

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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January 23, 1998

Ms. Cindy Herdrich
Center for Ecological Management of Military Lands
Vocational Education Building
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523

Dear Ms. Herdrich:

The State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources is very concerned with the military management of public lands within the Chena River State Recreation Area (SRA). We appreciate the opportunity to comment during the scoping process for the draft environmental impact statement regarding continued renewal of the military withdrawal of those lands.

In 1975, when the Alaska State Legislature designated this area as part of the Chena River SRA, they were aware of the military withdrawal status, and anticipated that the state would acquire the lands when the renewal option arose. Apparently, we missed that opportunity when the first EIS was reviewed in 1986. Subsequently, when the statewide land selections were reviewed in the early 1990's, this land parcel was identified as top priority for selection, when the withdrawal is revoked. The current renewal of the Military Lands Withdrawal Act is another opportunity to address an important public need for public land currently unavailable for recreational use.

Our manager for the recreation area attended your public scoping meeting in Fairbanks on December 3, 1997, and briefly commented orally, noting the significant recreation demand for these military lands within the Chena River State Recreation Area, and identifying this as a topic to address in developing the environmental impact statement on the withdrawal renewal. This is not a request to expand the recreation area, as was stated in your scoping newsletter, October 1997. We formally request that the U.S. Army and the Bureau of Land Management reevaluate the need for the withdrawal in the recreation area for the following reasons.

Recreational significance of the area. The Chena River State Recreation Area is interior Alaska's most accessible and diverse playground, only 30-minutes drive east of Fairbanks, Alaska's second largest city. Within its 254,000 acres of public land, the recreation area is bisected by the Chena Hot Springs Road and the Chena River.

Ms. Cindy Herdrich

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In summer, boating, fishing, hiking, camping, and picnicking are very popular visitor activities. In the winter, an expanding trail system and public use cabins beckon to many visitors, either skiing, snowshoeing, dog sledding, snowmobiling, biking, or skjoring. The area boasts eight developed trails, served by trailheads with visitor services. Unlike other hut-to-hut systems, four public use cabins offer road-to-hut opportunities. Trail use is one of the most popular activities and potential growth areas for visitor opportunities in the recreation area.

More than 150,000 visitors come to enjoy the recreation area each year. This represents about 20 percent of Alaska State Parks Northern Area visitation. Northern Area State Parks visitation accounts for almost 20 percent of state parks visitation statewide, which reflects the statewide impact of the Chena River SRA. Two of the major trails built in the recreation area 15 years ago have been "loved to death" and are scheduled for a major facelift in the year 2000. The cabin system, added in 1994, has exceeded our expectations of demand and more than pays for itself. Virtually any new recreation opportunities offered in the recreation area are readily embraced by the recreating public. As opportunities grow, and partnerships with local resorts expand, the potential exists to progress from interior's playground to a major visitor destination.

Military lands within the recreation area. A few sections of the Chena River SRA are still part of the 1961 military withdrawal. The lands involved are two tiers of sections across the southernmost boundary of the recreation area, roughly 13,500 acres total. This 2 x 11 tier of sections contains most of the Beaver Creek drainage, essentially the headwaters of the South Fork of the Chena River. We actively manage a winter, motorized-vehicle trail along the South Fork from the Chena Hot Springs Road past our public use cabin at the Nugget Creek tributary and almost to the Beaver Creek boundary. This shared-use trail enjoys use by snowmobilers, dog sledders, and skiers.

The Beaver Creek drainage is an obvious link to the public's trail system, connecting the Chena River's South Fork with its East Fork, where we also actively manage another trail from the road. The Chena River SRA Master Plan, adopted in 1982, refers to this loop trail extension, which would probably be a winter motorized-vehicle route. The plan also refers to cabins or shelters along the loop trail, perhaps in the Beaver Creek drainage.

Though summer use of the Beaver Creek drainage is very limited, the winter potential is good, and demand presently exists. Trappers and mushers use the Beaver Creek drainage now. Most use appears to access the area from the Chena Hot Springs Road, but some probably comes from the military access road west of the South Fork.

The information we have indicates the military has kept the Beaver Creek land withdrawn from public use for public safety purposes.

Ms. Cindy Herdrich

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The land has been used as a "buffer" along the Yukon Maneuver Area, and some monitoring or wargames equipment might be in the area. There is no indication that there might be any unexploded ordnance or hazardous materials in the area. In fact, the area is accessible to the public without much restriction. A permit is required to hunt or trap these military lands. This information needs to be confirmed in the draft EIS.

Last year, the local dog mushers association appealed to us and to the military to allow them to improve the loop trail, brushing and signing it under a federal grant program administered by Alaska State Parks. The state land managers supported the request, but the proposal was thwarted by military ownership of the Beaver Creek drainage. Until the issue of public recreational use of this military land is clearly addressed, these missed opportunities will continue.

These opportunities should not be viewed lightly. The trails in the Chena River SRA provide safe, well-maintained routes that offer sleddog training grounds for an international clientele, particularly along the Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail, a segment of the Yukon Quest International Dog Sled Race Trail. Expanded options for long distance backcountry travel would be very well received by many. The public relations potential for opening the Beaver Creek drainage to public use should not be ignored. We will be glad to work with you in this respect, and to address any management concerns you may have.

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In summary, we ask that you reevaluate the need for the military land withdrawal in the Chena River State Recreation Area. We also ask that you investigate and report on the amount of possible ordinance or other contamination in the area that might affect where or when public use might be allowed. Please consider that if the withdrawal cannot be relinquished, then how can

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public use be allowed under military ownership.

Sincerely,



John Shively
Commissioner

cc: Sally Gibert, Governor's Office of Governmental Coordination
Patty Bielawski, Department of Natural Resources Commissioner's Special Assistant
Jim Stratton, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation Director
Jane Angvik, Division of Land Director
Anna Plager, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

State of Alaska

DIVISION OF PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION

TO: Anna Plager
Superintendent, Northern Area

FROM: John Zimmerli
Chief Ranger, Fairbanks District

DATE: June 12, 1997

PHONE: 451-2697
e-mail: johnz@dnr.state.ak.us

SUBJECT: Military withdrawal, CRSRA

There are still a few sections of the Chena River SRA in the Beaver Creek-South Fork area that are still part of the "military withdrawal." Although designated by the legislature as part of the CRSRA, the military has not relinquished these lands. I see that they are accepting input on the withdrawals, and we should again request that they relinquish these lands, clean them up, and assist us in providing additional recreational acreage to the public. Trappers and mushers use the Beaver Creek drainage now, and it is an obvious link to our "loop" trail system to the East Fork.

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The lands involved are:

Secs. 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, and 12, T2S R6E F.M.
Secs. 1-12, T2S R7E F.M.
Secs. 5-8, T2S R8E F.M. (West parts of secs. 5 and 8).

13,440 ac.

We received title a couple years ago to the 2½ sections in T1S R6E (S1/2, 27, 34) which were once part of the withdrawal.

1600 ac.

We should petition the Army and our Congressional delegation to have these lands released to the State as soon as possible.

Rncf.

cc: Darryl Hunt, CRSRA Ranger

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State of Alaska
Dept. of Natural Resources
Div. of Parks & Outdoor Recreation

ANNA PLAGER
Park Superintendent
Northern Area



2700 Airport Way
Fairbanks, AK 99709
Office: 451-2697 Fax: 451-2754
Email: annap@dnr.state.ak.us

last withdrawn in '86
some land transferred to S.Parks

FAX SHEET



State of Alaska
Dept. Of Natural Resources
Division Of Parks and
Outdoor Recreation
3700 Airport Way
Fairbanks, AK 99709

OPTIONAL FORM 90 (7-82)

FAX TRANSMITTAL

of pages = 1

To: <u>Cindy Hendrich</u>	From: <u>S. Wilson</u>
Org./Agency: <u>CEMML</u>	Phone #: <u>- 2718</u>
Fax #	Fax #

Deliver to: _____

NHN 7540-01-517-7988

G098-101

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Location: _____

U.S. Dept. of Army

Telecopier Number: _____

384-3047From: Northern Area Office, Alaska State Parks

Sender: _____

Anna PlagerPhone #: (907) 451-2895Fax #: (907) 451-2754Date: 7/2/97

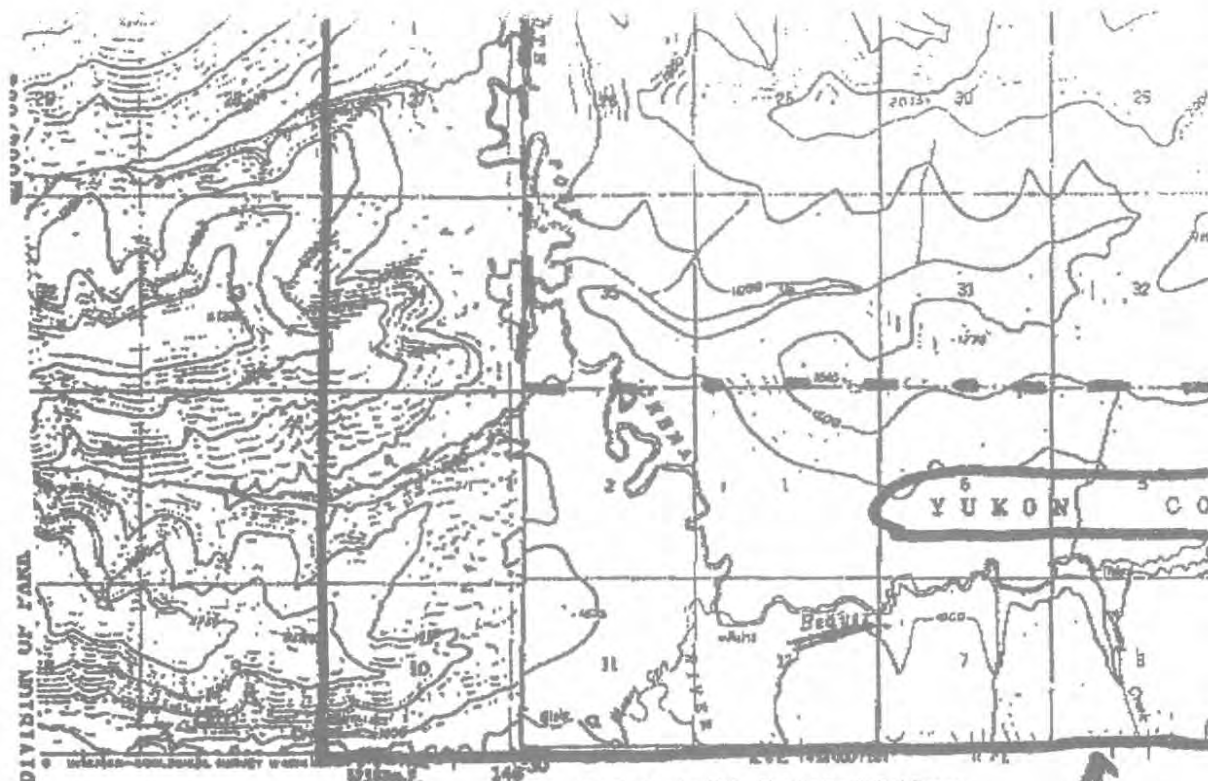
Total number of pages (including this cover sheet): _____

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Comments: _____

Is the legal description in the attached
memo still a military withdrawal? If so,
can the withdrawal be relinquished or be
available for recreation purposes? Please advise.

Thanks!



0003/004

DIVISION OF PARK

07/02/97 08:59

07/02/97 08:59

07/02/97 08:59

BIG DELTA (D-6), ALASKA N6445-W14530/25X30 1960 UNCLASSIFIED

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Light-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
State Route

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1958 and 1964. Half annotated 1968. Map not field checked
Projection and 10,000-foot grid (State Plane
Alaska Albers system, zone 5) Karmanian Mercator
100-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid data, zone 5,
shown in blue. 1967 North American Datum
See differences between 1927 North American Datum and North
American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) for 2.5 minute intersections
shown in USGS Bulletin 1070
Key and line represent unsurveyed and ungraded locations
redetermined by the Bureau of Land Management
on F-7 and F-8, Rehearsal Machine
Islands, as portrayed, indicate only water stress,
usually of low water, as interpreted from aerial photographs
Federal reservation boundaries established by the Alaska National
Wilderness Lands Conservation Act, PL 96-487, Dec. 2, 1979, are
shown as compiled by the administering agencies
There may be private holdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

