Record of Decision for the Stationing and Training of Increased Aviation Assets within U.S. Army Alaska





U.S. Army Alaska

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Record of Decision (ROD) for the Stationing and Training of Increased Aviation Assets within U.S. Army Alaska

Executive Summary

As the U.S. Army's Executive Director of the Installation Management Command (IMCOM), I have reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the "Stationing and Training of Increased Aviation Assets within U.S. Army Alaska." The Final EIS adequately evaluates the potential environmental and socioeconomic effects associated with the stationing and training of a new aviation unit in Alaska. The Final EIS, published in August 2009, is incorporated by reference in this Record of Decision (ROD).

This ROD explains that the U.S. Army (Army) will proceed with implementing its Preferred Alternative identified in the Final EIS by reorganizing and augmenting its aviation assets in Alaska as an Aviation Task Force (ATF) (Alternative 2). The ATF will be permanently stationed at Fort Wainwright (FWA). New facilities for the ATF will be constructed at FWA. This decision will result in a total growth at FWA by approximately 2,005 Soldiers, family members, and civilian support personnel. Implementation of this decision best supports both local integrated training and deployment abroad, and will continue the process of Army transformation in Alaska. It provides a critical training capability that the Army lacks currently.

1.0 Background

In 1999, the Army initiated a service-wide transformation process to restructure and transform its active duty forces to respond more rapidly to modern enemy threats. U.S. Army Alaska (USARAK) has been at the forefront of Army transformation. USARAK is home to the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT), 25th Infantry Division (1/25 SBCT), and the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) (ABCT), 25th Infantry Division (4/25 ABCT). The 1/25 SBCT is stationed at FWA and the 4/25 ABCT is stationed at Fort Richardson (FRA).

The Final EIS evaluates the environmental effects of the Army proposal to station and train an aviation unit in Alaska. The proposed reorganization and augmentation of USARAK's aviation assets and capabilities to support both integrated training and deployment abroad would continue the process of Army transformation in Alaska. Aviation units are expected to fight and train as members of combined-arms teams. An aviation unit in Alaska would enhance the integrated training of the 1/25 SBCT and 4/25 ABCT to achieve proficiency in the execution of combined-arms, joint, and coalition operations under realistic and challenging conditions.

The Final EIS and this ROD have been prepared in compliance with the requirements contained in the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations that implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) and the Army NEPA-implementing procedures, Army Regulation (AR) 200-2 (32 CFR Part 651).

2.0 Proposed Action

The Army proposes to reorganize and augment its aviation assets in Alaska (currently, about 490 Soldiers and 32 helicopters) to become a front-line aviation unit with an increased combat-readiness capacity. The Proposed Action includes stationing of additional Soldiers, helicopters, and support vehicles, construction and demolition of a number of facilities within USARAK cantonment areas, and increased aviation training. The EIS considers the FWA, FRA, and Eielson Air Force Base (AFB) military installations. The Cantonment and training areas associated with each of these installations include the FWA Cantonment, Ladd Army Airfield (AAF) at FWA, Bryant AAF at FRA, Tanana Flats Training Area (TFTA), Yukon Training Area (YTA), Donnelly Training Areas (DTA) East and West, Gerstle River Training Area (GRTA), and the Black Rapids Training Area (BRTA). Eielson AFB is included as a potential location for some stationing alternatives under the Proposed Action. While no new ranges or facilities would be built in response to the Proposed Action, training events would be conducted at FRA, FWA, and DTA, and would potentially result in increased use of facilities such as impact areas, landing zones, drop zones, firing points, small-arms ranges, the forward operating base, collective-training ranges, the battle area complex, and combined-arms collective training facilities.

Key components of the Proposed Action are detailed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS.

3.0 Alternatives

Alternatives for implementing the Proposed Action are discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS and summarized here.

Alternative 1: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, Army aviation assets would not change. No additional Soldiers or helicopters would be permanently stationed in Alaska, and no new facilities would be constructed. USARAK's current aviation assets consist of 490 Soldiers and 32 helicopters. Existing aviation assets would continue to use current training locations and transportation corridors, and aviation training would continue at the levels that occurred prior to the temporary assignment of aviation personnel and assets at FWA.

Alternative 2: Aviation Task Force (Preferred Alternative)

The Final EIS identifies Alternative 2 as the Army's Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative will form an ATF by augmenting USARAK's existing assigned aviation assets with 40 additional helicopters and 710 additional Soldiers. The Preferred Alternative will result in 1,200 total Soldiers and 72 total helicopters at FWA, with a total projected population increase by approximately 2,005 (including Soldiers, family members, and civilian support personnel). The ATF will be stationed at FWA. Construction of new facilities in the FWA Main Post and operation of additional generators and vehicles will be required. Construction and demolition will involve approximately 54.6 acres of new

construction for 21 facilities such as hangars, barracks, aircraft parts storage building, organizational vehicle parking, and a warm storage facility. Training will occur on current USARAK training lands and use existing flight corridors. Training from FWA will occur year-round with some restrictions on season, time, altitude, and location. A majority of the training is projected to occur between February and May, although the timing of training could vary depending on mission requirements and world conditions. Airfield operations at Ladd AAF will more than double. Airspace structure will not change but restricted areas will be activated more frequently.

Alternative 3: Combat Aviation Brigade

Alternative 3 would form a Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) by augmenting USARAK's existing assigned aviation assets with 84 additional helicopters and 2,360 additional Soldiers that would be split-stationed among FWA, FRA, and Eielson AFB. The total projected population increase (including Soldiers, family members, and civilian support personnel) would be approximately 4,125 at FWA, 1,235 at FRA, and 1,235 at Eielson AFB. Alternative 3 would result in a total aviation unit of 2,850 Soldiers and 116 helicopters.

Construction of all the facilities required for the Preferred Alternative, as well as additional facilities, would be required for Alternative 3. All construction would occur only on the FWA Main Post. Construction and demolition will involve approximately 73 acres of new construction for 32 facilities such as barracks, recreational vehicle parking replacement, rotary wing apron, and organizational vehicle parking. Existing facilities would be utilized at FRA and Eielson AFB. The CAB would operate more vehicles and generators to support training.

Training would occur on all USARAK training lands and use existing flight corridors. Implementing this alternative would provide USARAK with the capability to train up to three full brigades simultaneously. Flight activity around Ladd AAF would be the same as for the Preferred Alternative but activity would also increase at FRA and Eielson AFB.

Alternatives Eliminated from Detailed Consideration

The Army considered seven additional alternatives to the Proposed Action. Alternatives ranged from conducting training outside of Alaska or from different military installations in Alaska to alternative stationing of assets and infrastructure outside of FWA. None met all of the screening criteria, and each was dismissed from further evaluation.

