
**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FNSI)
FOR A
SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ADDRESSING
INSTALLATION DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING AT FORT HUNTER LIGGETT,
CALIFORNIA**

Introduction

U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hunter Liggett (FHL) has prepared this Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) to satisfy NEPA requirements for the Mission Road Improvement Project. This EA supplements and incorporates by reference the *Final Environmental Assessment Addressing Installation Development and Training (IDTEA) at Fort Hunter Liggett, California* (U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) 2010). An EA is required because the site layout and environmental impacts for this project were not defined in the 2010 IDTEA. The 2010 IDTEA addressed the potential environmental effects of range and cantonment area construction projects, and increased military training. The 2010 IDTEA may be accessed at http://www.liggett.army.mil/pdf/dpwPDF/Env/FHL_Training_Dev_EA_2010.pdf.

This Supplemental EA was prepared pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508) for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S. Code 4321 et seq.) and 32 CFR Part 651 (*Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*).

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed action is to improve roadway conditions by realigning two curves, demolishing abandoned roadway and facilities, and restoring native vegetation to disturbed areas along 1.2 mi of Mission Road. Mission Road supports FHL military and civilian vehicles as well as civilian traffic to Los Padres National Forest and the Pacific Coast via Del Venturi Road and Nacimiento-Fergusson Road, Mission San Antonio de Padua via Mission Road, and the Access Control Point for the Cantonment. This section of Mission Road is also referred to as Nacimiento-Fergusson Road (0.8 miles in an east-west direction) and Silo Road (0.4 miles in a north-south direction).

The proposed action is needed to improve driver safety and roadway conditions in order to comply with Federal and State Regulations, and will improve environmental conditions by creating a grassland buffer between the primary roadway and San Antonio River. Increases in training and construction in the cantonment described in the 2010 IDTEA have resulted in an increase in vehicular traffic and greater wear and damage to this section of roadway. Two curves in the roadway are not designed for safe passage over 30 mph. A portion of the existing roadway lies on a terrace above San Antonio River with little to no vegetated buffer between the roadway and the river. Portions of the roadway and the waste transfer station lie adjacent to the 100 year floodplain and near breeding habitat for the federally endangered arroyo toad.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action for this EA is the Mission Road Improvement Project along 1.2 miles of Mission Road in the cantonment of Fort Hunter Liggett. The project consists of realigning two curves and constructing a bridge connector road, demolishing abandoned roadways and the waste transfer station, and restoring disturbed areas with native vegetation. Approximately 6.7 acres of grassland vegetation would be removed for road construction, and 8.3 acres of

grassland vegetation would be restored after demolition. In 2014-2015, FHL would contract for construction and demolition of the two curves and bridge connector road. In 2014-2019, FHL would have military troop construction unit or a contractor demolish the waste transfer station. Site restoration would begin following demolition and continue until restoration is completed. The proposed action would comply with all applicable environmental and construction laws and standards.

No Action Alternative

CEQ regulations specify the inclusion of the No Action Alternative in the alternatives analysis (40 CFR 1502.14). The No Action Alternative serves as a baseline against which the impacts of the Proposed Action and other potential action alternatives can be evaluated.

Under the No Action Alternative, FHL would not implement the Proposed Action. Taking no action would not meet the purpose and need for the project to improve roadway and environmental conditions at the project site. In general, implementation of the No Action Alternative would result in continuing to utilize the existing Mission Road with its existing conditions, current alignment, speed limit, and proximity to San Antonio River. If the No Action Alternative is chosen, the increase in training at FHL would continue to deteriorate the roadway, and traffic flow and environmental conditions would not be improved.

Alternatives Considered but Dismissed

The U.S. Army evaluated possible alternatives to be considered for the Proposed Action. This section addresses options that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in this EA.

The Army considered repaving the existing roadway with no realignments. This alternative was eliminated because it would not improve the safety of the existing curves and the lane widths would remain inconsistent and narrow.

The Army considered paved shoulders rather than maintaining the current condition of the road base shoulders. This alternative was eliminated due to increased cost and storm water runoff, with no additional benefit to the purpose and need of the project.

In developing the proposed action, the Army considered minor variations in road realignment. The proposed alternative was designed to have minimal adverse effects to the environment while meeting the purpose and need of the project. The design variations were minor and do not warrant separate analyses.

The Army considered connecting to Nacimiento-Fergusson Bridge from the middle portion of West Curve realignment, but found this to create an unsafe intersection along Mission Road.

The Army considered rerouting the road to the north of Gravel Pit Pond; however, this resulted in greater adverse impact to federally listed vernal pool fairy shrimp.

Potential Environmental Impacts

Preferred Alternative

This EA contains an evaluation of the existing conditions and environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative, as required by NEPA. Implementation of the Proposed Action would have the following effects:

- No effect to airspace management, land use, noise, cultural resources, socioeconomics and environmental justice, or infrastructure (with the exception of storm water systems).

- Beneficial effects to water resources, biological resources, threatened and endangered species, infrastructure (storm water systems), and traffic and transportation systems.
- Moderate adverse effects to threatened and endangered species due to adversely affecting a vernal pool fairy shrimp pool.
- Minor, adverse effects to air quality and climate change, geological resources, water resources, biological resources, threatened and endangered species, infrastructure (storm water systems), traffic and transportation systems, hazardous materials and wastes, and health and safety.

No mitigation is required to reduce impacts below significance thresholds. Conservation and minimization measures would be implemented to reduce potential adverse effects of construction, demolition, and vegetation restoration.

Implementation of the No Action Alternative would not result in a change in current conditions; therefore, no significant direct or indirect effects would occur under the No Action Alternative.

The potential for cumulative effects on the environment was evaluated by reviewing other projects in the vicinity of FHL that could affect the same environmental resources as the Proposed Action. Although some cumulative effects could occur, they are expected to be negligible to minor. Implementation of the No Action Alternative would not result in a change in current conditions; therefore, no cumulative effects would occur to the quality of the human or natural environment.

NEPA Determination

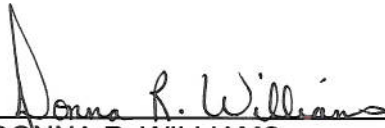
Based on the findings of the EA Supplement and incorporated by reference from the 2010 IDTEA, implementation of the Preferred Alternative, Mission Road Improvements, at Fort Hunter Liggett in Monterey County, California, would not have significant, adverse, direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on the quality of the human or natural environment. FHL has prepared this Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) to accompany the Supplemental EA. This FNSI concludes that an Environmental Impact Statement, the next level of environmental impact investigation under the NEPA, is not required for this action.

Public Review and Comment

The EA Supplement and draft FNSI were published for a 30-day public comment period from March 20 – April 19, 2014, and were available to the public for comment at the San Antonio School Library, 67550 Lockwood Jolon Road, Lockwood, CA 93932; Fort Hunter Liggett Library, Building 291, 7th Division Road, Fort Hunter Liggett, Jolon, CA 93928; and the Monterey County Free Library, 26 Central Avenue, Salinas, CA 93901; and on the Internet at: <http://www.liggett.army.mil/sites/dpw/environmental.asp>

Three comments were received from the public and addressed. No modifications to the proposed action were required. These documents are available in the administrative record at FHL, Environmental Division, Building 233, Jolon, CA 93928.

Signature:
Approved by:


DONNA R. WILLIAMS
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commander

3 June 2014
Date