Park Boundary
↑
APPROXIMATE DECLINATION

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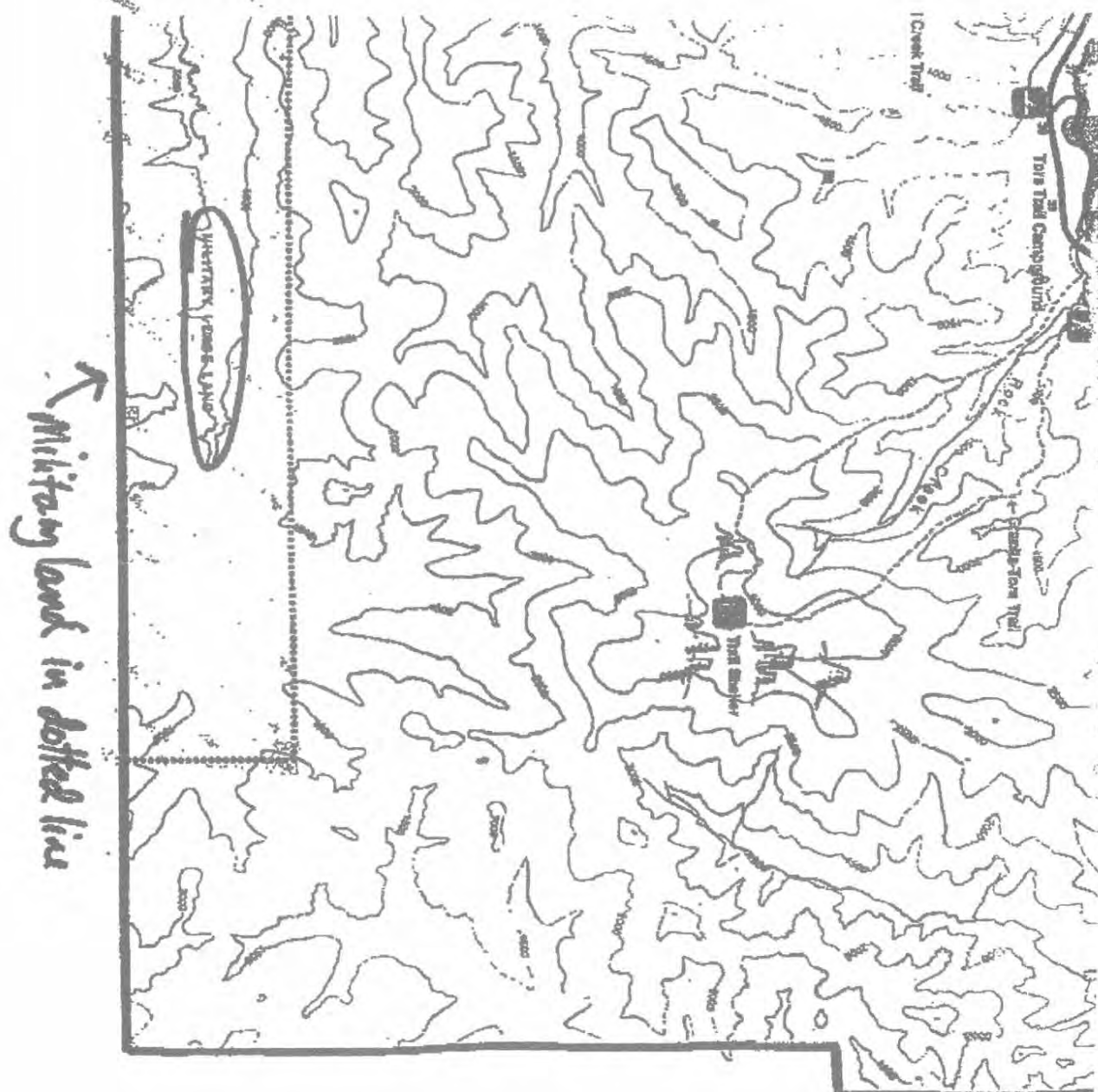
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8907 451 2754

DIVISION OF PARK

0003/004

TRUE NORTH



Delta/Greely Community Coalition

P.O. Box 780

Delta Junction, Alaska 99737

Delta Junction City Council
Delta/Greely School District
Delta Chamber of Commerce
Delta Community Corporation
Delta Chapter, Farm Bureau
Retired Military/Civilian Representative
Civil Service Representative



Cleeta P. Barger, President
Doris Fales, Vice-Pres.
Linda Spears, Sec./Treas.
Tel: 907-895-1081
FAX: 895-4219

July 7, 1997

Mr. Steve Wilson
U. S. Army Alaska
ATTN: APVR-RPW-EV
730 Quartermaster Road
Fort Richardson, AK 99505-6500

Dear Mr. Wilson,

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the EIS process for the Fort Greely Range areas which are withdrawn properties from BLM. Mr. Ed Sheehan's comments and statements are enclosed as he covered many of our concerns.

Our most important comment is that there should be no new impact areas caused by the operations of either testing or training activities. The area you have identified as training area A is not one impact area and the boundaries should be redrawn to indicate the actual impact areas. We are also concerned about trying to control the ranges from long distance such as from Fort Wainwright and Eielson AFB. Another concern is the protection of calving areas and limiting range usage during calving and unnecessarily limiting access during hunting seasons. The fire fighting capability will be severely limited with no military personnel at Fort Greely available to fight fires. The use of any range area during fire season should be limited to only those which can reasonably support the activity without causing fires. The residents of the Delta area are impacted by smoke and would risk losing property if the fires are allowed to escape the post boundary.

When the Delta/Greely Community Coalition testified to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission in April 1995, we brought out many of our concerns about the use of this area and the changes which will take place when Fort Greely is realigned. These comments are a matter of public record but if you have no access to what was briefed, we can provide that information upon request.

We feel that a complete EIS should be done and the public given an opportunity to comment on the document. Thank you for the opportunity to comment in the beginning phase of the project.

Sincerely,


Ray Woodruff, Executive Director

*Received
14 Jul 97
SW*

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Edward F. Sheehan
P.O. Box 472
Delta Junction, Alaska 99737
907-895-4806

To Whom it May Concern:

I am Ed Sheehan and I worked for Department of Army (DOA) at Fort Greely, Alaska (FGA) for 37 years; I indirectly supervised Training Area A and Range Control for 16 years. Also, I prepared the letters, etc. which turned the Range Control over to the Post and I personally named and produced boundaries for all of Training Area A.

1. During Base Realignment and Closure I wrote all the original reuse control/use regulations for FGA Commission Hearing at Delta Junction, Ak. , 24 April 1995. The Delta/Greely Community Coalition made sworn statements that must be considered in any new Environmental Impact Study (EIS) of Training Area A at Fort Greely. These sworn statements are a matter of public record and are summarized below as they relate to the EIS, followed by questions as appropriate.

aa) My first question is why are we doing a new EIS? Each one becomes more vague.

A) When asked for, the Range and Terrain Utilization Records for all of the U.S. Army Installations in Alaska could not be produced. These records are required by DoD regulations. Will the new EIS require proper recordkeeping or will continued, uncontrolled contamination be the rule? Only Major Cdr (not USARAK) can change.

B) Medical problems also affect ADF&G, Forestry, fire suppression, etc. There will be no helicopter.

C) FGA's original EIS forbids causing any new impact areas without a new EIS. Is this still the case? Training Area A is not one big impact area as shown on the brochure provided.

D) Only 2 of the 4 actual impact areas can be used without causing fires when the ground is not snow covered. During fire season, is only the Delta River and Delta Creek impact areas to be used? The last time I saw a USAF/USA status of forces agreement for FGA, only Army troops were to be used for firefighting. Now no helicopter or Army troops are immediately available.

E) USARAK Regulation 350-2 (Range and Terrain Regulations for Training) dated 01 January 1995, is totally inadequate for USAF or USA use when live firing is involved. Training Area A, FGA cannot be used for live fire without adequate instructions with respect to troop safety, fauna safety and fire suppression.

F) The current YMA EIS did not consider new contamination or decon of munitions. Will the FGA EIS consider these? Why not?

G) The BRAC papers strongly emphasized that Range Control at FGA should be at FGA. The community, ADF&G, Forestry, etc. should be very concerned about this.

H) The first two EIS's were very specific concerning civilian hunting, trapping, mining access, etc. They required that access be allowed except when a real military necessity prevented access. DoD personnel have overreacted in this area, and frequently they "usually" close huge areas when this is not necessary. If Range Control is outside FGA this could cause a major problem. Additionally, USA and USAF Range Controllers will not be outsiders, and will work for the range user.

2) In closing, Delta has already stated under oath, its concerns about the use of Training Area A. DoD should consider these concerns in their EIS and also be under oath.

3) There is no question in my mind that a complete EIS and not a modified EIA is required. USAF has never been authorized to fire except in front of OP 26 (winter and in two river bomb sites). Training Area A is no more available year around than Blair Lakes (not used).

April 24, 1995

Edward F. Sheehan
P.O. Box 472
Delta Junction, Alaska 99737
(907)895-4806

To Whom It May Concern:

I was a Military Commander, or a senior Department of the Army civilian (DAC), with each of the three major activities at Fort Greely, Alaska - Headquarters Fort Greely, Cold Regions Test Activity (CRTA), and U.S. Army Northern Warfare Training Center (NWTC), during the period 1960 - 1986. At least once every year since my retirement in 1986, I have served as a paid consultant/instructor to the NWTC. For at least fifteen (15) years, I served as a special advisor to the Commanding General, USARAL and, later, the Commanding General, 6th ID (Light), and their subordinate commanders on matters relating to cold regions and mountain environmental training. Additionally, I conducted numerous cold weather and mountain military training accident investigations relating to the environment.

1) The following statement addresses my qualifications to comment on cold regions and mountain training and testing in Alaska:

A) During the above period, I was frequently called on to give expert witness and advice, concerning the effects of cold on military training and testing. I participated in numerous USARAL maneuvers.

B) Served as the Senior Test Manager for hundreds of cold weather tests, ranging from a new pair of skis to major systems such as tanks, missiles and helicopters;

C) Served as Acting Post Commander of Fort Greely for periods up to 120 days, and over the years, supervised a number of studies which would have realigned and/or closed elements of Fort Greely, moving them to Fort Wainwright or, the Lower 48. It is interesting to note that these studies indicated that the proposed moves were not cost effective, and a detriment to training and/or testing.

D) Served as the head of the NWTC for four (4) years.

E) Was the principal author/coauthor of much of cold weather and mountain doctrine currently in use by our Armed Forces.

F) Have first-hand knowledge relative to the training and testing facilities at all three of the major Army installations in Alaska. I have taught and written

about the climate and terrain of Interior Alaska, much of my adult life.

G) Have twice been awarded the Department of the Army Civilian Meritorious Service Medal for expertise and service relating to Cold Regions training and testing.

2) The following statements of fact are made, based on my knowledge of the military value of Fort Greely, and the effect that BRAC realignment will have on its operation and mission. I believe that the proposed BRAC action could seriously effect the future of Interior Alaska, waste taxpayer dollars, and reduce the overall combat effectiveness of the military. In my opinion, the repositories of information for cold regions and mountain warfare knowledge could be lost with this action.

A) Large scale ground and air maneuver problems, as well as USAF air space controversies, have plagued the military in Alaska for at least thirty (30) years. This is especially true in the Fairbanks area where environmentalist and civilian aviator concerns have repeatedly kept the military from using the full potential of the land area of Fort Wainwright. These vocal groups have caused a public outcry that, to this date, prevents the use of that vast land area west of the Tanana River.

B) Any major, live-fire training or testing exercises, outside of Fort Greely, would require that a new environmental impact statement be submitted, and approved.

C) Neither Fort Wainwright, nor Fort Richardson, are capable of meeting the Army's range safety requirements for training because they lack the terrain required by regulations to keep fired munitions and laser beams within prescribed impact areas, boundaries and on Post. This problem becomes more acute as new laser guidance systems and smart munitions are made available. Many major weapons systems cannot be fired on these Reservations. (See Attachment #1) The addition of the 248,000 acre Yukon Maneuver Area (YMA), provides a convenient training site to Fort Wainwright. However, this roughly rectangular 28 x 17.5 mile training site is too small to meet range safety requirements for many major weapons systems currently in use. Additionally, the YMA is too small to support simultaneous training by the Army and the Air Force, using todays firepower. The disadvantages found at Fort Wainwright are not true of the approximately 670,000 acre Fort Greely Reservation.

D) Movement of the training and testing from Fort Greely to Fort Wainwright would require major range and

other facility construction. Many of these facilities now exist at Fort Greely. This alone, would appear to negate any short, or long-term monetary gains.

E) In 1964, a large segment of the Cold Region Test Activity was moved from Fort Greely to Fort Wainwright, and required ranges were constructed along the highway and west of the Tanana River. These facilities were never really used because of pressure applied from the Fairbanks area environmentalists and aviators. Only general equipment training could be accomplished. CRTA (then the US Army Arctic Test Board), was moved back to Fort Greely in 1966, and this mistake is about to be repeated. CRTA testing must capture a given climatic condition when it occurs, using sophisticated instrumentation. This cannot be accomplished efficiently after a 100-mile bus ride to Fort Greely. (See Attachment #2)

F) The US Army and USAF have historically used only the Delta River and Delta Creek Impact Areas at Fort Greely during the summer/fall fire seasons, because they are fire safe. One cannot fire into either of the two YMA Impact Areas, even if they are surrounded by fire breaks, using the same munitions, without causing fires. This is a public relations disaster waiting to happen.

G) Having considered the ramifications of moving NWTC to Fort Wainwright, I believe regardless of how one looks at it, this move would require an increase of personnel, and level of funding. Fort Wainwright is 140 miles from the Black Rapids Training Site, and 185 miles from the nearest glacier available to the United States Army. This alone would require a major loss in the available training time and, eventually cause a loss in student proficiency and troop safety.

3) Public Law 101-510 requires the Secretary of Defense to develop and report to the Congress, the criteria to be used in selecting bases for closure and realignment. In BRAC 95, the Department used the same criteria as BRAC 91 and 93. These criteria gave priority to military value, followed by return on investment and economic and other impacts on base communities. The military value criteria was to include mission requirements, availability and condition of land, facilities and associated air space, as well as cost and manpower implications.

4) In my opinion, Fort Greely elements cannot be sent to Fort Wainwright, without major cost increases and a irreversible loss in training and testing proficiency. Fort Wainwright has only some of the terrain and climatic conditions, that are available at Fort Greely. "Piggybacking" the testing, training, range control, etc., from one location to another, will result in a

loss of environmental expertise and, eventually, at least double existing costs. The real expense of operating Fort Greely is nothing, compared to the value of what is accomplished there, or what it will cost to duplicate these conditions elsewhere.