4.0 Public, Agency, and Tribal Involvement

In accordance with CEQ regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) and AR 200-2 (32 CFR Part 651), the Army provided federal, State, and local agency stakeholders, the public, Alaska Native tribes, and other interested parties the following notifications and opportunities for involvement during preparation of the EIS:

- A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on April 4, 2007. The notice and an invitation to scoping meetings were published in appropriate local papers (*Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, *Delta Wind*, and *Anchorage Daily News*) following publication of the NOI.

- Agency and public scoping meetings were held April 10-19, 2007. The agency scoping meetings were held in Anchorage and Fairbanks, while the public scoping meetings were held in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Delta Junction. The scoping period ended on May 4, 2007; more than 50 people attended scoping meetings, and 20 provided scoping comments. Comments included requests for more detail about training activities and coordination of airspace use with general aviation; potential disturbance of existing hazardous waste sites and management of hazardous substances; potential disturbance of historic and archaeological cultural resources; potential noise effects on both human and wildlife populations; potential disturbance of marine mammals, particularly beluga whales, in the Cook Inlet; and potential disturbance of big game such as bison and moose. In addition, the public asked the Army to clarify the Proposed Action and alternatives, including the need to explain clearly the increase in personnel, the use of certain installations for stationing, construction details, and aerial training activities under each alternative. The EIS addresses each of these issues.

- USARAK consulted with Alaska Native tribes and tribal organizations in accordance with the requirements of Executive Order (E.O.) 13175, *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*, and E.O. 13007, *Indian Sacred Sites*, to avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of sacred sites, and with the Department of Defense (DoD) *American Indian and Alaska Native Policy: Alaska Implementation Guidance* (DoD, 2001). The Army provided letters, maps, and supplemental information to 11 federally recognized tribes notifying them of its intent to prepare an EIS. Tribes were offered the opportunity to enter into government-to-government consultation. During the scoping period, the Army did not receive any verbal or written comments from tribes. In addition, the Army presented information on the Proposed Action during four quarterly meetings with the Upper Tanana Inter-Tribal Coalition between 2006 and 2009, and provided updates on the Proposed Action via newsletters between 2007 and 2009.

- The Army issued a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Draft EIS in the *Federal Register* on May 1, 2009, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) filed notice of its receipt of the EIS in the *Federal Register* on May 8, 2009. Notices announcing the Draft EIS availability and public meetings were published in the *Anchorage Daily News, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner,* and *Delta Wind* newspapers four times each between the Draft EIS release and the public meetings, and one final advertisement was placed in each newspaper prior to the end of the comment period. Notices were also mailed to 129 agency and tribal representatives, and private individuals or organizations that expressed interest in the EIS. Copies of the Draft EIS were provided to local libraries, and the Draft EIS was posted to the U.S. Army Alaska Conservation website (http://www.usarak.army.mil/conservation/).

- Agency and tribal meetings were held in Anchorage and Fairbanks on May 18 and May 20, 2009, respectively. Public meetings were held in Anchorage on May 18, Fairbanks on May 20, and in Delta Junction on May 21, 2009.

- The comment period for public, agency, and tribal review of the Draft EIS ended on June 22, 2009. A majority of the comments received were related to airspace management, air quality, wildlife, environmental justice, and subsistence and recreation. Comments generally involved concern over increased numbers of aircraft and potential

conflicts with other users; support for notification procedures; clarification on specific information (provided and requested); the program used for modeling mobile source emissions; clarification of values used to prepare the emissions estimates; clarification of the calculated number of operations per year; request for documentation in the EIS regarding the affects of current and proposed activities on moose; concerns that increased activities in DTA will increase disturbance to calving grounds of the Delta bison herd along the Delta River; concern that administrative activities and access for management and research purposes as well as for prescribed burns will be restricted; concern that increased pressure on subsistence species will result because of increased military and support personnel; and concern that new military and support personnel would not be aware of or respect the importance of tribal values and culture. All comments received were thoroughly considered and addressed in Chapter 9 of the Final EIS.

- The NOA for the Final EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on September 11, 2009. The Final EIS was made publicly available at local libraries of potentially affected communities and on the U.S. Army Garrison Alaska Conservation website (http://www.usarak.army.mil/conservation/). Notices were also mailed to 159 agency and tribal representatives, and private individuals or organizations that expressed interest in the EIS.
- The NOA of this ROD will be published in the *Federal Register*. Following its publication, the ROD will be made available (with the Final EIS) online and at local libraries.

5.0 Decision for the Stationing and Training of Increased Assets within U.S. Army Alaska

In the Final EIS, the Army identifies Alternative 2 as the Preferred Alternative to station increased aviation assets in Alaska. This alternative will augment and reorganize existing USARAK aviation assets into an ATF and will involve adding 710 Soldiers and 40 helicopters to FWA, construction and demolition of supporting infrastructure at FWA, and increased aviation training at USARAK lands. This alternative will result in a total growth at FWA by approximately 2,005 Soldiers, family members, and civilian support personnel, 40 helicopters, and 54.6 acres of new facilities construction.

I have considered the results of the analysis in the Final EIS, supporting studies, and comments provided during formal comment and review periods. Based on this review, I have determined that Alternative 2 reflects the proper balance of enhancing USARAK aviation capabilities, improving training opportunities for existing USARAK forces, improving the Army's ability to support worldwide military operations, and protecting the environment.

My decision to implement the Proposed Action through augmentation and reorganization of existing Alaskan aviation assets into an ATF is based on the following considerations. First, this decision will effectively support USARAK's local training needs as well as support worldwide military operations. In addition, the overall disturbance footprint will be smaller under the ATF and helicopters will be seen in fewer parts of the state under the ATF option (as compared to the CAB option under Alternative 3). The ATF is smaller in scale and scope than the CAB, will be less costly for the Army to implement, and will result in

lesser adverse environmental and social impacts. Finally, the Army has temporarily stationed additional Soldiers and helicopters in Alaska to support the training and deployment requirements for the units based in Alaska, but these units have not been assigned permanently. Alternative 2 will permanently station the units that have been in Alaska temporarily beginning in 2005 and includes the construction of permanent support facilities. Dependents and civilian workers will also accompany the permanent stationing of the ATF Soldiers.

Alternative 2 meets the Army's purpose and need. My decision to implement Alternative 2 includes commitments to environmental mitigations discussed in Section 7.0 of this document. Alternative 2 is environmentally preferable to Alternative 3. Although Alternative 3 would not result in significant additional impacts, the larger Brigade unit would require more construction and training. The split-stationing of Soldiers and helicopters would also broaden the scope of impacts to different areas.

The No Action alternative would be the environmentally preferred alternative, but this alternative does meet the Army's purpose and need. Therefore, I have not chosen it.

