Decision for the Fort Bliss Mission and Master Plan Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

1. The United States Army Air Defense Artillery Center and Fort Bliss ("Fort Bliss") has decided to implement Alternative 3, our preferred alternative, as described in the Fort Bliss, Texas and New Mexico, Mission and Master Plan Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS). Three other alternatives were analyzed in the PEIS (including the No Action Alternative). This decision was reached after analysis of the potential environmental impacts of each alternative, the evolving mission responsibilities of Fort Bliss and the U.S. Army, and the public comments received on the PEIS.
2. The PEIS was filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and made available to the public by announcement in the Federal Register on 16 March, 2001. The PEIS evaluates the potential environmental effects associated with implementing alternatives for managing the military mission and daily operations on Fort Bliss. The PEIS and this Record of Decision comply with Army Regulation 200-2, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and the President's Council of Environmental Quality regulations at 40 CFR Parts 1500 - 1508.
3. Implementation of Alternative 3 provides the Army the maximum flexibility and offers the greatest potential for Fort Bliss to continue to be a valuable training area for U.S. military units and for U.S. allies from around the world. Alternative 3 includes implementation of revisions to the Real Property Master Plan, the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP), the Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP), and the Training Area Development Concept (TADC). A number of potential mission support improvements are included in Alternative 3. These include additional controlled access Field Training Exercise Sites to be located on McGregor Range, specialized training facilities for Army Reserve, National Guard, aviation, and mechanized armor units, and test support for Army tactical missile systems. The Future Development Concept, Chapter 4 of the TADC, includes potential future actions which may be implemented if the needs arise. Implementation of Alternative 3 maximizes the installation's training capabilities and future training potential, improves the installation infrastructure and master planning process, and enhances Fort Bliss' environmental resource management practices to provide the optimum environment in which to conduct training and sustain the military mission.
4. Fort Bliss has adopted all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm resulting from implementation of Alternative 3 of the PEIS. On the Main Cantonment, impact avoidance and minimization is accomplished through implementation of the Real Property Master Plan and its Component and Contributing Plans, including adoption of the revised Main Cantonment Area Land Use Plan. This will provide a planning framework that will improve land use relationships within the main

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cantonment and compatibility with land uses near the main cantonment. Implementation of the ICRMP will be of particular benefit in avoiding or minimizing adverse impacts to extensive cultural resources in the main cantonment (including the National Register District and National Register Eligible District). It will allow Fort Bliss to follow pre-approved procedures for agency coordination involved with cultural resource management, and will integrate compliance protocols for federal regulations.

5. On the training complex portions of Fort Bliss, impact avoidance and minimization is accomplished through application of siting and management practices from the INRMP, ICRMP, Range Standard Operating Procedures, and the Training Area Development Concept land use designations for deploying mission and mission support activities to locations appropriate for the designated training activities. Potential locations for new field training exercise sites will be surveyed to avoid or minimize impact to cultural and natural resources. Additional project-specific environmental evaluation and mitigation may be required for actions proposed under the future projects proposed in Alternative 3, and Chapter 4 of the TADC.

6. Monitoring for compliance with the land use and management practices is accomplished through interactions between the Environmental Office (Directorate of Environment), and both the Range Scheduling Office and the Directorate of Public Works and Logistics during scheduling of training or maintenance activities. Monitoring of training exercises is conducted by personnel from McGregor Range and the Directorate of Environment to check for compliance with procedures and actions that avoid or minimize environmental impacts. Directorate of Environment personnel also monitor for environmental compliance to avoid and minimize the environmental impacts of the support and maintenance activities which primarily occur on the cantonment and main Range Camps. Changes in land cover will be monitored using satellite imagery analyses coordinated with traditional vegetation sampling techniques.

7. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED. The four alternatives analyzed in the PEIS are additive, building upon one another to provide the Army the maximum flexibility within a range of planning actions from which to select.

8. The No Action Alternative is the current Fort Bliss mission, including planned developments, and ongoing maintenance activity. Under No Action, there would be no implementation of proposed revisions to Army short-and-long range plans or resource management plans. The Fort Bliss current mission, planned developments, ongoing maintenance activity, and existing natural and cultural resource management practices would continue.

9. Alternative 1 included the current missions assigned to Fort Bliss as described above in the No Action Alternative, but would adopt recent updates to certain mission and mission support planning components of the Fort Bliss Real Property Master Plan. These include the Long-range Component, the Short-range Component, the Power Projection Platform Capital Investment Strategy, and informal modifications to the Mobilization Component. Also adopted would be the two environmental resource management plans known as the INMRP and the ICRMP. These documents would improve overall planning for and management of natural and cultural resources on Fort Bliss while sustaining the military mission. Another important change would be adoption of a more detailed land use plan for the Fort Bliss Training Complex, which is that portion of Fort Bliss outside the Main Cantonment Area. The details of this land

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use plan are presented in Chapter 3.0, Current Conditions, of the TADC, which was published by the Army in July 1998. This land use plan classifies training area land use into zones of similar mission activity and assists planners in deploying training assets while minimizing environmental impacts. This alternative would be the environmentally preferred alternative based on fewer new missions and less potential for activities that could impact the human environment.

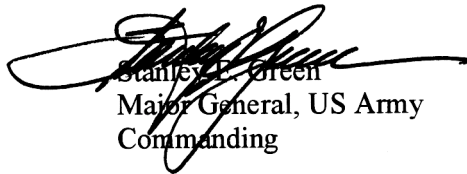
10. Alternative 2 includes all actions in Alternative 1. The difference from Alternative 1 is that Alternative 2 would increase, by approximately 13.5 square miles, the availability of controlled access Field Training Exercise sites on the Fort Bliss Training Complex. These would be located on suitable terrain within specific training areas in the Tularosa Basin and on the Otero Mesa portions of McGregor Range.

11. Alternative 3 is the selected alternative, and includes all actions in Alternatives 1 and 2. Alternative 3 is described above.

12. Additional information or a copy of the PEIS or ROD can be obtained by writing to:

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