5) The proposed DOD/BRAC realignment of Fort Greely shows obvious political bias concerning which major military reservation in Alaska should be downsized, if any. No real investigation has been conducted to determine the capabilities and limitations of these installations. Hence, the findings of the Washington D.C. based study group proves nothing. There will be no real money savings.

6) Certainly no final BRAC decision should be made without at least investigating the Range and Terrain Utilization Records for the three installations. These required records will show beyond any doubt that Fort Greely is the real training and testing site for the US Army and USAF when live fire is employed. This, along with the resulting munitions contamination, has been true for at least thirty (30) years. A thorough investigation would show that;

a) Fort Richardson has its own environmental problems with respect to weapons firing. Basically, this fort is used almost exclusively for small unit dry-firing maneuver and garrison training.

b) Fort Wainwright has a much greater value than Fort Richardson to the military, but its weapons firing is limited. The YMA provides this fort a greater live fire maneuver capability than exists at Fort Richardson.

7) The BRAC must be told (the State of Alaska should be concerned) that, even if it was possible to fire most weapons at Forts' Wainwright and Richardson, this would be inadvisable. Duplicating ranges and the resulting impact areas that already exist at Fort Greely, would only contaminate new terrain, requiring eventual clean-up and funding. The ongoing Yukon Maneuver Area (YMA) Proposed Resource Management Plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement, does not address contamination by military weapons and, their decontamination, as issues.

8) From a State standpoint, worse perhaps than the above stated bias and environmental concerns, is the scandalous lack of publicity or fair notice to the State of Alaska and the residents of the Delta/Fort Greely area. This DOD/BRAC proposal unnecessarily pits Alaskans against each other. Our elected representatives should be embarrassed that these actions can take place without the DOD/BRAC adequately communicating, investigating, and understanding the issues and problems involved. If this is a "done deal" politically, a decision not based on the facts or true needs of the military, the public should be so advised so they can pack up their families and get on with their lives. However, if the realignment of Fort Greely

results from inadequate study and/or other misunderstanding at DOD level, this should be corrected.

9) Concerning the impact on the local community, most of this information will be covered elsewhere. However, I would like to emphasize that the US Congress provided guidance that tasked places like Fort Greely to provide medical support and evacuation to the surrounding rural areas. Unless we are careful, the area from the Yukon-Alaska border, to North Pole and Glennallen (an area larger than a number of states), will have little, or no medical coverage. For example, two recent tourist bus accidents, requiring triage out of the Fort Greely medical facility, was very well handled with minimum fatalities. These accidents would have resulted in about 100 untreated casualties and slow response times, if the Fort Greely medical facilities had not existed.

ATTACHMENT #1

Weapons and Munitions Training and Testing That Can Be Done at Fort Greely - But Not Elsewhere*

- 1) M1A1 tank and Bradley fighting vehicle mobility exercises**
- 2) Tank and Bradley main gun firing and laser use
- 3) Laser flashing (GLLD, HHLR, etc.)
- 4) DS and GS artillery
- 5) Artillery direct fire
- 6) Large missiles, i.e. the Patriot, Roland, Nike, etc.***
- 7) Large and hand-held air defense systems fired at remote controlled drones and/or jet aircraft
- 8) Artillery and helicopter delivered smart and scatterable munitions
- 9) Rocket assisted artillery at greater ranges
- 10) Anti-tank missiles such as improved TOW when fired at greater ranges from helicopters, after leaving cover and firing parallel with the ground
- 11) Large boom demolitions and USAF bombs
- 12) Flame weapon systems

* Current weapons and munitions fired at Fort Greely that cannot be fired elsewhere in Alaska, safely, and within the full capabilities of the item/system.

** Almost all weapons and vehicles used by the current mechanized and foot infantry divisions, were tested at Fort Greely.

*** Fort Greely airspace control and freedom of use far exceed the other installations.

ATTACHMENT #2

Other Training and Testing Facts That Bear Upon the Fort Greely Realignment Situation

- 1) From about 1960-1987, all the terrain at Fort Greely, except main post, the air field, and NWTC ski areas, were under the operational control of CRTA or its predecessor. This was the desire of the CG, USARAL, the DOD owner. Under this arrangement, the trainer could use the terrain whenever they desired, but did not have to pay for that use. Almost all range construction, roads, etc., were bought with Research, Development and Test and Evaluation (RDT&E) and customer funds.
- 2) From 1960-64, all of the basic testing ranges were cleared and constructed. These ranges were various size, cleared areas, facing toward an impact area that could be used year-round. These ranges were improved over time, but continued to be only a cleared rectangle that was reconfigured each year to accommodate a given test item(s). The shelter, security, safety and instrumentation items required for testing, were mobile and, were moved to and configured to, a test site, as needed.
- 3) CRTA test items are developmental in nature. Munitions and weapons are considered unsafe and are tested accordingly. Historically, all kinds of weapons and munitions have proven to be unsafe in cold regions testing and injury was only prevented by the use of barriers and safe test procedures. In the past, many of munitions have not functioned as intended and have gone astray when fired. For example, major missile systems have malfunctioned and the entire YMA is not large enough to contain the trajectory of these stray missiles.
- 4) CRTA has a small nucleus of test managers and instrumentation specialists that know how to test in a cold regions environment. They take state-of-the-art off the shelf instrumentation (almost none of which will work in the cold until hardened) and come up with a way to evaluate and analyze a test function that exists nowhere else in our country. If CRTA moves from Fort Greely we will lose this expertise.
- 5) The 6th Infantry Division (Light) took over operational control of the ranges and terrain at Fort Greely in 1987. One can only assume that they looked at the mobile facilities, and wanted a fixed range. The user then spent his training funds at YMA.

FORT GREELY REALIGNMENT

John Hite

1) From Valley Forge to the Republic of Korea, American Military history is replete with examples of massive combat failures on the cold weather battlefield. The cost of unpreparedness, for this type of battle, has been extremely high in terms of casualties and equipment failures. FT Greely is the only base in the entire U.S. military dedicated to combat on the cold weather battlefield. It is the only installation located within the North American Cold Weather Triangle (1). As such, it is better situated than any other U.S. base for cold weather testing and training.

2) The realignment of FT Greely, with the proposed movement of NWTC and CRTA to FT Wainwright, is an inherently bad decision based on inaccurate information. This decision has dark implications for the ability of the U.S. Army to fight, and win, on the cold weather battlefield.

3) For a number of generations the expertise to train, to test, and to succeed in cold weather combat has rested on the shoulders of the men and women of the FT Greely/Delta Community. Much of this irreplaceable expertise will be lost should this poorly thought out move take place.

4) To believe that this mission can be accomplished by safariling trainers, trainees and testers from FT Wainwright is simply nonsense.

5) To believe this will save money is poor mathematics.

6) To believe that this will be more efficient in the long run is short-sighted and simply not possible.

7) FT Greely, according to the Army's own analysis in 1993, is a one-of-a-kind installation that contains the only extensive fixed instrumentation to support this critical mission.

8) This one-of-a-kind capability linked with its very small cost simply cannot, in good judgement, be eliminated.

The Environmental Impact That Bear Upon The Fort Greely Realignment Situation

1) Large scale ground and air maneuver problems, as well as USAF air space controversies, have plagued the military in Alaska for at least thirty (30) years. This is especially true in the Fairbanks area where environmentalist and civilian aviator concerns have repeatedly kept the military from using the full potential of the land area of Fort Wainwright. These vocal groups have caused a public outcry that, to this date, prevents the use of that vast land area west of the Tanana River. Fort Richardson has major environmental problems with respect to weapons firing. Basically, due to its close proximity to Anchorage, this fort is used almost exclusively for small unit dry-firing/garrison training and annual qualifications with small arms.

2) All of the Department of the Army (DA) input obtained by the Delta/Fort Greely Community Coalition, states that USARAK has 1.5 million acres of training land available for use. In the vaguest of terms, USARAK implies that large scale, live fire maneuver and joint US Army and USAF operations occur on all three military reservations. In fact, neither Fort Wainwright (FWA) nor Fort Richardson (FRA) are capable of meeting the Army's range safety requirements for training, because they lack the terrain required by regulations to keep fired munitions and laser beams within prescribed impact areas, boundaries, and on Post. This problem becomes more acute as new laser guidance systems and smart munitions are made available. Many major weapons systems cannot be fired on these Reservations. The addition of the 248,000 acre Yukon Maneuver Area (YMA), provides a convenient training site to Fort Wainwright. However, this roughly rectangular, 28 x 17.5 mile training site, is too small to meet range safety requirements for many major weapons systems currently in use. Additionally, the YMA is too small to support simultaneous training by the Army and the Air Force, using today's firepower. The terrain at YMA is not flat enough to satisfy standard weapons firing test procedures. The disadvantages found at Fort Wainwright are not true of the approximately 652,000 acre Fort Greely (FGA) Reservation.

3) Each of the three major Army installations in Alaska have an approved Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Additionally, there is an ongoing Proposed Resource Management Plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement for the YMA. As it relates to the FGA realignment, the following EIS information is provided:

a) The EIS', other than the YMA, forbid causing any new impact areas without going through a new EIS process. This means that any major live fire training or testing exercise, outside FGA, would require that a new EIS be submitted and approved.

- b) For reasons unknown to the public, the proposed YMA Environmental Impact Statement does not address munitions contamination as an issue.
 - c) FGA airspace control and freedom of use far exceeds that of the other installations. A check of the required US Army and USAF Range and Terrain Utilization Records will show that Fort Greely is the real live fire/joint use training and testing site for the DOD in Alaska. This, along with the resulting munitions contamination, has been true for at least thirty (30) years. A thorough investigation would show that the land areas of FWA and FRA have been under-utilized, or only limited, small unit firing has occurred for more than thirty (30) years.
 - d) The US Army and USAF have historically used only the Delta River and Delta Creek Impact Areas at FGA during the summer/fall fire seasons because they are fire safe. One cannot fire into either of the two hilly and brush covered YMA Impact Areas, even if they are surrounded by fire breaks, using the same munitions, without causing fires. This is a public relations disaster waiting to happen.
 - e) The BRAC should understand (and the State of Alaska should be concerned) that even if it was possible to fire most weapons at FWA and FRA, this would not be advisable. Duplicating ranges and the resulting impact areas that already exist at FGA, would only contaminate new terrain, requiring eventual clean-up and funding which is not otherwise addressed in the proposed realignment.
- 4) The proposed realignment of FGA fails to consider the past, or realistically project the future. Following World War II, the need for a cold regions and mountain training and testing base was established. FGA was chosen because it has the climate, terrain and remoteness to fulfill these needs. During the past forty-six (46) years, FGA has evolved to meet the Army's requirements, and a cadre of military and civilian experts have been trained to prepare men and materials for conflicts in places like North Korea, Bosnia, etc. Over the years, various Lower 48 and Alaskan installations were considered to replace FGA. However, when the essential ingredients of climate, terrain, remoteness and people expertise were considered, it was decided that the work done at FGA could not be accomplished anywhere else controlled by DA. For example: ice fog, a climatic condition that seriously effects military operations, occurs naturally at -40 degrees Fahrenheit. At FWA and YMA, ice fog will occur at about -25 degrees Fahrenheit, as a result of man-made moisture and pollutants in the air. Hence, all training and testing that requires observation from ground level to about 300 feet, will be handicapped. Poor visibility occurs about 25% more often at FWA than FGA, during the five coldest months.

5) It is the understanding of the Coalition that USARAK and the USAF plan to continue to use FGA as their primary live fire/joint exercise site. Additionally, USARAK plans to operate Range Control and Public Relations from FWA, just as the USAF controls its use of FGA impact areas from Eielson AFB, after coordinating with FGA Range Control. The USAF have personnel on site at FGA when using the impact areas. For USARAK to fire at FGA, without on-site range control supervision, would be unsafe, and a violation of the intent of the FGA Environmental Impact Statement.

6) The Delta Community has historically been a good neighbor of the military. They have cheerfully tolerated all manner of live firing blunders, including numerous violations of the FGA Environmental Impact Statement without causing the military any adverse commentary from the media. The military, US Army and USAF, are now centralizing their troops around Alaska's two largest cities, while all but closing Fort Greely. This alone should forewarn anyone of future problems. To assume that USARAK can realign FGA and still ask the people of the Delta Community to tolerate large bangs, sonic booms, maneuvering off Post, etc., would be the height of arrogance. If only the EIS violations are enforced by public outcry, the resulting problems and restrictions would be great for USARAK and the USAF. This is especially true if their Range Control and public relations people are not familiar with the climate, terrain, and the people of the local community.

**DA and USARAK Range and Terrain Regulations Input
as it Relates to the Fort Greely Realignment**

1) The Delta/Fort Greely Realignment Coalition recently obtained copies of the USARAK and DA Range and Terrain Regulations through the Freedom of Information Act. A review of these documents, relative to the realignment of FGA, indicates that there are deficiencies in the following areas:

a) USARAK Regulation 350-2, "Range Regulations," dated 1 January 1995, exaggerates or misrepresents the truth in the following subject areas:

- 1) The availability and usability of airspace at all three US Army reservations in Alaska;
- 2) The live fire maneuver capabilities and limitations of the three Army reservations;
- 3) The usability of the FWA Tanana Flats Training Area (630,000 acres west of the Tanana River). The regulation implies frequent summer use and frequent winter ice bridging of the Tanana River.

b) The review of USARAK Regulation 350-2 showed the following:

- 1) YMA is not wholly owned by the military and has public access requirements and limitations.
- 2) No range currently exists at FRA, FWA, or YMA for shooting direct fire using any caliber weapon larger than 7.62 mm.
- 3) FRA indirect fire capability is limited to the use of sub-caliber devices at ranges of 500 meters or less. Previously used impact areas, like the Eagle River Flats, have been closed due to public outcry and past environmental failures.
- 4) Strict limitations exist for firing indirect fire weapons at FWA and YMA, and these weapons cannot be fired within their full capabilities.