6.0 Environmental Consequences and Proposed Mitigation Measures

Implementation of this decision is expected to result in direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts. Impacts will occur as a result of troop stationing and facilities construction at FWA and training exercises on USARAK training lands. Impacts are fully evaluated in the Final EIS. I have considered the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts associated with the implementation of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 2 in the Final EIS) and make this decision in consideration of the environmental impacts associated with each alternative evaluated in the EIS. The discussion below presents a summary of impacts that are anticipated to occur as a result of implementing the alternatives considered in the Final EIS. Mitigation measures to reduce impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3 are also included in the discussion below.

6.1 Airspace Management

Under Alternative 1, there would be no change in helicopter basing or operations at Alaska military installations. Army helicopter operations would continue to have the potential to interact with general aviation (GA), particularly near airfields and in the visual flight rule (VFR) corridors.

The Preferred Alternative will add 40 helicopters to FWA, and takeoffs and landings from Ladd AAF will double (averaging 40 takeoffs and landings daily). Helicopters will travel to training areas using existing, established routes. The transit routes will use the same airspace as GA, but the volume of trips will be relatively minor. Restricted areas over the training areas will be activated more frequently, potentially decreasing the availability for GA to fly over training areas during exercises. Increased activity would increase the potential for interaction with GA.

Under Alternative 3, the same helicopters and activity would occur at FWA as with the Preferred Alternative, but Alternative 3 would add 20 helicopters to FRA and 24 helicopters to Eielson AFB. At FRA, an average of 20 USARAK airfield operations would occur daily. At

Eielson AFB, four airfield operations would occur daily, on average. Alternative 3 would have the highest level of flying activity and, thus, the highest potential to affect GA.

Under all alternatives, the military's existing programs would continue to be used to coordinate with local civilian aviation interests and the U.S. Air Force (USAF) to reduce potential conflicts in corridors that both military and civilian air traffic use heavily. The overall impact to airspace under the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3 would be adverse but less than significant.

6.2 Cultural and Visual Resources

Under Alternative 1, there would be no impacts to cultural or visual resources from construction or training activities.

The impacts to historic and visual resources for the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3 are the same. Both alternatives would result in significant adverse effects to the World War II-era National Historic Landmark (NHL) at FWA. Impacts are related to infill development of facilities that are out of scale with historic buildings, viewshed obstruction from the infill development, and the potential for change in use of Hangars 2 and 3, which contribute to the NHL's historic significance.

To mitigate these effects, the Army has proposed a number of actions to minimize effects to the NHL. The Army proposes to involve National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 consulting parties in the procurement process for design and construction of new facilities within the NHL, as well as follow the *Fort Wainwright Army Installation Design Guidelines* for design of the new facilities, particularly new helicopter hangars, to ensure they are "sympathetic" to the historical setting of the NHL. For Hangars 2 and 3, the Army proposes to prepare a study to investigate potential future uses of these buildings following construction of new helicopter hangars and complete Historic American Buildings Survey documentation. To increase public education and access to the historic resources at FWA, the Army also proposes to construct a viewing platform for visitors; prepare a context statement for the Cold War in Alaska; prepare design guidelines for renovations, maintenance, and new construction within the NHL; and prepare a context study for cold weather research in Alaska with its beginnings at FWA. In coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the other NHPA Section 106 consulting parties, the Army completed a Programmatic Agreement (see Appendix F of the Final EIS), dated September 2, 2009. SOP 12 of the Army's *Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan* provides procedures for inadvertent discoveries and emergency actions. SOP 12 addresses the process for tribal coordination, when appropriate. The overall impact to this resource would be adverse, with most of the impacts considered to be significant. Mitigation measures are robust and offset some of the impacts of the decision.

6.3 Noise

Under Alternative 1, USARAK receives a few noise complaints each year, most of which are related to weapons training rather than flight operations. Currently, the Noise Zone (NZ) II contour at FWA extends into a residential area, and the primary source of noise in this location is airfield operations.

Under the Preferred Alternative, noise at FWA will increase in the short term from construction, and in the long term from an overall increase in operation of facilities and activity in airfields and flight corridors. These activities are not expected to change NZs around the installation.

In addition, Alternative 3 would increase flying operations at Bryant AAF and Eielson AFB. Although noise-generating activities would occur more frequently under the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3, NZs would not change around any of the installations or flight corridors. The frequency of noise annoyance would be expected to increase proportionally to the increase in flight operations.

No additional mitigation is proposed to address the noise impacts because the NZs would not change from existing conditions under any of the alternatives. The Army will continue to implement existing measures and guidelines for minimizing noise complaints. The overall impact to this resource would be adverse but less than significant.

6.4 Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste

Under Alternative 1, there would be no change in the use of hazardous materials or generation of hazardous waste. Contaminated sites on FWA would continue to be managed according to agreements and consultation with the EPA and Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

Under both the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3, some facilities construction and demolition activities are proposed to be sited within contaminated areas. Contaminated soil encountered during construction would be removed and properly disposed of in accordance with appropriate State and/or federal regulations. For all facilities proposed under the Preferred Alternative that are sited in known contaminated areas, the Army has conducted Pre-Construction Environmental Surveys. The surveys recommend approval for construction without additional investigation for all but the following two areas:

- A screening-level investigation for the Aircraft Parts Storage Facility was conducted in July 2009 to determine the presence or absence of contamination. The investigation determined that shallow petroleum contamination is present at the site. Additional investigation and remedial activities will be required. It is expected that contamination will be localized and within the capability of the project and Garrison to manage. The site was recommended for construction with the understanding that further investigation will be necessary to determine the presence or absence of contamination and required remediation will be performed.
- Known minor contamination, potential contamination, and other recognized environmental conditions present a strong suspicion that contamination would be encountered during the demolition of Buildings 3011, 3475, and 3477 or subsequent construction of the Organizational Parking Area project. The extent of the potential contamination cannot be determined until demolition of Buildings 3475 and 3477 has occurred. It is expected that contamination will be localized and within the capability of the project and Garrison to manage. The site was recommended for construction with the understanding that further investigation will be necessary to determine the presence or absence of contamination and required remediation will be performed.

For construction of facilities in areas where contamination is encountered, the Army will evaluate and remediate as appropriate under the Fort Wainwright Federal Facility Agreement, which requires concurrence from State and federal agencies. Alternative 3 has two more properties sited in contaminated areas than the Preferred Alternative and, therefore, could be more complicated and expensive to implement.

Operation and maintenance (O&M) of new aviation assets and facilities would increase use of hazardous materials and generation of hazardous waste. Alternative 3 involves a larger workforce and operation of more facilities that use hazardous materials and generate hazardous waste. USARAK has existing management plans and programs to safely collect, store, and dispose of hazardous materials/hazardous waste, and has capacity to handle O&M waste associated with either the Preferred Alternative or Alternative 3. The Army would continue to manage its hazardous materials and waste in existing programs to be protective of human health and the environment. The Army is committed to continuing ongoing monitoring in areas where the presence of contamination is possible but has not been previously identified. The overall impact to this resource would be adverse but less than significant.

