

## **Notice of Intent to Conduct an Environmental Assessment for Proposed Action to Eliminate Trespass Horses at Fort Polk, LA**

### **Public Notice**

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Army regulations, the Army is seeking input as well as the participation of animal rights groups and other subject matter experts in developing appropriate alternatives to eliminate trespass horses from the Fort Polk Military Reservation and the Peason Ridge Military Training Area. The U.S. Army Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk will provide opportunities for interested agencies, organizations, and individuals for help in determining the appropriate scope of the Environmental Assessment (EA) to include alternative actions and issues of concern to be considered and analyzed.

Fort Polk has a large population of trespass horses. The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana has determined the horses are trespass livestock to which the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Protection Act of 1971 is not applicable.

The population of trespass horses that remain on the training landscape imposes a safety conflict with training activities. This safety risk is unacceptable for troops, Army equipment, and the horses themselves.

The EA will evaluate potential impacts associated with a wide range of alternatives regarding the disposition of the trespass horses. The analysis process will identify affected resources, evaluate effects of the proposed actions on those resources, determine alternative implementation methods, and, if necessary, recommend mitigation measures.

No decision on any actions regarding the horses or the disposition of the horses will be made until after completion of the EA and careful consideration of issues of concern and reasonable alternative actions identified by the public, appropriate government agencies, and subject matter experts. The Army encourages public input on this issue as well as the participation of animal welfare groups and other subject matter experts in developing an appropriate course of action in regard to this issue. To aid the Army in identifying and evaluating issues and concerns, comments should be as specific as possible.

Please submit comments to [usarmy.polk.imcom.mbx.pao-public-response@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.polk.imcom.mbx.pao-public-response@mail.mil) or to the address shown below no later than 30 days from the date of this notice so that your comments and ideas can be addressed in the EA.

JRTC and Fort Polk  
Public Affairs Office  
Attention: Public Response  
7033 Magnolia Drive Bldg. 4919  
Fort Polk, LA 71459

A public meeting will be held in Leesville, LA, to receive public input on issues of concern and alternative courses of action. The Leesville meeting will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, August 13 at Leesville City Hall, 101 West Lee Street, Leesville, LA 71446. The meeting will be conducted in an "open house" type forum at which information booths will be established and public comment forms made available. The public can come and go at their convenience during the three-hour timeframe of the meeting.