2) At the expense of FGA, USARAK Regulation 350-2 uses one-half inch of typed text to explain FRA inability to be used for live firing, while only using a handful of pages to extoll FGA range use and supervision. If the USAF or US Army rely on this regulation when firing at FGA, unsafe conditions will exist.

3) The frequency and extent of USAF live firing at FGA is understated and the coordination required is oversimplified. The USAF coordination with FGA Range Control, and the coordinated action taken, is currently satisfactory. However, these actions are not adequately discussed in the USARAK regulation.

4) DA Regulation 385-62, "Policies and Procedures of Firing Ammunition for Training, Target Practice, and Combat", dated 15 November 1983, requires the CG, USARAK (installation commander) to establish and maintain detailed range and terrain records. This, and other range safety responsibilities placed on the installation commander, that cannot be otherwise delegated, are not covered in the new USARAK Regulation 350-2.

5) Both the DA and USARAK range and terrain regulations are outdated. They fail to address the artillery, anti-tank, tank, air defense, and demolitions systems, etc., that are now in the hands of troops. These documents fail to give using units adequate range safety guidance when firing existing weapons/munitions in Alaska and elsewhere.

ALASKA ARMY LANDS WITHDRAWAL PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING EVENING
SESSION

Held on Tuesday, December 2, 1997 Time: 7:00 p.m. to 8:19 p.m.

Volume 1 of 1

Scoping Meeting Proceedings Held at Diamond Willow Club Delta Avenue and First
Street Ft. Greely, Alaska

Reported by: Carol A. McCue, RMR Heartland Court Reporters Fairbanks, Alaska

A P P E A R A N C E S Speakers: Mr. Doug Johnson, Head of Environmental Group,
USARAK Ms. Cindy Herdrich, CEMML Public Comments: Mr. Jack Morris Mr. Ed
Sheehan Mr. Randy Bealer

P R O C E E D I N G S (Scoping meeting proceedings convened at 7:00 p.m., December 2, 1997.) MR. DOUG JOHNSON: Are we ready? Okay. We're going to start, then. I'm Doug Johnson, I'm the head of the environmental group for the U.S. Army Alaska. I'm going to be the emcee for this meeting tonight. This is the second series of the public scoping meetings we've had on the renewal of the land, the maneuver — well, I'll get this as I get going here. The renewal withdrawal for the military lands. There we go. Okay. We're going to do — you're in this one, Jim. Come on in. We just started. We just started. All right. We'll get going again. The purpose of the meeting here tonight is to listen to concerns of your issues and any questions you have regarding the Army's proposal to renew the training and maneuver areas for Ft. Wainwright and Ft. Greely. We're going to do it basically the way we did it before. Introduction in the beginning, then we're going to do a video, and then we're going to go into some more view graphs and present more of the information. A lot of this will be repetitious from the meeting we had before. After we finish the second series of view graphs, we'll go into just some general question and answer period, then we'll wrap the meeting up. Next slide, please. Let's go to the next slide. Again, as I said, I'm Doug Johnson, I'm the Environmental Department Chief for U.S. Army Alaska. Along with me we have representatives from the Air Force, then we also have our primary support group out of Colorado State University to help put this on. Also, we have a court reporter like we did in the last meeting. We're taking this for official notes. If you want a copy of the transcripts, we'll be happy to provide you a copy. What we need is for you to sign in on the sign-in sheet, and then we will be happy to mail you a copy. Other than that, if there are — if there aren't any other questions right now, we'll go into the video. Okay. Hearing no questions, we'll start the video. (Video played.) MR. DOUG JOHNSON: Okay. At this point I would like to introduce Cindy Herdrich, who is from the Center for Ecological Management of Military Lands, Colorado State, and she will discuss the EIS scoping process and then general topics regarding the issue. Cindy. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Okay. The Alaska Army Lands Withdrawal Renewal involves the three properties on Ft. Wainwright and Ft. Greely that are shaded in green on this map. Can everybody hear me in the back? Ft. Wainwright Maneuver Area also known as the Yukon Maneuver Area, Ft. Greely Maneuver Area, and the Ft. Greely Air Drop Zone. Ft. Greely's Air Drop Zone comprises approximately 51,950 acres. The maneuver areas covers approximately 571,995 acres. Those two pieces of property together represent approximately 94 percent of the entire installation of Ft. Greely. The Yukon Maneuver Area, Ft. Wainwright maneuver area comprises approximately 246,000 acres. That, in itself, is roughly 27 percent of Ft. Wainwright. The areas shaded in green, you'll notice that there are parcels of land that are excluded from that green shaded area within, say, the Yukon Maneuver Area. Those parcels of land have been withdrawn

under separate public land orders, and the military has use of those parcels of land indefinitely, so those are what would be considered more or less a permanent withdrawal. Meaning the military doesn't have to go through the process of renewing the uses of those parcels of land. The withdrawal, what a withdrawal really means is that the Department of Defense has been granted the right to use the land, and it has been withdrawn from the public domain. Meaning that it's withdrawn from public use. The last time that this property was renewed for withdrawal in 1986, the legislation was passed mandated that it be jointly managed by both the Bureau of Land Management and the Department of the Army. And it is used by not only the Army but also the Air Force. And the proposal to renew this land withdrawal, the Army is not proposing to change the amount of land it is seeking, it is only asking that they renew exactly what they are using now. Military use on these properties started back in the 1950s. Ft. Greely was first obtained by the military November 7th of 1950. The maneuver area at Ft. Greely. The Air Drop Zone was actually the use on that was acquired by the department of — the military department June 26, 1959. And Ft. Wainwright Maneuver Area was June 15th of 1956. Initial use of these properties were all obtained through a permit process, and all three of these properties were used by permits, by Department of Defense, up until 1961. And then starting in 1961, legislation has been passed by Congress which has granted the use of these properties up until the year 2001. And that's the current withdrawal that will be expiring November 6th, 2001. And that last was renewed November 6th, 1986. So the term of that last renewal was for a 15 year time period. That last legislation that was authorized in 1986 granted the military use of these lands for artillery firing, aerial gunnery, infantry tactics, military maneuvering, training, equipment development and testing, and other defense-related purposes. Department of the Army is not proposing any changes in use for the renewal, and they are not proposing any new impact areas. The Engel Act of 1958 is the legislation that requires the Department of Defense — let me back up, let me start over. The Engel Act of 1958 is the legislation that requires any withdrawals of property covering 5,000 acres or more, that will be used by the Department of Defense for military purposes, requires approval by Congress. At the last renewal in 1986, Public Law 99-606 requires the Army to complete an Environmental Impact Statement for continued use of this property beyond the year 2001. Public Law 99-606 requires a Draft Environmental Impact Statement be published by November 6, 1998, for renewal. Because legislation is required in order to renew the withdrawal, this Environmental Impact Statement is going to be completed as a Legislative Environmental Impact Statement. It's required for legislation, and in order for Congress to consider legislation to renew the withdrawal, they require completing a detailed statement on that legislation. The detailed statement that the Army will be submitting to Congress will be a Legislative Environmental Impact Statement. Some of the differences between a Legislative Environmental Impact Statement and a normal Environmental Impact Statement is on a Legislative EIS, the proponent or the person or the department that's preparing that Environmental Impact Statement is not required to go through a scoping process. The Army is completing a scoping process on this Environmental Impact Statement. The Legislative EIS is only prepared as a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Army is not required to carry forth and actually publish a final Environmental Impact Statement. And any comments that are received on the Draft Legislative Environmental Impact Statement are responded to by the Army, and all the comments and all the responses are provided to Congress along with the draft version of the Legislative EIS. And because it's only a draft version and because Congress has to

actually formally act on the renewal for the withdrawal, the Army and the BLM will jointly prepare legislation that will go to Congress for them to act on. So a record of decision will actually come from Congress. They will make the final decision. The EIS process itself involves certain steps that are mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act. And the first step in the process is to prepare a Notice of Intent. The next step is to complete the scoping process, then a draft Environmental Impact Statement gets written, printed and published and circulated to the public and agencies. There's a period involved after that to accept comments on that Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and for a Legislative EIS, then, there's also an added step of drafting proposed legislation and submitting that to Congress. So the first step of the process is to actually prepare a Notice of Intent, and publish that in the Federal Register that the Department of the Army is in the process of preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. That Notice of Intent was published in the October 15th, 1997 Federal Register. So we've now moved on to the second phase of our EIS process which is the scoping process. And the National Environmental Policy Act defines scoping as an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed, and for identifying the significant issues related to the proposed action. So the proposed action on this Environmental Impact Statement is for the continued military use of the three properties involved. So at this point, we are inviting participation from agencies and the public. We're conducting scoping meetings in Delta Junction, Fairbanks, and Anchorage. We would like to hear from the public. We would like to know what your concerns are, what you feel the issues are to be related to the renewal of this withdrawal. And then we take that input from the public and identify those issues that need to be further analyzed in the Environmental Impact Statement. The scoping period started on October 15th with the publication of the Notice of Intent. It is going to run 60 days beyond the last scoping meeting here, so we will actually close the scoping period February 4th, 1998. During that time period, we will accept any oral and both written comments. And for anybody that's connected to the Internet, we've also established a web site for the public to access information on the Environmental Impact Statement, and to also offer us some — or submit to us your written comments via the Internet. Okay. Within the document itself, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, there are certain sections that are mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act, purpose and needs section, which defines basically what you are proposing to do, which will be renewing the withdrawal of these properties. The second section outlines the various viable alternatives that you will be analyzing within the Environmental Impact Statement. The third section defines the existing environment, base line condition, what exists on that property now. And the fourth major section of the Environmental Impact Statement is to analyze the environmental impacts of those significant issues, based on the viable alternatives, so you're comparing alternative to alternative. And the Draft EIS, again, must be published by November 6, 1998. Following publication of the Draft EIS, there will be an opportunity for the public to review that document, and to submit comments to us, either through public meetings, which again will be held in Delta Junction, Fairbanks, and Anchorage. We will also accept written comments on the Draft EIS. The Army will respond to all of those comments that they have received. And their response along with all the comments will be submitted to Congress along with the draft version of the EIS. The last step in the process is for the BLM and the Army to jointly prepare legislation that will be submitted to Congress. And again, Congress will make the final

decision on to the renewal of this withdrawal. Back in June, we conducted some preliminary public hearings in Delta Junction, Fairbanks, and Anchorage. And the items listed up here are some of the issues that were presented at those meetings. Public access to the withdrawal properties, non-military activities that can occur on those properties, protection of wildlife habitat, fire management, timber harvesting, decontamination of impact areas, and expansion of the Chena River Recreation Area. At this time, what we would like to do is answer any questions you have on the presentation, on the actual withdrawal, and also accept your comments that you would have related to this project. We do have a court reporter that is recording the proceedings of this meeting. We will open the floor to anybody from the public that would like to make a comment, ask a question, voice a concern. If you would prefer not to comment at the open floor, at the end of the meeting you can sit down directly with the court reporter and she will take your verbatim testimony, or we also have a written comment form that you could actually write out your issues or concerns and submit those to us. So at this point, first, I'll ask if anybody has any questions that maybe need clarification? Mr. Sheehan? MR. ED SHEEHAN: Yes. My first question is I attended the last meeting, I've attended this meeting now, and nobody has said what the Air Force and the Army intend to do different than they are not already doing. We have the Public Land Order, which I know what it says, if it was going to be more of the same you might be able to say okay, let's do that, but we don't know if they are going to do everything exactly like they have done in the past, that's one thing. But there's been no comment whatsoever in either of these meetings of where we're going from here with this withdrawal. Secondly, the Public Land Order specifically states, okay, that yes, the BLM and the Army control this area, but the secretary of the Army opens it to the public for all these reasons, which are right there on the thing. And if that's going to be changed, you know, if that's part of the intent of this, it ought to be up front and brought forward. And the last thing I want to state is I have a bunch of comments, if we're going to have a comment period. I can't just do it with a question. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Well, at this point in time, the Army and Air Force is not proposing any use changes on this property than what was previously authorized in 1986. I can't speak for them as to what might come down the road for future changes, but at this point in time, they are not proposing any new impact areas, and they are not proposing any changes in what they were previously authorized for the use on that property. MR. ED SHEEHAN: Okay. That's the first time that's been said. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Okay. MR. ED SHEEHAN: Anyway, when we get to the comment period, I would like to comment. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: And then your second question about the use of the property by the public, can you re — can you ask that again, Ed? MR. ED SHEEHAN: Well, I can read the Public Land Order if you would like. It specifically says, it has a separate header, closure to the public, if the Secretary — that being the Secretary of the Army, not Commanding General of the Air Force or the Army because this is not Army land, it's public land — the Secretary of the military department concerned determines the military operation, public safety and national security required to close the public use of any road, trail or portion of the lands withdrawn from this Act, the Secretary may take action as the Secretary determines necessary or desirable to effect and maintain such closure. Period. Any such closure shall be limited to the minimum areas and period which the Secretary — that's Secretary of the Army — of the military department concerned determines they are required to carry out whatever is happening. Before and during any closure under this subsection, the Secretary and military department concerned shall, A, keep appropriate warning notices posted. Not being done. And B, take appropriate steps to notify the public concerning the closures. Not being done. And then if you want to know what it will be open for, it