6.5 Wildlife and Fisheries

Wildlife species included in the impact analysis are those identified as being indicator species: moose, caribou, Dall sheep, bison, brown and black bears, beluga whales, migratory waterbirds, sandhill cranes, raptors (to include bald and golden eagles), and neotropical migratory birds.

Under Alternative 1, the primary impacts to wildlife species occur from training exercises, which would continue to occur at current levels.

Under the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3, the increased number of personnel stationed at FWA could increase hunting pressure on game mammals and could increase wildlife-vehicle collisions as traffic increases as a result of increased population. These effects would be greater for Alternative 3 where the personnel numbers are larger. Construction and airfield activities in the FWA Main Post would have little effect on wildlife under either alternative because little wildlife resides in this area.

Under both the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3, wildlife would be affected by increased military training, both in the increased use of flight corridors and the increased number of exercises at training areas. These effects would be greater under Alternative 3 because this alternative would involve more frequent use of flight corridors and training areas. Impacts to wildlife present along flight corridors and in training areas are described below.

- Along the flight corridors between FWA and the TFTA, YTA, and DTA, moose and bison are common but likely habituated to overflights. The increase in helicopter traffic is unlikely to have much of an effect on these species or on Dall sheep, which are not affected by higher-altitude overflights. Caribou and bears are limited in their distribution along the flight corridors between FWA and the TFTA, YTA, and DTA, and would likely be unaffected. Birds of all types would be potentially affected by increased helicopter traffic in the flight corridors, but the effects would be minimal because most species are not common along the flight corridors or use the flight corridors for only

limited periods seasonally. Bald eagles are an exception to this because they nest along the flight corridors and have been shown to be sensitive to aircraft and helicopter noise. Because the increase in flight activity is relatively small, this impact remains minimal. Alternative 3 would add the Eielson AFB-DTA corridor and would increase the number of helicopters flying along the Tanana and Delta rivers, which would increase effects to sandhill cranes, as compared with Alternative 1 or the Preferred Alternative.

- Wildlife present on the training areas is more susceptible to impact from increased training. This increased sensitivity is partly because helicopters using the training areas fly much lower to the ground and often hover. The effect is limited because helicopter use would still be relatively infrequent at these areas, particularly under the Preferred Alternative. At TFTA, which is a high-density calving area for moose, low-flying and hovering helicopters would have a moderate to severe effect to individuals near the training exercises. While these effects are not likely to affect moose at the population level, they do cause substantial disruption, particularly if activities occur during calving season (mid-May). The Army restricts training during moose calving for this reason. Black bears den at TFTA and may be affected by noise during training. Brown bears, caribou, and bison are not common at the TFTA but all are common at DTA, and brown bears are also present at YTA. Caribou and brown bears have been shown to be sensitive to overflights by helicopters, particularly during the calving and post-calving season. While neither species is present on DTA in large numbers, they would be moderately affected if present during training exercises. Helicopters do not seem to affect the bison herd at DTA, which is habituated to noise except during calving when the Army restricts training when bison are present. Birds that nest or breed within the training areas could be affected by increased training activities. The trumpeter swan, which nests at TFTA and DTA, has been shown to be sensitive to noise. The sharp-tailed grouse, which has breeding areas in several drop zones at the DTA, could be moderately to severely affected if training occurred during breeding season (May); however, if training did not occur during this period, effects would be minimal. Training at FRA (only part of Alternative 3) would affect moose and brown and black bears, but the effects are limited because activity is limited.

To minimize effects to wildlife species, the Army will continue to impose restrictions on training activities during critical nesting or calving periods and will follow its existing guidelines to avoid disturbance, displacement, or mortality that could permanently affect populations. Existing wildlife protection measures include implementation of *USARAK Regulation 350-2: U.S. Army Alaska Range Regulation, Training* (2002), which includes guidelines for the avoidance of harassment of wildlife. The Army will continue to restrict activities in the DTA as follows to protect bison: 1) minimize disturbance to bison calving areas on DTA between April 15 and May 31, if bison are present, and 2) minimize disturbance to bison pre-migration areas between July 1 and August 31, if bison are present. The Army will continue to halt ground-training activities or operations within 2,000 meters of any bison during any time of year. Additional mitigation measures are additional observations of moose herds and trumpeter swans, pilot advisories of the presence of sandhill crane roosting areas during spring and fall migration, development of a wildlife awareness program for pilots and Soldiers, and surveys of sites prior to construction to protect eagle nesting and feeding habitats. Beluga whales would not be affected by implementation of the Preferred Alternative, but may be affected by noise impacts from

training under Alternative 3. If the Army had selected Alternative 3 as its Preferred Alternative, it would need to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service about effects to the beluga whale. The overall impact to wildlife species would be minimal to minor for several species but less than significant for all species.

6.6 Air Quality

The Fairbanks area, including FWA, is designated as a maintenance area for carbon monoxide (CO) and non-attainment for particulate matter less than 2.5 microns ($PM_{2.5}$). As a maintenance area, the region has an implementation plan in place to keep CO emissions in compliance with National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Fairbanks has been proposed by EPA as non-attainment for $PM_{2.5}$. Under Alternative 1, FWA will continue to participate with federal, State, and regional officials to conduct its activities in a manner that does not contribute to air quality violations. FWA will continue to comply with the terms of its Title V permit.

Under both the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3, FWA also will continue these coordination and compliance activities. An air quality analysis was conducted for the Proposed Action alternatives. The results, assumptions, and calculations for the analysis are included in Section 4.7 and Appendix D of the Final EIS. The analysis showed that although increased vehicle emissions and operation of new stationary sources that emit air pollutants would occur under both alternatives, the overall impact to this resource would be less than significant because emissions would all be below regulatory thresholds. Construction of new facilities would also generate emissions from dust and vehicle operations. These temporary emission impacts would be less than significant and would be below regulatory thresholds. Emissions would be greater under Alternative 3 because the increase in the number of Soldiers and the associated facilities would be greater. Mitigation will include minimizing dust during construction and coordinating with regional efforts that address CO and $PM_{2.5}$.

6.7 Socioeconomics

Alternative 1 would not substantially change the population, housing, economic, or school conditions in communities surrounding FWA, FRA, or Eielson AFB. Existing resources are sufficient to support existing needs, with the exception of Army family housing at FWA and unaccompanied housing (barracks) at FRA, which are in tight supply. Construction of family housing and barracks on FWA (as well as other facilities at FWA, FRA, and Eielson AFB) would continue as currently planned and programmed.

The Preferred Alternative will result in a minor increase in population and economic activity in the area near FWA; increases, however, will be within historical fluctuations. The Preferred Alternative will result in greater short- and longer-term shortages of military family housing as compared to Alternative 1. New military family housing will be constructed at FWA by 2014; however, even after this project is completed, 311 military families will not be housed on the installation. Housing needs could be accommodated in the Fairbanks area, but families living off FWA will have higher housing costs. Until additional housing units are completed in 2014, families could be in FWA temporary housing longer than desired. Civilian workers will not add greatly to the housing demand because most will be hired from the local area. Barracks housing will be short until 2011

when a new barracks is completed. Relocatable housing structures could be obtained or beds could be added to existing barracks in the short term to temporarily alleviate the shortfall. Enrollment at schools on FWA will increase nearly 5 percent, which can be managed through federal aid that will be provided to the State of Alaska. Overall housing and school impacts under the Preferred Alternative will be adverse but minor, and economic impacts will be beneficial and minor. No mitigation, other than the measures to reduce the impacts of the housing shortage mentioned above, will be implemented.

Under Alternative 3, family housing at FWA would be short 525 units, and barracks would lack more than 500 beds, even after completion of the new barracks. Soldiers stationed at Eielson AFB and FRA under Alternative 3 would not experience a shortage of family housing but unaccompanied housing at FRA would be an issue. There is an existing shortfall of 417 beds in barracks space at FRA, which would be exacerbated with the implementation of Alternative 3. If Alternative 3 were implemented, the overall shortfall of beds at FRA would be 611, and no new barracks are planned at the installation. There would be increased enrollment at schools serving families that live at FWA, Eielson AFB, and FRA; however, it is anticipated that the increased federal school impact aid to the Fairbanks North Star Borough and Anchorage School Districts would offset the costs of enrolling additional students. The overall impact to housing and schools under Alternative 3 would be moderate and adverse, while the economic effect would be moderate and beneficial. If the Army had selected Alternative 3 as its Preferred Alternative, it would have conducted an additional housing analysis to verify the shortages and considered constructing additional housing.

6.8 Soils and Permafrost

There would be no construction under Alternative 1 and, therefore, no disturbance of soils or permafrost during construction. Impacts from training would be the same as under current conditions.

Construction of new facilities under the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3 may result in direct short-term adverse impacts to top soils and permafrost as a result of the removal of vegetation and disturbance of soils and permafrost within the facility construction footprint. Temporary erosion impacts and melting of permafrost may occur as soils are exposed during construction. Implementation of established best management practices (BMPs) would reduce the potential for long-term adverse impacts to soils and permafrost. Training activities under the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3 could affect soils and permafrost, but the effects would be limited because ground disturbance would be minimal, and training would use preexisting ranges and maneuver areas, including landing zones, refueling points, and impact areas. Existing range management practices would continue to be used to manage potential effects. The overall impact to soils and permafrost would be temporary and less than significant.

6.9 Water Resources

Implementation of Alternative 1 would not increase water use because no facilities or personnel would be added to FWA. It also would not introduce pollutants into waters during construction because no construction would occur. Impervious surface area would not increase. Military training activities may lead to slight sedimentation from trail use and

chemical decomposition of munition constituents within designated impact areas. Implementation of existing BMPs would reduce these impacts.

Under the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3, additional personnel stationed at FWA would increase water use. Alternative 3 would also increase water use associated with new personnel at Eielson AFB and FRA. Construction of facilities at FWA under the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3 could temporarily impact surface water resources and water quality, including in the section of the Chena River listed as impaired, as a result of erosion and sedimentation from land disturbance and increased potential for the accidental release of hazardous materials. Construction of new facilities also would increase impervious surfaces, increasing surface water runoff and creating less surface area for groundwater to recharge. The net increase of impermeable areas at FWA under the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3 is approximately 36 and 49 acres, respectively (no construction is proposed at FRA or Eielson AFB under either alternative). The effects would be greatest under Alternative 3 because more construction would occur at FWA. Helicopter training exercises, including flight operation and maintenance, would utilize existing facilities and operating procedures; consequently, slight, if any, changes are anticipated in water quality and quantity from training. Implementation of requirements in storm water discharge permits for construction and facility operation, i.e., the anticipated renewal of the Multi-Sector General Permit and the pending issuance of a municipal separate storm sewer system permit, including storm water pollution prevention plans and BMPs, would reduce the potential for long-term adverse impacts to water resources under both Alternatives 2 and 3. Furthermore, the Army would coordinate with State and federal regulatory agencies to implement additional measures, as deemed necessary, to address issuance of a total maximum daily load limit for the Chena River (anticipated in 2010). The overall impact to this resource could be adverse but the effect is temporary and less than significant.

6.10 Subsistence and Recreation

Alternative 1 would not change access to military installations for subsistence or recreation. Lands surrounding restricted areas would continue to provide access to hunting and other recreation activities.

Both the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3 would increase the amount of time that training lands are unavailable for subsistence or recreation. However, federal lands adjacent to the training facilities would continue to be available for subsistence and recreation activities during those periods when USARAK lands are unavailable or closed. Pressures on these surrounding lands would increase from Alternative 1 conditions. There would be a greater frequency of closures with Alternative 3 than the Preferred Alternative because more training would occur under Alternative 3 that could conflict with public use of military lands. Alternative 3 would also bring more military personnel to the area who might engage in recreational hunting. With ongoing implementation of standard BMPs established by USARAK for subsistence and recreation activities, as well as ongoing education of Soldiers on Alaska Native cultural awareness and diversity, including subsistence-user resources, the overall impact to this resource would be adverse but less than significant.

6.11 Cumulative Effects

The Army conducted a cumulative impact assessment to determine if the combined effects of the Proposed Action along with other projects occurring in the region might be significant. Subsection 4.12.3 of the Final EIS provides a general description of the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions included in the cumulative impact assessment. There would be no cumulative impacts from implementation of Alternative 1 because no action would be taken under this alternative. Therefore, Alternative 1 is not included in the cumulative effects analysis.

After review of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects occurring in the same region of influence as the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 3, the Army determined that the following resources could be sensitive to cumulative effects: airspace management, cultural and visual resources, hazardous materials/hazardous waste, noise, wildlife, and subsistence and recreation. For cultural and visual resources, the geographic scope of analysis was limited to the FWA Main Post because direct and potential cumulative impacts are related to facilities construction and demolition. For hazardous materials/hazardous waste, the geographic scope of analysis included the FWA Main Post and USARAK training areas because direct and potential cumulative impacts are related to facilities construction and demolition as well as ground disturbance during training. For the other resources, the geographic scope included the FWA Main Post, flight corridors, and USARAK training areas. Other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects considered during the analysis comprise military construction, military training, military reorganizations, and military airspace proposals, as well as private rail and pipeline projects.