specifically says protection of wildlife, or wildlife habitat, control of predators and other animals, recreation, et cetera, et cetera. Now that's what the Public Land Order says. Unfortunately, not a lot of people read what the Public Land Order says. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: I don't think I have enough knowledge to speak for the Army as to how they are posting. MR. ED SHEEHAN: I'm going to comment on that kind of thing when I get my chance. MR. CAL BAGLEY: I don't think that that language is going to be changed by Congress. That will still be in any renewal authorization. The actual effectiveness of implementing it by the commander here is more of a management issue that needs to be addressed through your comments. And that would be a significant issue that would be brought up in the document. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: And the property is withdrawn from use by the public, recognizing that what that property is going to be used for is primarily for military training. So that is the ultimate use of that property. Can you identify yourself. MR. JACK MORRIS: Yeah. Jack Morris. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Thank you. MR. JACK MORRIS: This wasn't one of my original questions, but since we started talking about public access, most people think of public access as by land, physically on land. Well, we have public access by air in this area. And that's one of the biggest things that I have noticed in the last three years, and especially in the last six months, is the denial of public access by air. The Alaska Range, which we have all of the Deborah, Mount Hayes, and all those, the East Fork, West Fork, Little Delta Tributaries, those have all been shut off to us by air now because of a high impact area use of 2202. And so the Eielson — they have Eielson Range Control, and they are doing an outstanding job with what they are doing, they are helping us as much as they can, but the total amount of access into that area has been cut by 75 percent in the last two years to access those mountains. We generally have to enter before 7:00 or 8:00 in the morning, come out 5:00 or 7:00 at night. And then we have Saturday and Sunday access, so our public access by air has been cut by 75 percent. That was a statement I would like to make on public access. Then it says that the military and BLM will jointly prepare this and present. And when you say BLM, what personnel, insofar as BLM, is that Fairbanks BLM personnel that are familiar with the area, or is this Washington D.C. BLM people? MR. CAL BAGLEY: The BLM in the local office will assist and review the preparation of the Draft EIS. The legislation comes from the Secretary of the Army, and the Secretary of Interior, I guess the director of BLM at the Washington D.C., so they are the ones that actually build the legislation. The document is built here, with the Army and the BLM's final review before publication. MR. JACK MORRIS: But the local BLM and local military, they are familiar with the area, they work in conjunction, so our BLM office out of either Anchorage or Fairbanks? MS. CINDY HERDRICH: It's Fairbanks. MR. JACK MORRIS: Fairbanks will be the ones that will be involved. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: It will go beyond that. It's got to be a combination of the local Steese, White Mountains district office, and the state office at Anchorage. MR. JACK MORRIS: Now the BLM personnel that will be involved, is it possible to get their names? MR. CAL BAGLEY: Gary Forman is the principal point of contact, and all his natural resource staff are working with us, the contractor, in their specific area of expertise. MR. JACK MORRIS: Okay. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: Then it's state director, state office director for BLM in Anchorage is Tom Allan. And the coordinator in his office is Robbie Havens. Our understanding of the BLM office is the district field office will supply their comments, recommendations to the state office. The state office then forwards it to their national office. MR. JACK MORRIS: The other question, if I may. Now, when we say — I need some clarification. When they say Environmental Impact Study, now, what does that specifically mean when we're talking about specific property? What does that

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mean? Does that mean that when we — like let's say we're looking at the Ft. Greely maneuvering area, which 2202 restricted is part of. Now, when you say impact study, do we — do you actually do a study of that physical property to see what the — this increased traffic and everything, how it's affecting it? Do you actually do these things? MR. CAL BAGLEY: It's an Environmental Impact Statement. This — the law didn't require that any additional studies be performed. The Army has come up with a significant amount of funds to do some base line surveys, specifically in support of this Environmental Impact Statement, in addition to what they normally do under their management of the natural resources. One of the programs they have implemented is called ITAM, Integrated Training Area Management, which is an Army-wide program that was established three or four years ago as an inventorying and monitoring of base line conditions with a direct focus toward military impacts. That does not occur inside the impact areas where there is a hazard. There are no surveys done inside those duded areas where supposedly ordinances were. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: Does that answer your question? MR. JACK MORRIS: I guess what I'm saying is except does that mean that you're physically going to go out into the field, except in those dud — into those active live areas, you're physically going to compare that to what? What other base line? When was it done before to compare it to? MR. CAL BAGLEY: Well, the studies that are starting now are much more comprehensive than has ever been done before. There are pieces of information through time and that is all being gathered as far as establishing previous conditions, and then the current studies will be compared against what is there. In some cases there is nothing else to compare to. MR. JACK MORRIS: That's my concern. If you was to go out there in the morning and survey that area, unless you lived here in this area, you know, and were 1 seeing it for the first time or the first time in the last three years, you know, you've seen it two years ago, you wouldn't have anything to compare this to. What was it like ten years ago, what was it just like three years ago, before this large impact happened. Well, what has this changed now in the last three years since this heavy traffic has started. That's the question I'm asking. How are you going to be able to decide? We know what's happening but how are you going to judge and be able to judge what's happening in that area? MS. CINDY HERDRICH: At the last — the last time that legislation was passed in 1986, the Army was required to complete environmental impact statements to renew that withdrawal in 1986. MR. JACK MORRIS: So you will have that as a base to compare to now? MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Yes. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: The other I think positive on that is the — another major study we're doing — MR. CAL BAGLEY: I mentioned this ITAM study, is an incredibly in-depth inventory of all of the Army lands in Alaska. It has not been done in the past. A lot of cases it was done piecemeal or to answer specific questions, but this is the first time that we've ever undertaken, let's say, a massive study to look at all of the lands that we're managing. So the parallel to this withdrawal EIS is this training management program that's in a sense to maintain the lands and prevent the damage from occurring, and then if it does occur, then we're going out to rehabilitate it. Does that answer your question? MR. JACK MORRIS: We're working on things. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: Okay. The issue that will be also looked at, I think this answers some of the questions we had before the meeting started on the increased air use, we're going to be pulling the findings out of the Air Force MOA study, the EIS they did a couple of years ago, just completed. Again, that's going to have considerable amount of information. Maybe we can't base line compare hard core, but we've got a lot more data to work from and compare it with what we

can. So again, this is part of the charge that we've given CEMML is to go in and look at all of these other studies that have contributed and add to what we're doing, in a sense to widen that picture as I think you're asking. MR. JACK MORRIS: I know when we — I attended and testified at several of those meetings with the Air Force when they were setting up the MOA's around and enlarging, in the enlargement area, but I don't think there was anyone at any of those meetings from Fairbanks or here that were at those meetings could ever have believed how much increase in traffic we were going to have in these specified areas. Not so much in the outskirts of the MOA's, you know, and the top side of the Charlies and Yukon, back in there. But what are impact areas, I don't think anybody could have ever believed the amount of increase when the Philippian people come in here, I guess that's what came in here, and what we looked for coming in the future. I don't think anyone could have realized what was getting ready to happen here. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: To clarify from my — when you're talking an impact, if you choose to go just hypothetically, you want to go from let's say Delta and you want to go to the southwest side of Ft. Greely, currently if you're past that eight o'clock window, you're not allowed to fly a straight line heading, you're required to fly the perimeter? MR. JACK MORRIS: They fly the perimeter, we have to go up above, around the outside perimeter along the mountains or we have to go down and come up the banks of the Little Delta. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: Okay. MR. JACK MORRIS: And for safety reasons, Eielson and us have worked out an agreement that if we're coming up the Little Delta, we notify them before we cross so — because they have low flying coming through there. And most of our airplanes we fly in this area are rag airplanes and all they are reading on the radar is our props. So they notify us. Some of us have already put transponders in our airplanes so they can pick us up. And but the area to get across there, this summer here was the worst I have ever had since I've been here since '80, and easily 75 percent denial. Easily that. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: But basically within that window that you described, after 8:00, before 5:00, and not on the weekends? MR. JACK MORRIS: Yeah, after 8:00 and before 5:00. And when they have — like they have special maneuvers come in, you know, that they had two or three special ones this summer, when it got increased, but once in a while they would run into 8:00, nine o'clock at night. Then Texas rain Alpha got hot there for a while and they even closed down Bravo because of the Alpha hotness coming out. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: Were you getting plenty of information through the — MR. JACK MORRIS: Eielson does a beautiful job. We can call them on the telephone or we can call them by air and those guys is excellent. I've been in trouble over there in weather and called them and I've had them actually pull planes up so I can come under and get out of there and they really try hard. It's just that we've got a tremendous amount of real estate over there that we just can't get to, just can't get in there. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you. MR. CAL BAGLEY: That's kind of the point of why it's withdrawn, why it's not normal BLM land, it's withdrawn for the military's purpose, and that's their intent is it would take precedent over other uses. MR. BILL GOSSWEILER: My name is Bill Gossweiler and I'm the chief of natural resources for the U.S. Army Alaska, and I've been working up here since 1978. And I work a lot with the hunting programs and the — all the older — a lot of the programs that aren't military, along with some of the military things, too. And we really try to accommodate wherever we feel we can easily other uses on the lands, but in all our directives, in all our Army regulations, it clearly comes out that it

says that these activities will be — will be allowed to the maximum extent possible, when and only if they are compatible with the military mission, and they do not significantly affect the environment in a negative way. So those are the criteria that we have to weigh when we are looking at doing these or other activities. Has to be totally compatible with the military mission because that takes precedence. MR. JACK MORRIS: Affect the environment, that's the key word you said, how it affects the environment and I think that's the part that we are trying to say, people need to see what this is starting to do. We're seeing it in our moose herds already over there, we're seeing it. MR. BILL GOSSWEILER: One of the problems is a lot of these problems are relatively new like the ITAM program, and we're getting on board with that now and gearing up, so a lot of the things we're doing now will show its benefit in 10 years from now, but it's a slow workup process. And we'll be able to get that information that you're talking about, but unfortunately, back 15 years ago, we never — they never even approached it that way, so we don't have base line stuff then, we're gathering the base line stuff right now. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: A lot of our contributory information is going to come from ADF&G, U.S. Fish and Wildlife. Those agencies are in different words echoing the same kind of concerns. Obviously, I mean the rules to us are we're not supposed to have detrimental impact on the natural wildlife. Ancillary information that you speak of indicates maybe we are. But this part of the process is to in a sense go ferret that out. The thing that I'm also — and we've been grappling with, this is not a new subject to us, obviously every fall we have the request for access because of hunting. We have been historically allowing or in a sense shifting our training needs because of the request for hunting. I'm going to predict that some point in the future we're going to be clashing for that same airspace. MR. JACK MORRIS: We have a situation on 2202 that's been working pretty well, they call it cleanup time from September 1 through 20, because of the heavy amount of traffic going through that area. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: And let's say, I think in fairness, the — we're all aware of the seasonal hunting issues that go on in Alaska. And I think that we still have a common interest to use the land for everybody. And as I say, I think right now, and it sounds like in a sense you're agreeing, it's been working. I don't think you're hearing us say we want to change that. MR. BILL GOSSWEILER: Once in a while I go to the North American wildlife conferences and the military wildlife conferences in the Lower 48 and I talk to some of my counterparts, and that kind of thing is kind of unheard of in the military installations in the Lower 48 where they try to accommodate hunting seasons and things like that. They say we just — that just doesn't happen down here. So we do some special things up here I think and so far it's been working. MR. CAL BAGLEY: You mentioned observations that you've made, and I would like you to be very specific in your comments, either verbally or written, of what you're seeing, from your observations, so we can get those in the record and use that as part of that data that we are gathering to identify what the status of the resource is. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Mr. Sheehan, do you want to make your comments? MR. ED SHEEHAN: I would love to. I'm Ed Sheehan, I represent myself. I can represent as many people as you would like me to if that's not important. I have 38 years' experience at Ft. Greely. I understand the climate, terrain, wildlife, range control setup probably better than anybody. I personally wrote the original EIS. It didn't fly. So Metrics Corporation had to take it over. But lately I've been disillusioned with the generic range, terrain, environmental regulations being produced by the military. That's going to be my main discussion here. I think my own opinion, that other than

the impact areas now, we're not blaming this on the Air Force or the people shooting in the impact areas, other than the impact areas, there's been more destruction in the past 15 years than has been done in the history of that land, rivers, or what have you. Okay? I can bring you around, anybody bring you around and show you this. Mass destruction, needless destruction. All of it could be better done. And most of it is done with total disregard of existing EIS's because the average pilot, the average rifle company, the average guy gets no training in this kind of thing. You ask them and they will tell you that's the Army's land. That's all they know about. The viable alternatives and specific issues, and I'm going to discuss more of this, require an examination and have to be honest and that's the point I'm going to be making to you because I don't think they are now. Usually what happens is the result of a temperate zone mentality, whether you're talking about a big operation like so and so Thunder or big missile shoot like we had a couple of years ago there, these things are dictated from above. And this from above is in Florida or somewhere else. And they say, when they mass the schedule, we're going to train, we are going to do this at this date. And that could be the worst thing you could do in a subarctic environment. In other words, there's a time that fires occur out there. There's a time when they don't occur out there, so on and so forth. But that's not the way things are planned by the military. And that's one of the biggest problems you have. In other words, I'm going to be pushing that you consider the environment, okay? Not just the military and the seasonal effects on the environment. Okay? There's nothing — that's what I mean by generic. The comments I got back from Colorado State University and Wain — are strictly generic. They could have been written for Eglin Air Force Base. They have got nothing to do with this environment. I think we've got to do this without being overly restrictive to the military and the public. We have such a thing right now going. It's been going for some time. The problem a lot of people have with it is it's building and nobody is telling us why it's building or how it's building or where it's going from here. Now, everybody likes to have something. Every time I read the paper and the United States Army and Air Force in Alaska, we are having the first ever such and such. First annual whatever it be. The use of Oklahoma bombing range, by whatever Thunder it was, I'll bet anything was nowhere near as big of operation as was existing in the early '60s and the early '70s on that same bombing range. It's just somebody says it's bigger. They don't look it up and get the facts. There has been a maneuver in the United States Army Alaska, the Army parts of it, in 15 years that was as big as many maneuvers that occurred before that. Okay? Using that same environment. Now, if you question that, go look it up. Okay? Those are the facts of life. And I was actually living this and controlling ranges and what have you when it was occurring. So don't get excited about the fact that more people are shooting out there because it's been done before. The problem was the time — the last time they did it, the Air Force, for example, they had the Oklahoma Range set up, they had the whole thing. It doesn't have today's sophistication but they had it. And they really wanted to do it in the bombing range directly across the Tanana River. Okay? So they went about getting that, getting this to go, okay? They had the environmental part of that approved all the way up the line, too. And all of a sudden the public got the word, specifically aviators, they had Cats building a road out to the site. 636,000 acres across that river that, for all practical purposes, hadn't been used since. Okay? They were — had tractors moving out there to do the final setup out there and the public said we didn't get the word. They had gone through the same process. And it was brought to a halt and hasn't been used for