The EIS concludes that there will be cumulative effects to cultural resources, hazardous materials/hazardous waste, wildlife, socioeconomics, and subsistence and recreation when impacts of other projects are combined with those of the Preferred Alternative. Cumulative effects to most of these resources are less than significant. With continued coordination among military and civilian airspace users, there will be no cumulative effect to airspace management. Near FWA and Eielson AFB, noise reductions resulting from USAF actions implementing base realignment and closure (BRAC) will offset increases in noise from increased helicopter training under the Preferred Alternative. Modification of World War II- and Cold War-era historic resources representative of Alaska's military legacy will likely continue as the military mission continues to evolve and these historic resources cannot be adapted to new missions. Other construction projects in contaminated areas on FWA could combine with the construction projects of the Preferred Alternative to further limit the availability of uncontaminated construction sites and increase the likelihood that future construction would be conducted on contaminated sites, requiring agency coordination and resulting in increased construction schedules and costs. Raptors and neotropical bird species may be affected by cumulative actions of military and rail projects along the Tanana River. A proposed new rail line could possibly present a barrier to activities such as hunting which, when combined with diminishing availability of military lands due to increased training needs, will cumulatively affect public access, recreation, and subsistence.

Effects to housing at FRA under Alternative 3 only could present a significant cumulative effect with consideration of recent Army growth from Grow the Army that has or is projected to further strain housing resources in the short and long term. Grow the Army

includes construction of new barracks; however, even with the new beds, the existing deficits and demands of Grow the Army in addition to Alternative 3 of the Proposed Action would overwhelm military housing at FRA and require substantial expansion of facilities to meet needs.

7.0 Mitigation Commitments

The Army is committed to sustaining and preserving the environment. As part of the decision to implement the Preferred Alternative for the stationing and training of increased Aviation Assets on USARAK installations, the Army will enact the following environmental mitigation measures to minimize the impacts of this decision.

- **Implementation and Continuation of Existing Environmental Management Programs.** The Army will continue to implement its environmental and land management programs to minimize environmental impacts at FWA and USARAK training areas. These programs are designed to comply with applicable laws and regulations, and are based on the Army's commitment to sustainability.
- **Use of Best Management Practices.** The Army will apply BMPs during project planning and execution to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to the environment and socioeconomic conditions. BMPs are procedures or that are applied routinely in the construction and operation of facilities, such as use of erosion control features to prevent pollutants from entering waterways.
- **Specific Mitigation Measures.** Some impacts of the Preferred Alternative require special mitigation that is outside of the Army's routine practices. These measures are included in the Preferred Alternative to reduce environmental or socioeconomic impacts that cannot be addressed by BMPs. Mitigation measures that the Army has committed to completing when implementing the Preferred Alternative are listed in Appendix A.

These measures represent all practical means to avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental harm resulting from implementation of the Preferred Alternative. As appropriate, the Army will also employ a monitoring and enforcement program for the mitigation adopted in this decision.

I have considered the results of the analysis described in the Final EIS, supporting studies, and comments provided during the public comment period on the Draft EIS. Based on this review, I have determined that the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 2 in the Final EIS) and mitigations discussed above will enhance USARAK aviation capabilities, improve training opportunities for existing USARAK forces, and improve the Army's ability to support worldwide military operations, while minimizing impacts to the environment.

Mr. John Nerger

October 13, 2009

Date

John B. Nerger
Installation Management Command
Executive Director

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APPENDIX A

Mitigation Summary

TABLE A-1
Mitigation Summary for Preferred Alternative
Record of Decision for the Stationing and Training Increased Aviation Assets within U.S. Army Alaska

Mitigation Project Title	Final EIS Section	Description of Method
Pre-Construction		
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.1	Utilize sympathetic design for the new hangars that considers the historic character of the National Historic Landmark and follows the Secretary of the Interior's standards as closely as possible.
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.1 and 4.3.3.2	Fort Wainwright will involve the Section 106 consulting parties in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Request for Proposal process to secure services for designing and constructing the new facilities. The consulting parties also will be involved in the contracting source selection process through the Programmatic Agreement.
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.1	Continue to follow the *Fort Wainwright Installation Design Guide* for siting new facilities along with other guidance and processes for military master planning.
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.3	Fort Wainwright will conduct a reuse study for Hangars 2 and 3. The study will outline limitations and requirements of Hangars 2 and 3, but the majority of the focus will be on potential cost-effective uses that fit within the needs of Fort Wainwright, particularly the needs of Fort Wainwright's airfield.
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.3	Update Historic American Buildings Survey documentation to record the current conditions for Hangars 2 and 3.
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.5	Develop new design guidelines to help preserve the integrity and heart of the National Historic Landmark and the Cold War Historic District.
Noise Management	4.4.3	Follow existing standard practices to locate facilities for noise-sensitive receptors (e.g., residential housing, hospitals) in areas compatible with such uses as part of the master planning process.
Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste	4.5.3	If necessary, negotiations with the regulating agencies over specific Cantonment construction projects will need to take place prior to final siting analysis, project award, and construction of new facilities. Through this process, funding requests for cleanup of contaminants, commitments for continued (or increased) environmental monitoring, and other required changes can be accomplished in accordance with the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA). Any additional sampling and monitoring of contaminated sites required for construction of new facilities will take place prior to the start of construction.
Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste	4.5.3	The Fort Wainwright and Fort Richardson Directorates of Public Works have the primary responsibility for developing and implementing the asbestos management programs as part of their obligations under the installation *Asbestos Management Plan* , to include asbestos survey data for any building proposed to be demolished. A written "Notification of Demolition and Renovation" shall be submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 10 working days (according to the postmark) prior to the start of any work on an asbestos project. The construction contractor will be responsible for work site air monitoring compliance and final clearance. The asbestos program coordinator and the installations' engineering departments are responsible for quality assurance contract inspection for all asbestos work.
Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste	4.5.3	Continue implementation of the *Lead-Based Paint Management Plan* .
Air Quality Permit	4.7.3.1	Reevaluate need for construction and/or operating air quality permit modifications based on final site selection and design prior to start of construction.
Air Quality Permit	4.7.3.1	Submit construction permit applications to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation as required and appropriate.
Permafrost Site Selection and Design	4.9.3	Areas with permafrost are avoided whenever possible. However, if a construction site is selected that has permafrost, then specific U.S. Army Corps of Engineers design guidelines or construction techniques are followed, which could include the use of driving piles for the foundation, removal of the permafrost, or other measures that are determined on a site-by-site basis.
During Construction		
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.6	Any potential effects to previously undocumented cultural resources discovered during construction would be mitigated pursuant to Fort Wainwright's *Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan* , Standard Operating Procedure 12. If during the course of the Undertaking any unforeseen or unanticipated effects are discovered, U.S. Army Garrison Fort Wainwright (USAG-FWA) shall initiate consultation pursuant to 36 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 800.13 to resolve the unforeseen effect. If human remains are inadvertently discovered, USAG-FWA shall cease all work and ensure that the remains are secured from further disturbance or vandalism until a plan for treatment has been developed. If USAG-FWA determines that the remains are Native American, the Garrison Commander shall immediately undertake any actions necessary under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, as amended. If USAG-FWA determines that the remains are not Native American, and do not warrant criminal investigation, USAG-FWA shall immediately notify the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and consult with the SHPO to identify descendants or other interested parties, if any. USAG-FWA, in consultation with the SHPO and any interested parties, shall develop a plan for the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. No mitigation will be required.
Wildlife Management	4.6.3	Survey construction sites, based on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service criteria, to ensure construction and occupancy of facilities would not impact eagle nesting and feeding habits.
Air Quality Management	4.7.3.1 and 4.9.3	Establish and implement a dust control plan to reduce impacts from fugitive dust during construction.
Soil Erosion and Water Quality	4.9.3 and 4.10.3	Ongoing implementation of storm water pollution and prevention plans and standard construction best management practices established by Fort Wainwright for construction- and soil disturbance-related activities would minimize impacts to soil resources. Disturbed soils will be revegetated following construction of facilities.
Water Resources Management	4.10.3	Implement the requirements of the Multi-Sector General Permit and the permit for the municipal separate storm sewer system when they are issued.
Water Resources Management	4.10.3	Coordinate with Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to implement additional measures, as deemed necessary, to address issuance of a total maximum daily load limit for the Chena river (anticipated 2010).
Post-Construction		
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3	The current aviation functions housed in Hangars 2 and 3 will remain in place through the first two full phases of construction. Only after the new hangars are built would the current functions relocate, and the use of Hangars 2 and 3 could possibly change.
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.4	Construct a viewing platform with interpretive panels from which visitors may view the National Historic Landmark and parts of the Cold War Historic District, as described in the Programmatic Agreement.
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.5	Help the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) update and finalize the SHPO report, *The Coldest Front: Cold War Military Properties in Alaska.* The report will serve as a historic context for resources associated with the Cold War in Alaska.
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.5	Prepare a historic context for cold weather research in Alaska to support evaluation of this important but relatively unstudied area of Alaska's history.
Cultural Resource Management	4.3.3.5	Develop a "Teaching with Historic Places" lesson plan in partnership with the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District to impart knowledge of and instill value for the Ladd Field National Historic Landmark in the Fairbanks community.
Air Quality Permit	4.7.3.1	Conduct air quality permit compliance audits.

TABLE A-1
Mitigation Summary for Preferred Alternative
Record of Decision for the Stationing and Training Increased Aviation Assets within U.S. Army Alaska

Mitigation Project Title	Final EIS Section	Description of Method
Recurring		
Air Space Coordination	4.2.3	U.S. Army Alaska will continue its program of coordination with local civilian aviation interests and the U.S. Air Force to reduce potential conflicts in corridors used heavily by both military and civilian air traffic.
Air Space Coordination	4.2.3	Use of Notice to Airmen system to alert civil and military users of upcoming events, such as training exercises.
Air Space Coordination	4.2.3	Participate in Alaska Civil Military Aviation Council meetings, a forum for discussing aviation issues with the U.S. Air Force and civilian aviation interests.
Air Space Coordination	4.2.3	Continue to advise airspace users over FREQ (FM) 38.30 regarding operational ranges and areas to avoid.
Air Space Coordination	4.2.3	Evaluate participation in the U.S. Air Force Special Use Airspace Information System program.
Air Space Coordination	4.2.3	Conduct quarterly U.S. Army Alaska Aviation Safety Standard Council meetings with the Federal Aviation Administration, U.S. Air Force, and general aviation representatives to alert the civilian and military aviation communities about upcoming exercises and other periods of intense training activity.
Air Space Policy and Doctrine	4.2.3	U.S. Army Alaska operations in and outside of training areas will continue to be governed by existing policies and doctrine including U.S. Army Regulation 95-1, *Aviation Flight Regulations* , U.S. Army Alaska Airborne Standard Operating Procedures, U.S. Army Alaska 350-2, *Range Regulation* , July 2002, and Army Pamphlet 385-63.
Noise Management	4.4.3	Collect comments or complaints regarding noise, including a 24-hour feedback line.
Noise Management	4.4.3	Continue public notification of nighttime firing.
Noise Management	4.4.3	Continue public notification of exceptions to firing hours (6 a.m. to 10 p.m. for demolitions, field artillery, and mortars) by the Public Affairs Office through publication of a Notice of Firing.
Noise Management	4.4.3	Continue to implement existing U.S. Army Alaska Regulations 95-1 and 350-2, which regulate military helicopter travel outside U.S. Army Alaska lands, including operations over populated areas, livestock, dwellings, and other noise-sensitive areas.
Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste	4.5.3	Continue to adhere to the regulations and guidelines outlined in the Federal Facility Agreement as interpreted and disseminated via the installations' institutional controls.
Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste	4.5.3	Continue management of hazardous materials using existing environmental systems and programs (U.S. Army Alaska Pamphlet 200-1) to manage the handling and disposal of hazardous materials and waste encountered on a more frequent basis.
Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste	4.5.3	Continue to implement the requirements outlined in the *Lead-Based Paint Management Plan* .
Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste	4.5.3	Continue to implement the *Asbestos Management Plan* .
Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste	4.5.3	Continue to implement the Integrated Pest Management Plan.
Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste	4.5.3	Non-construction related activities will be conducted and implemented through continued compliance with applicable federal, Army, and USAF regulations and will include the continued provision for the use of portable containment systems at in-field refueling points that would be capable of containing potential fuel releases from fuel tanker vehicles, effectively minimizing the risk of training area contamination from inadvertent petrochemical release. Munitions and explosives of concern will not be disturbed until qualified personnel could dispose of them pursuant to ICs.
Wildlife Management	4.6.3	Additional monitoring to evaluate whether moose herd health, reproduction, or movement are changing as a result of helicopter use.
Wildlife Management	4.6.3	Work with ADF&G to conduct a moose migration study in the TRTA to evaluate migration patterns and moose production to monitor the health of the herd.
Wildlife Management	4.6.3	Work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to increase monitoring frequency of trumpeter swans in the Tanana Flats from every 5 years to annually to detect impacts from increased training. Annual monitoring will evaluate whether increased training affects the breeding success of trumpeter swans in the Tanana Flats, including the Tanana Flats Training Area and Donnelly Training Area West.
Wildlife Management	4.6.3	Develop a wildlife awareness program for pilots and Soldiers in concert with Range Control, Natural Resources, and the unit that describes sensitive wildlife species present on Post, along flight corridors, and in training areas; identifies sensitive wildlife areas; describes types of wildlife behaviors that indicate disturbance; describes seasonal time periods when wildlife may be more vulnerable to disturbance (moose calving, bird nesting, or migration); and discusses procedures that will reduce potential for disturbance to wildlife and aircraft bird collisions. The awareness program will incorporate the existing ArcGIS models used for range scheduling to depict wildlife areas and dates of use by sensitive species.
Wildlife Management	4.6.3	Pilots will be made aware of sandhill crane roosts along the Delta River and the Donnelly Training Area during spring and fall migration, and advised to alter travel paths during these times. This advisory will reduce potential for disturbance of those areas.
Wildlife Management	4.6.3	Conduct surveys for raptor nests in the Tanana Flats Training Area, Yukon Training Area, and Donnelly Training Area, and along the flight corridors from Fort Wainwright to the Tanana Flats Training Area and from Fort Richardson to the Donnelly Training Area to locate nesting bald eagles and other raptors that may be affected by helicopter overflights and training activities.
Wildlife Management	4.6.3	Consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine best methods to reduce and/or prevent harassment of migratory birds and raptors during military helicopter training.
Air Quality Management	4.7.3.2	Abide by U.S. Army Alaska's Air Quality management Program.
Air Quality Management	4.7.3.2	Collect localized air quality sampling parameters to assess training impacts.
Water Resources Management	4.10.3	Continue to implement current permit requirements and associated storm water pollution and prevention plans and best management practices.
Water Resources Management	4.10.3	Implement the requirements of the Multi-Sector General Permit and the permit for the municipal separate storm sewer system when they are issued.
Water Resources Management	4.10.3	Coordinate with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to implement additional measures, as deemed necessary, to address issuance of a total maximum daily load limit for the Chena river (anticipated 2010).
Subsistence and Recreation	4.11.3	Continue Government-to-Government Relationship: Conduct full-time Native Tribal coordination within USARAK. Conduct research and cooperative studies with Alaska Native Tribes to address possible effects of Army activities on subsistence resources both directly within USARAK installation boundaries and on those outlying resources that may also be affected by Army activities. Consult with all interested parties, especially Alaska Native Tribes and rural dwellers, to determine subsistence need and subsistence areas, including those potentially or historically used for subsistence harvest.
Subsistence and Recreation	4.11.3	Continue Compliance with Existing Laws, Regulations, and Management Plans: The Sikes Act requires military lands be made available for nonmilitary uses when it does not impact military training and is not a hazard to public safety. Continue compliance with regulations listed under the Alaska National Interest Lands conservation Act. Work with relevant federal and State officials to protect local subsistence populations through priority for harvest when resources are reduced. Implement the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP), USARAK natural resources conservation programs, and ecosystem management. Continue ongoing soil and water quality monitoring to trace the fate of munitions constituents as described in the INRMP. Implement the *Range and Training Land Development Plan* , *Integrated Training Area Management* (ITAM) *Work Plan* , environmental management systems, the *Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan* , ecosystem management program, and sustainable range program.