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all practical purposes since. So the Air Force decided to come back to Ft. Greely. And that's what happened. Now, you don't have to take my word for that, you can take the Daily News-Miner for the year 1972 and read all about it. Okay? They brought the Air Force to their knees. And it had to come back to Greely. Ft. Greely, Alaska, has 50 years of climatology available. As much as anyplace in the state. We've had a Met team here for that long. Okay? And those in charge of enforcing this EIS once it gets done, and the range and training regulations, have to be knowledgeable concerning the subarctic and its phenomena which seriously affects everybody's day-to-day decision. If you're the range controller and you don't understand what's happening out there environmentwise, you're wasting your time. For example, what is the best months for live firing exercise versus this temperate zone mentality I was talking about with respect to terrain, destruction, fires, public access, visibility. These things are determinable. Right now. If you attack it that way. What munitions can be fired and when. For example, if you fire pyrotechnics, white phosphorous, aerial flares, okay, in the snow, I guarantee you, you will have spring fires. It's an absolute. As soon as it hits the snow, it gets snuffed out; as soon as it gets oxygen, it burns. That's an absolute. You don't have to run around playing games with it. Seasonally, what does the training look like? For example, OP-26 where we're building this facility now is typically saturated in April and May, great time to use it. And it's a fire waiting to happen from July to October. Again, if you don't have that temperate zone mentality and they plan these major things at the right time, they can have just what they are looking for. Poorly built winter roads, fire, munition contamination, et cetera, are all preventable with proper planning and understanding of the environment. Doing the right thing when. Now, the specific comments, now, that I want to see in this EIS are as follows: The EIS must address the climate, terrain, fauna, water cleanliness, et cetera, etcetera, as it relates to Ft. Greely's environment, and specific munitions and delivery means. Okay? That's what DOD guidance tells you you have to do. That's what the Army DA's regulations tell you to do. If you want I can requote all these things, too. But specific munitions, specific delivery means versus the moose, versus the whatever. You know. Secondly, any major changes hereafter, and this has been violated repeatedly — we should define major, okay — should require an additional EIA or EIS, period. And that ought to be in the EIS. It was in every one we've had so far, even though it's ignored.

Concerning range and terrain control, a joint Army, Air Force venture is probably needed. The Base Realignment and Closure Commission hearing on 24 April that we discussed last time says the following about it. Remember, now, this is a U.S. Congress dictated hearing and the people are all under oath that are making these statements. Large field, ground and air maneuver problems, as well as Air Force airspace controversy, have plagued the military in Alaska for at least the last 30 years. This is especially true in the Fairbanks area where environmentalist and civilian aviator concerns have repeatedly kept the military from using the full potential of the land area of Ft. Wainwright. These vocal groups are caused by public outcry that to this date prevents the groups — prevents the use of 636,000 acres west of the Tanana River. Ft. Richardson has its own major environmental problems with respect to weapons firing. Basically due to close proximity of Anchorage, this fort today is used only — is used almost exclusively for small unit dry firing and garrison type training, as well as annual weapons qualifications. It is the understanding of the coalition that — that the United States Army in Alaska and the Air Force plan to continue the use of Ft. Greely as their primary live fire joint exercise site. Additionally, USARAK plans to operate Range Control and public relations for Ft. Wain-

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wright, Alaska, just as the Air Force controls its use of Ft. Greely impact area from Eielson Air Force Base. After coordinating with Ft. Greely range control. The Air Force have personnel on site at Greely when they are using the place. In a violation of the intent of Ft. Greely environmental — if they don't do this, it's a violation of Ft.

Greely Environmental Impact Statement. Okay. The Delta community has historically been a good neighbor for the military. They have cheerfully tolerated all manner of live firing blunders including numerous violation of Ft. Greely Environmental

Impact Statement without causing the military any adverse commentary from the media. The military, U.S. Army and Air Force, are now centralizing their troops around Alaska's two largest cities while all but closing Greely. This alone should forewarn anyone of future problems. To assume that USARAK can realign Greely and still ask the people of Delta community to tolerate large bangs, sonic booms, maneuvering off post, et cetera, will be the height of arrogance. If only Environmental Impact Statement violations are enforced by public outcry, the resulting problems and restriction would be great to USARAK and the U.S. Air Force. This is especially true if the range control and public relations people are not familiar with the climate, terrain and people of the local community.

Number four. No new impact areas, period, roads, period, or air fields, period, should be constructed without a new EIA or EIS and after public scrutiny. The public now wants to know how Simpsonville, this new facility across there, was constructed in an area that is not now and never has been used for live firing. This makes a mockery of the EIS system which already says you can't have any new impact areas.

Stop for a minute. These three definitions you used and sent me back, the generic comment on impact areas I gave you, we now have three designations of impact area. I guarantee you that more rounds by weight or whatever criteria you want to use for have been fired in the Delta River than has been fired into Oklahoma impact area ever.

Okay? You can do it by weight or number or duds or any way you want to do it, but that's the fact. And you haven't made that one of your primary things. An impact area is an impact area. Winter roads, air fields, et cetera, have been made at the whims of various commanders that were never again used after they were built. And if you question that, again I would like to point them out to you. Ft. Greely, Alaska, west of the east bank of the Delta River is half as big as New Jersey. And the impact areas are huge by any standard. We ought to be able to live with the ones we have and not create new ones.

Number five, the current range regulations for Ft. Greely were deemed inadequate during the BRAC hearing, and again, I would like to quote it. At the expense of Ft. Greely, Alaska, USARAK Regulation 350-2 uses one half inches of tight page text to explain Ft.

Richardson's inability to be used for live firing, while only a handful of pages extol Ft. Greely's range use and supervision. If the Air Force or the Army rely on this regulation when firing at Ft. Greely, unsafe conditions exist. Period. The frequency extent of Air Force firing at Ft. Greely, Alaska, is understated and the coordination required is oversimplified. The Air Force coordination with Ft. Greely range control and the coordination action taken — and this is again at the time, 1995 — is currently satisfactory. However, these actions are not adequately discussed in the USARAK regulation. In fact, they are not discussed, period. There are no range fans, no nothing about any Air Force use of any impact area. And these are DOD requirements. Department of the Army Regulation 385-62, the policy and procedure for firing ammunition for training, target practice and combat — this is the Army's version of it — requires a CG — USARAK was the only installation commander here — to establish and maintain a detailed range and terrain record. This and

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other range and safety responsibility placed on the installation commander can not otherwise be delegated. And these things are not covered in the regulation, and weren't doing — we could not get data on what was in the impact areas and all that kind of stuff when we tried to. Five.

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Both the DA and USARAK range and terrain regulations are outdated. They fail to address the artillery anti-tank laser, air defense, demolitions, air platform systems that are now in the hands of troops. These documents fail to give the using unit adequate range safety guidance when firing existing weapons munitions in Alaska and elsewhere. In other words, we're saying you don't even have any regulation to use the areas that are proper, and we think that you ought to have them before you have an EIS. The EIS needs — must pull together the Army, the Air Force use of Ft. Greely, Alaska. Right now this is two separate entities. This did not exist when we studied it in 1995. And it definitely didn't consider seasonal use or cold region phenomenon. None whatsoever. It was this generic just handwritten stuff that doesn't really address the environment. A joint regulation that meets the needs and safety of military and the public and the environment is sorely needed. Another one. Sonic booms should be eliminated. Or at least controlled. A method of fixing responsibility should be devised. We read in the paper, Fairbanks News Miner, when you have one of them, call us. You know, that doesn't get the problem solved. Tell us in the paper what you did to the guy that keeps doing it to us. Sonic booms are a frequent occurrence in Delta Junction. Specifically over the Clearwater area. When a sonic boom or close-in bombing or demolitions occur at low temperatures, it is more than a minor inconvenience. You would not get away with this anyplace else in our country. It rattles houses, cracks foundations, the whole nine yards. Any new landing and take-off path should be coordinated with FAA and community. We see a lot of this coming now. Range fans must be developed for each munition and weapons combination, in accordance with DOD policy. The range fans must consider the worst case environmental conditions. That's right out of DOD regulations. In accordance with DA policy, only commanders of major commands — in the case of the United States Army Alaska, that's Commanding General Pacific, in the case of the Cold Region Test Center, that's AMC — have authority to waiver range safety requirements, period. That comes right out of the DA reg. No general in Alaska has this authority. Firing records must be developed and munition contamination controlled. Records should be kept indefinitely. We found this to be a tremendous flaw during the BRAC finding. Based — and this is to the Air Force guys listening. Based on my own experience relative to the Delta River impact area, the one that I said that most firing has occurred in over the years, I would like to have anyone show me how the Army and the Safe Air Feasibility Test, that big missile shoot we had recently, two years ago, or the Air Force, pilot of the Air Force operation in Rolling Thunder can fire a laser from an aerial platform while flying or shooting north-south or south-north, and still meet minimum DOD safety requirements. It can't be done. Other impact areas, again, based on the angle of flight from — by the airplanes, and what we're doing, especially when causing laser problems from refraction and reflection, and ricochet problems with tungsten carbide cores and spent uranium cores, you have to be very, very careful to keep that stuff on post. And you all know as I know that you can lase and blind animals and blind people if it's not being done right and you can do it at tremendous distances. With a 7 and a half power binocular, a simple little ruby red thing like a handheld laser range finder can blind a man with 7 and a half power binoculars about 20 miles. Sheep have 7 and a half power

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sights. Number six, munitions contamination should be addressed as a major EIS issue. This Yukon Command Maneuver Area we're talking about, the very first — one of the very first statements in that is that they're not going to consider contamination. So it wasn't even part of the EIS. To me that's nonsense. Number seven, the EIS should require that existing memorandums of agreement or understanding between the military and the State of Alaska be reviewed and updated. For example, soon there will be little or no medical helicopter fire fighting law enforcement, et cetera, support available at Ft. Greely, and these areas have affected life and limb, every one of them, in the recent past. Now eight, public access to Ft. Greely, Alaska and civilian use of the air space should be no more restrictive than currently exists in a Public Land Order. Everyone working with the EIS has to understand the intent of the Public Land Order.