TABLE A-1
Mitigation Summary for Preferred Alternative
Record of Decision for the Stationing and Training Increased Aviation Assets within U.S. Army Alaska

Mitigation Project Title	Final EIS Section	Description of Method
Subsistence and Recreation	4.11.3	Continue Outreach and Notifications: Use tribal consultation and newsletters so that subsistence users are aware of, and provided opportunity to comment on, existing hunting and fishing programs on USARAK lands. Ensure that members of local communities, who may not have access to the internet, are kept informed about USARAK policies and activities. Provide up-to-date information to members of local communities that may be affected by activities on USARAK lands. Notify public about range use, duration of exercise/range closure, convoys, and any use of close air support. Publish a public notice of major training exercises throughout the Delta Junction community and in the local newspaper at least 2 weeks prior to the training event. Develop a public information packet and media strategy to inform the public of restricted-access areas and areas open for public use. Determine the feasibility of establishing an internet website and telephone hotline to provide access information. Continue to implement USARTRAK automated check-in phone system to provide information regarding daily closures.
Subsistence and Recreation	4.11.3	Continue Access and Awareness: Implement an education and awareness program for military personnel and others applying for hunting and fishing permits on USARAK lands to emphasize the importance of subsistence resources to rural dwellers and to discourage the waste of any subsistence resource. Determine placement of access gates to allow for maximum continued recreational use and maximum public safety. Allow recreational activities outside of the construction footprint and maneuver area according to current management policies. Provide environmental awareness training to troops and civilians. Develop and implement an information and education program for Army and civilian personnel using USARAK lands. Conduct hunter safety education courses and work with ADF&G to provide educational opportunities on USARAK lands. Hunter safety courses and educational opportunities will allow USARAK to better and more safely manage its lands for a wide range of public uses. Continue to streamline public access to USARAK lands through the Recreational Access Permit and maintain its extended 2-year renewal period.
Subsistence and Recreation	4.11.3	Continue to Support the Stocked Lakes Program: Maintain access to ADF&G stocked lakes. Work with ADF&G to support stocked lake program brochures, signs, and improvements. Monitor recreational impacts on stocked lakes and streams, and upgrade access and recreational opportunities when needed.
Subsistence and Recreation	4.11.3	Continue Education: Provide educational opportunities on USARAK lands. Build and maintain kiosks at all primary entrances to recreational areas on USARAK lands, and provide visitors maps and information geared towards that area. Information kiosks can assist users to quickly identify areas designated for recreations use, as well as the times and locations of military activities.
Subsistence and Recreation	4.11.3	Continue to Support Enforcement: Fully fund conservation officers to enforce State and federal game laws and military rules and restrictions.
Subsistence and Recreation	4.11.3	Continue Monitoring and Maintenance: Monitor recreational usage of each training area through the USARTRAK phone system. Implement procedures in the INRMP for monitoring of recreational use. Assess the impacts of recreational vehicles on USARAK lands to support long-term management. Continue to implement recreational vehicle use policies in accordance with the INRMP. Continue to implement the Range and Training Land Development Plan involving maintenance projects on all firing ranges such as target repair and replacement, target mechanism maintenance and repair, and maintenance of range buildings.

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APPENDIX B

List of Acronyms

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APPENDIX B

List of Acronyms

1/25 SBCT	1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division
4/25 ABCT	4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division
AAF	Army airfield
ABCT	Airborne Brigade Combat Team
AFB	Air Force Base
AR	Army Regulation
ATF	Aviation Task Force
BMP	best management practice
BRAC	base realignment and closure
BRTA	Black Rapids Training Area
CAB	Combat Aviation Brigade
CEQ	Council of Environmental Quality
CO	carbon monoxide
DoD	Department of Defense
DTA	Donnelly Training Area, East and West
E.O.	Executive Order
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FRA	Fort Richardson
FWA	Fort Wainwright
GA	general aviation
GRTA	Gerstle River Training Area
IMCOM	Installation Management Command
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHL	National Historic Landmark

NOA	Notice of Availability
NOI	Notice of Intent
NZ	Noise Zone
O&M	Operations & Maintenance
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns
ROD	Record of Decision
SBCT	Stryker Brigade Combat Team
TFTA	Tanana Flats Training Area
USAF	U.S. Air Force
USARAK	U.S. Army Alaska
VFR	visual flight rules
YTA	Yukon Training Area