It's very specific and I'll bet you nine-tenths of the people here haven't even read it. It also has to understand that wildlife don't understand man-made boundaries. You know, they come and go at Ft. Greely. Lastly, I hope the EIS, in summary, the study group will address all of Ft. Greely west of the east bank of the Delta River, in fact, everything across the river, from a seasonal standpoint since time of year affects everything that happens over there. When caribou migrate, where do they migrate, when do fires normally occur, when is mobility enhanced, when does the military not like to maneuver. I'm convinced that the adequacy of the EIS and its enforcement will have an early and lasting effect in the area of public relations. In other words, the public hasn't said anything yet because they are in the dark and you haven't told them what you're going to do differently than right now. Okay? Simpsonville is built on one of the best big game areas in Alaska, used mostly by people from Fairbanks. Pilots use the place real heavy come hunting season. It's very important, I think, that you inform the public up front of any underlying thinking; in other words, guidance that makes this thing written a certain way. And like I said, you haven't told the public anything, you haven't told us in these meetings anything what we're going to do differently. And that's all I really have to say. I would like to be kept informed and I would like to get a copy of what happens. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: So I understand you, that you want — sir, you want a copy of this transcript, too? MR. ED SHEEHAN: I would like a copy of everything. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: Okay. Did you get the one from before? MR. ED SHEEHAN: Yes. MR. DOUG JOHNSON: Okay. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Does anybody else have any comments? MR. RANDY BEALER: Yeah. My name is Randy Bealer. I've lived here a long time. I moved to the area in the late '50s. I've seen a — MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Can you speak a little bit louder? MR. RANDY BEALER: I've lived in the area since the late '50s. I've seen a tremendous increase in military use, but I've at the same time seen the local economy disappear. The jobs are going and the nuisance factor is increasing. My proposal, anybody wants to come in the area with something new or do more testing or do — you know, bring their artillery in here, take it home. Bring it back to Anchorage, bring it to Fairbanks, bring it to Aberdeen Proving Grounds, take it away from here. We're tired of it. You know, if there is no compensation for the local people, we don't want to put up with it. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Anybody else have any other comments? MR. ED SHEEHAN: Can the Air Force tell us why they want to use the Lakes impact area along with the Oklahoma impact area? That's added to your impact area there. MAJOR DAVE ENNIS: The only impact

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areas that we use are the Oklahoma and Delta Creek impact areas. MR. ED SHEEHAN: That's the only one you're using right now. You've used Delta River, you've used all of it at one time or another. But your map shows use of the Lakes impact area. Alaska Environmental Impact Statement opened that up. Because it fits your definition as not so hazardous type impact area. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Which impact area are you referring to? MR. ED SHEEHAN: Lakes. In other words, the map there showing that red area includes Oklahoma and Lakes impact area. MR. JIM BREUN: I am Jim Breun, I'm the range manager for U.S. Army and Alaska, and of course, the Air Force is a tenant of ours. And we permit the use of all that red area depicted on the map as impact area. There are some areas of it that are more heavily used than others, but it's all impact area or buffer between impact areas. And I don't think that represents a change. It's been the case long before I've been here. So I don't think it's anything new. MR. ED SHEEHAN: Okay. But it's not intended that you're going to make that into an Oklahoma bombing area? MR. JIM BREUN: It's already a bombing area now. I mean it can be bombed. There's nothing prohibiting us from bombing it. MR. ED SHEEHAN: It is not now and never has been a bombing area, the Lakes impact area. I ran range control at Ft. Greely for 17 years. MR. JIM BREUN: Uh-huh. MR. ED SHEEHAN: It's been used — all of the firing ranges on the river, and the woods backs up the river, keeps the munitions from going all over the countryside. The first part of the river when you get on the east bank — west bank of the Delta River would have contamination. In the woods, if you fire a small arms, a 20 millimeter gun or something, into those woods, a mile in, there's no problem. You can forget about it. And that's true all along there, but bombing wise, no. That's the reason for that impact area. I drew those boundaries. I know what's supposed to be done there. That's what I'm saying about generics. If you're going to use it, tell us you're going to use it. If you're not going to use it, tell them they can't use it. When I was there, they can't use — couldn't use it. LT. COL ANDERSON: The Lakes impact area, and everything but what you mentioned along the rivers is primarily used for inert bombing rounds with the Air Force. And it has to do — it's all impact area, but it has to do with munitions that are placed in those, you know, versus high explosive is how we're currently using it. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: And Mr. Sheehan, the impact areas that are depicted on the map, those are the current designations for the impact areas, as the Army and Air Force are using them today. MR. ED SHEEHAN: Well, that's because just somebody come up with these names, okay? I'm telling you that regardless of how you weigh it or use it, there's been more — there are more duds in the Delta River than there are in Oklahoma Range. And I'm telling you that in all of the '60s and early '70s, they used — the Air Force used Oklahoma as much as they are using it right now. It was a steady thing. And they didn't pick up the duds before they left. This dud picking up business started about '82. Before that, they used to send statements, certificates that said there were no duds or all duds were cleaned up. So you know, I wouldn't pray out in Oklahoma bombing range. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Anybody else have any other comments that they would like to make before we close the meeting? MR. RANDY BEALER: I was wondering if anything was being done to clean up any of these ranges now, like the riverbed. It looks like hell out there. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: The Air Force actually cleans up the impact areas. MAJOR DAVE ENNIS: Sir, we have an annual requirement to clean up our impact area. MR. RANDY BEALER: Well, this stuff has been out there for years and years and years.

There's old car bodies, dumpsters, torn up junk. Just down the river and take a look. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Those are the targets. MR. ED SHEEHAN: Well, when they put them in, like all the 116's in the Little Delta, when they put them in there was no EIA or EIS done for that, they just did it. Okay? I'm not finding fault with that, I'm just saying it is. What I'm proposing is we don't do that any more. We don't build a Simpsonville, okay, in a place that's not an impact area unless you're going to — unless you tell the public and go through the process. That's what the process is all about or it's a mockery. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Any other comments, or we'll go ahead and officially close the meeting. If anybody would like to voice any of their concerns or issues directly to the court reporter, she's available. Or there are also comment sheets on the table there, with some extra pens if you want to jot something down and leave with us. Otherwise, we thank you for taking your time out to participate in this scoping process for this Environmental Impact Statement. And appreciate you coming. MR. CAL BAGLEY: We are sending out a newsletter to keep you aware of where we are in the process, so if you would like to receive that, please sign your name and address also. MR. CLARENCE GOWARD: You're sending a newsletter out to everybody whose name is on there? MR. CAL BAGLEY: Everybody. Yes. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Yes. There's a log sheet also, so if you wanted to register you will be added to the mailing list, you will receive copies of our newsletter, and also a copy of the Environmental Impact Statement when it's published. MR. CAL BAGLEY: The newsletter is also on the web site, so if you are connected, you can comment that way. (Off record.) (Scoping meeting proceedings adjourned 8:19 p.m. December 2, 1997.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE I, CAROL A. McCUE, RMR, hereby certify: That I am a Registered Merit Reporter for Heartland Court Reporters and Notary Public for the State of Alaska; that the foregoing proceedings, the Scoping Meeting proceedings, taken December 2, 1997, were written by me in computerized machine shorthand and thereafter transcribed under my direction; that the transcript constitutes a full, true and correct record of said proceedings taken on the date and time indicated therein; Further, that I am a disinterested person to said action. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my official seal this _____ day of _____, 1997. _____ CAROL A. McCUE, RMR Registered Merit Reporter Heartland Court Reporters My Commission Expires: February 15, 1998

ALASKA ARMY LANDS WITHDRAWAL
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING OPEN HOUSE

Held on Wednesday, December 3, 1997 Time: 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Volume 1 of 1

Open House Proceedings Held at Carlson Center Pioneer Room 2010 Second
Avenue Fairbanks, Alaska Reported by: Carol A. McCue, RMR Heartland Court
Reporters Fairbanks, Alaska

36 P R O C E E D I N G S (Open House proceedings, first statement, convened at 2:00 p.m.,
December 2, 1997.) MR. ROBERT LAYNE: Well, I'm representing the Division of Land
37 here with the State of Alaska, and I've come to talk about the submerged lands that run
through and around and by the military reservations here, primarily the Delta River and
the Tanana River. We have, in our estimation, asserted the fact that we own these lands
due to the Submerged Lands Act and we're concerned about activities that take place
on them. It's been brought to my attention that it's potential that these are still under
military control, in which case we're concerned about the effects on water quality on the
adjacent lands thereto because we own thousands of acres adjacent to these places. The
primary reason I came to speak with people was because I wanted to get some input into
the Delta River, what's being gone on there, and what's being called the Mississippi
Range, and also, you know, past and present activities, and also to see what's going
on with the Tanana River corridor as it relates to the lands there and the adjacent
lands. It's been brought to my attention recently that a water control, flood control, what-
ever you may have, project was being done on the Delta River. I received a Corps of
Engineers notice, and yet, you know, we believe we own the land in the Delta River, and
yet no permits were requested from that. And I called the Corps of Engineers, Roger
Petkoff here in Fairbanks, about this. I also am in the process of writing Colonel Anderson
at Ft. Greely about this to make him aware that the work that they are doing below the
ordinary high water mark in the Delta River requires a permit from the State of
Alaska. And to go deeper than that on the Delta River, we sent a letter back in 1994,
which has never been responded to, from the director of our division, to then the garrison
commander, Colonel Madison, and informed him that, you know, the Delta River was ours
and we were concerned about the nature of the activities that have taken place, and the
potential for contamination that would be present from unexploded ordnance, debris
and other materials, which are there. We have people who use these rivers constantly for
navigation purposes. We're concerned about their well-being, we're concerned about the
off-flow from any hazardous materials that may be out there onto adjacent lands and
waters. So this is something that we've brought up. It hasn't been as hot an item for us in
recent months because we've had other previously utilized military lands to deal with, and
as far as we knew, the Delta River wasn't being used for a range anymore.

However, we've had some input that is somewhat contrary to that at this point, so that
question needs to be resolved as to what its actual status is as a range at this point.
And referring there again to what is referred to as the Mississippi Range. There is also
some concern about how activities on these lands in general affect state waters
and adjacent lands. Some of the activities that are taking place on and are planned to take
place on Delta Creek, for instance, will very likely affect things downstream from there.
And we want to keep track of those and find out what they are and make sure that the
people and the lands of this state are safe. The tests that military do are obviously

for national defense purposes. We understand that. We know that the range out in Delta there, for instance, is one of the last available in the world of this kind because as the population grows, these kinds of areas are becoming more and more populated, and therefore, unable to be used for these kinds of purposes. So we — we're not trying to impede progress, but we're just concerned about what we are left with in the end is a — as people of the state and managers of the resources. Like I said, we're in the process of putting together a formal letter to Colonel Anderson at this time on the Delta River situation. The Tanana River has been watched by our sister agency, Department Of Environmental Conservation, and some of the concerns about previous dumping and firing into the Tanana River corridor are being addressed through them. But they are still a concern to us as they relate to the submerged lands and also the adjacent lands and the waters. That's pretty much why I'm here and what I've got to say. MS. HERDRICH: That's good. MR. ROBERT LAYNE: You might also want to add that I thank the military and other groups involved here for the opportunity to comment on these situations, and to address things like this on a personal basis instead of going through the long-winded letters and paperwork process that we normally go through. (Statement ended 2:08 p.m., December 3, 1997.) (Second statement commenced at 4:03 p.m., December 3, 1997.) MR. PETE HAGGLAND: My name is Pete Haggland. I've been — was born and raised here, been flying here for about approximately 35 years. And somewhere in the neighborhood of 15,000 hours. And we've always had an excellent relationship with the military. One of the major concerns I have in the — in the special use airspaces that the training areas and maneuver areas, we seem to be getting a smaller and smaller corridor to transit through the areas, and the maps really do not do justice without the superimposing of the Air Force MOA's and restricted use corridor from the Delta area to Eielson. And when one combines those, it is — everybody is getting pushed into a smaller and smaller and smaller corridor and it's going to create some potentially very serious problems. One of the things I would also like to see is that in times of not using the area, that the military instead of leaving the restricted areas active or NOTAM active, release them back in so that people can transit through this. I think that would alleviate in many ways many of the problems. That's pretty much it. (Second statement concluded 4:07 p.m., December 3, 1997.) REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE I, CAROL A. McCUE, RMR, hereby certify: That I am a Registered Merit Reporter for Heartland Court Reporters and Notary Public for the State of Alaska; that the foregoing proceedings, statements during the Open House Proceedings taken December 3, 1997, were written by me in computerized machine shorthand and thereafter transcribed under my direction; that the transcript constitutes a full, true and correct record of said proceedings taken on the date and time indicated therein; Further, that I am a disinterested person to said action. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my official seal this ____ day of _____, 1997. _____ CAROL A. McCUE, RMR Registered Merit Reporter Heartland Court Reporters My Commission Expires: February 15, 1998

ALASKA ARMY LANDS WITHDRAWAL PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING EVENING
MEETING

Held on Wednesday, December 3, 1997 Time: 7:00 p.m. to 7:51 p.m.

Volume 1 of 1

Scoping Meeting Proceedings Held at Carlson Center Pioneer Room 2010 Second Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska

Reported by: Carol A. McCue, RMR Heartland Court Reporters Fairbanks, Alaska

I N D E X Speakers: Mr. Doug Johnson, Head of Environmental Group, USARAK Ms.
Cindy Herdrich, CEMML Public Comments: Mr. Marty Tieva Ms. Anna Plager Mr.
Mike Stredny

P R O C E E D I N G S (Open House proceedings convened at 7:10 p.m., December 3, 1997.) MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Ms. McCue, according to the clock back there, it's 10 minutes past 7:00; according to my watch, it's a quarter past 7:00 so we'll start the meeting for tonight. And I'm supposed say this is December 3rd, and we're at the Carlson Center in Fairbanks, for the official record. Okay. We'll start this meeting. I would like to welcome you to the second of the three meetings we're having on the Army's scoping meetings for the Land Withdrawal Renewal, Environmental Impact Statement process. The purpose of us being here tonight is to listen to your concerns, issues, comments and any questions you have regarding our proposal to renew the Ft. Wainwright Maneuver Area and the Ft. Greely Maneuver Area and Air Drop Zones under this renewal process. As we start this, what I would like to do is we'll provide a short video that outlines the current Army and Air Force uses of these lands. From there we'll go into presentation, a video presentation that Cindy Herdrich is going to do. That will provide you additional information as to what the process is we're doing and why we're doing it. And then after her presentation, we'll provide an opportunity for any questions or comments that you would like to provide us. And that at the end of that portion, we'll officially close the meeting. I would like to also say that I'm Douglas Johnson, I'm the environmental chief for the U.S. Army Alaska, and I'm the moderator of this session. Also with us, we've got members from the Air Force, we've got members from BLM, we have — I believe the State Parks is here. I think I've covered all the agencies. Plus I believe we have a representative sampling of two of the public. And I'm hoping it's three of you. Also, for the record, we have a court reporter, Miss Carol McCue. One of the things we will provide anybody that requests it is a copy of the transcripts. The purpose of having the court reporter is so we have an accurate record of what is stated and we'll also be able to provide anybody a copy of that transcript. With that, I would like to introduce Cindy Herdrich, who will — I'm sorry, I messed up. I'm also supposed to push this. We'll go to the video, and I did blow it. With that, the video, please. (Video played.) MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Okay. At this point I would like to introduce Cindy Herdrich from Colorado State University who will discuss the process and purpose that we're going through. Cindy. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Okay. The Alaska Army Lands Withdrawal Renewal involves the three properties in this map that are shaded in green. Can everybody hear me in the back? Am I talking loud enough? The Yukon Maneuver Area in the Ft. Wainwright installation, the Ft. Greely Maneuver Area, and the Ft. Greely Air Drop Zone. The Ft. Greely Air Drop Zone covers approximately 51,590 acres. The maneuver area covers approximately 571,995 acres. These two properties together represent 94

percent of the Ft. Greely installation. The only property at Ft. Greely not involved in this withdrawal renewal are those areas that are not shaded in green, primarily that's the Cantonment area. There's also three other small parcels of land. A tract down between the Air Drop Zone and the maneuver area, a couple other small pieces that lie on the west side of the Air Drop Zone. Those parcels of land have been withdrawn indefinitely for military use, so they do not have to go through a withdrawal renewal process for the military to continue to use those properties. On Ft. Wainwright, the Yukon Maneuver Area, also known as the Ft. Wainwright Maneuver Area, covers approximately 246,000 acres of land. That training area, or that maneuver area represents 27 percent of the Ft. Wainwright installation. If you notice, there are some parcels of land that lie within the Yukon Maneuver Area that are excluded from this withdrawal renewal. Those, again, are parcels of land that the military had acquired the use of those through public land orders, and they were withdrawn indefinitely, so they are excluded from this project. All of these properties involved were withdrawn from the public domain, meaning that they were removed from public use. They are jointly managed by the Army and the Bureau of Land Management. They are used by the Army and the Air Force. And for this withdrawal renewal, the Army is not proposing to increase or decrease, to change the amount of land withdrawn. They want to continue status quo, they want to continue using the amount of land that they are presently using. Cal, my button is stuck. MR. CAL BAGLEY: There you go. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: You must have got it because my button I think is still stuck. Original military use of these properties was acquired, Ft. Greely Maneuver Area, the Army acquired use of that tract of land November 7th, 1950. The Ft. Greely Air Drop Zone was acquired by the military for use June 26, 1959. And the Ft. Wainwright Maneuver Area was acquired for military use June 15th, 1956. All three of these properties were originally acquired through a permit process. Those permits ran until 1961. After 1961, the military continued to use these three properties, through legislation passed by Congress. The last withdrawal renewal was completed in 1986. Congress authorized military use on that, on these properties to the year 2001. And the withdrawals on these properties expired November 6, 2001. At the last renewal in 1986, Congress passed Public Law 99-606. They authorized the military to use these properties for artillery firing, aerial gunnery, infantry tactics, military maneuvering, training, equipment development and testing, and other defense-related purposes. U.S. Army Alaska is proposing to renew these three withdrawal properties for the same military usage that was authorized in 1986. U.S. Army Alaska is not requesting any additional impact areas or any changes in use on these properties. The Engel Act of 1958 requires that all withdrawals of public land of 5,000 acres or more for military purposes be approved by an act of Congress. When these three properties were last renewed in 1986, Public Law 99-606 states that the Army must complete an Environmental Impact Statement to renew the withdrawals in the year 2001. It also states that that Draft Environmental Impact Statement must be published by November 6, 1998. Now because legislation must be passed by Congress to renew the Alaska Army lands withdrawal, Congress requires a detailed statement be completed and be submitted with proposed legislation. The detailed statement that U.S. Army Alaska will be completing will be a legislative Environmental Impact Statement. Legislative environmental impact statements differ from an Environmental Impact Statement, the scoping process is optional on a Legislative EIS, even though it is optional, U.S. Army Alaska is conducting scoping on

this Environmental Impact Statement. That's what's happening here tonight. A Legislative EIS is prepared as a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, meaning that a final Environmental Impact Statement is not required. All comments received on the Draft Legislative Environmental Impact Statement are submitted to Congress along with the Draft EIS. Congress will determine if the Alaska Army lands withdrawal are renewed, and for the length of time that they are renewed for. Now, the EIS process which is going to be undertaken is outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA. The first step in the process is to complete a Notice of Intent. Second step is to complete a scoping process. The third is to actually publish a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, fourth step is to conduct a comment period, to accept comments from the public and agencies who review the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and the fifth step will be to draft proposed legislation. The first step in the process, the Notice of Intent to prepare the Draft Environmental Impact Statement was published in the Federal Register on October 15th, 1997. The second step, the second step of the EIS process is the scoping phase, which this meeting here tonight falls within that phase. NEPA defines scoping as an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues relating to the proposed action. During the scoping process, U.S. Army Alaska is inviting participation from agencies and the public to help identify those issues that need to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement. Together with the public, U.S. Army Alaska is going to determine the scope and the significance of the issues that are identified, and U.S. Army Alaska will identify and eliminate those issues which are not significant to the scope of this process — to this project. So those issues that are not related to the renewal of these withdrawal properties. The scoping period will run — it started October 15th, 1997, with the publication in the Federal Register of the Notice of Intent. It is going to run through February 4th, 1998. That is 60 days past the last scoping meeting that we are holding here in Alaska. We conducted a scoping meeting — an open house and scoping meeting yesterday in Delta Junction. We held an open house and scoping meeting here today. And tomorrow we will do the same in Anchorage with an open house and an evening meeting. During this time period, we'll be accepting any oral and written comments that the public or agencies will have on the completion of the Environmental Impact Statement. And we've also established a web site through Colorado State University, where if anybody's connected to the Internet, they can log on. And they can — we provide information, updates, copies of our newsletter, and also through that, you can submit comments to us. The third step in the EIS process is to complete the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Now, within that draft statement, certain sections are required by NEPA. The first one is the purpose and needs section. The second section is discussion of the viable alternatives, which will be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement. The third section is a description of the existing environment, the base line conditions that exist on the three withdrawal properties. The fourth section is a comparison of the environmental impacts of each of the viable alternatives. And again, to reiterate, U.S. Army Alaska is required to publish the Draft Environmental Impact Statement by November 6, 1998. Now, following publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, a comment period — I'll wait until you get caught up. Following publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the public will be given the opportunity to review and comment on that document. Again, we will conduct public hearings for review of the Draft EIS, and those will be held in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Delta Junction. Federal, state and local agencies will be provided with copies of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and will be encouraged to provide us their comments on that document. Any of you that

have come to one of our meetings and have signed in on our log sheet will be added to the mailing list and you will also be provided a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. U.S. Army Alaska will accept written comments, along with oral comments following publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. All comments will be submitted to Congress, along with the Draft EIS and the proposed legislation. Okay. The last step in the EIS process is for the BLM and the Army to jointly prepare proposed legislation that will be submitted to Congress. We held preliminary public hearings during the month of June in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Delta Junction to inform the public and agencies of the U.S. Army Alaska's intent to renew the withdrawal properties. During those meetings a number of issues were raised by the public and agencies as items that need to be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Those items include public access, non-military activities, protection of wildlife habitat, fire management, timber harvesting, decontamination of impact areas, and expansion of the Chena River Recreation Area. At this time, what we would like to do is open the floor to any questions or comments that anybody has that has attended the meeting. We have a microphone set up front here, and we have a court reporter present, so she will take your verbatim testimony. We can handle your comments in probably three different ways. If you don't feel comfortable coming to the microphone and speaking in front of everybody, you can wait until we close the meeting and we would ask that you sit one on one with the court reporter, and she will take your testimony. And the third option is we have written comment forms on the back table. If you want some time to think about what your comments or concerns are, you can write those down and either leave that with us or send it in to us. So at this time, I would like to open the floor to anybody that does have any questions or concerns, items that they would like to bring up. Go for it. And if you can first identify yourself. MR. MARTY TIEVA: I'm Marty Tieva, and I'm a — I'm Martie Tieva and I'm a hang-glider and paraglider pilot. And I would like to see if Donnelly Dome could be withdrawn, at least on the weekends during the summer and holidays for paragliding and hang-gliding, and maybe a simplified access procedure for obtaining permission to fly there so you don't run into any low flying aircraft. If it would be at all possible, a nice trail to the top would be good, too, because that would open it up for also hang-gliding. At the present time, you can only paraglide because you have to haul the stuff up by hand, which takes an hour. It's a nice site because it flies in every direction. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: And when you say withdrawn, you mean accessible for the public's use? MR. MARTY TIEVA: Right. Right. It can still be military. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Is there anybody else that has any questions or concerns or comments? MS. ANNA PLAGER: I'm Anna Plager and I'm park superintendent for Northern Area Alaska State Parks. I have parks that are remotely affected like the Donnelly Dome situation and we have a lot of park visitors who take their risk at being apprehended as violators of the law by going up Donnelly Dome, and then talking about what a wonderful place it is, and it's too bad it's not open to the public more freely. So I think I would echo the previous commenter's suggestion, that that should be considered open because it does get the use and it would be a real desirable recreation place. I'm here primarily tonight to listen and I will be submitting written comments officially from the agency, but I did want to share with you and the public, that's why state parks is interested. I also wanted to comment on your presentation because I felt that there was a little nuance there that could be corrected. And that is the issue that we brought up in

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the past was our concern about the Chena River State Recreation Area. It is not a question of expanding the recreation area. The boundaries of the recreation area already contain military land. So we're not trying to expand the area, what we're trying to do is expand the opportunity for use of the recreation area because currently that area, the lower tier of the — the southern tier of the Chena River Recreation Area is not available officially for public use. We're not allowed to manage it for recreation, and in fact, we really discourage people going in there. But the particular drainage that is owned by the military, managed by the military, is a very important part of the bigger recreation picture, and we would very much like for that area either to be relinquished from the withdrawal, or opened to public use in some fashion, particularly in the summer. It's not really that much of an issue — I mean particularly in the winter. It's not really that much of an issue in the summer, very difficult to get there except through the military roads. But we have had a number of applicants come to us or interested volunteer groups like the Two Rivers Dog Musers Association. Even last year they came and said we would like to apply for a trails grant program to tie in your South Fork trail with your East Fork trail, and we would do that by the use of Beaver Creek and Wheeler Creek, Munson Creek, that drainage. And it's a natural loop. It would tie into our two existing trail systems that right now are not connectable because they go through military land. I don't know what the risks are, I don't know what the real military issues are for the use of that land, and so I'm here kind of to listen and learn about that and see where we can go with this idea. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Okay. MS. ANNA PLAGER: Thank you. MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Could you help us in your comments, your written comments in getting as specific as you can, mention the drainages. If you have got anything that's mapped out, stuff like that, because I think that will help us respond in a little bit more accurate way to those questions. MS. ANNA PLAGER: Is Steve Wilson here? MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: He's part of our group and he's currently on vacation. MS. ANNA PLAGER: I have faxed these maps to him in the past, but I will make sure I include those with my comments. MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: If we have them, then — MS. ANNA PLAGER: I have elaborated on those just through casual correspondence this fall, and we exchanged information that way. MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Anybody else that would like to comment? Any questions? Oh, here we go. MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Okay. Great. MR. MIKE STREDNY: I was going to wait a little bit. My name is Mike Stredny, and I've lived down in Delta and I have a place up here in Fairbanks. I was just wondering, I would like to talk to the BLM representative and I would like to see if they would like to remove some of this land like the drop zone where the main part of the herd rests. It would be a lot better managed as a buffalo — for the herd, and the Army doesn't really need it. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Okay. MR. MIKE STREDNY: You touched on some of the points that you had at some of the other scoping meetings, and one of them was access. And having the trails and trapping cabins on the other side of the Little Delta, we've always had trouble getting through your drop zone. And Little Delta River is pretty heavily bombed and I see you do a nice job with your presentation, but the reality is that you're really not picking up. There's, I don't know, countless parachutes and stuff, debris from flares, and it's the same on the South Fork of the Little Chena. I work for range maintenance up there, and again, it's — your pictures are fine, but what's really there on the ground you need to get out a little more. I would like to see a little bit more access on both of them. Something easier to get instead of just like on weekends or holidays, like Thanksgiving you can go through for three days. It really prohibits where you can go and for how long. I guess that's about it. Thanks. MR. DOUGLAS

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JOHNSON: So I can get some help from you, are you talking both land access or air access or both? Again, I'm trying to get specifics so we can target the response. MR. MIKE STREDNY: I go either by skis or on snow machine. But I would hate to be a pilot out there. MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: The reason I bring it up is last night we had an individual in Delta that was, in a sense, concerned on access, but his concern was primarily air. MR. MIKE STREDNY: Air? MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Again, going from the east side across to the west side of the area. So you're primarily worried more on the land, ski, snow machine, dog sled type? MR. MIKE STREDNY: Yeah. Like I say, it's a bombing danger. You cut through there and there's quite a few cabins up there. Again, you don't really show very much on your presentation here, but there are quite a few people that have some trapping cabins, trap lines up through there, and it's always been a hassle for the last 20 years to get through there. And again, you have to wait for like Thanksgiving to get a three day weekend, you can come out. If something goes wrong, well — you can go on a weekend. MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you. MS. CINDY HERDRICH: Anybody else that would like to make any comments? MR. DOUGLAS JOHNSON: Okay. Then according to the clock on the wall, which says 7:45, I'll officially close the meeting. We'll stay around. If there are any questions you have informally, we do have some items over against the wall, we'll explain some of the information in greater detail, and as I say, we will be available. Thank you. (Public Scoping Meeting proceedings adjourned 7:51 p.m., December 3, 1997.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE I, CAROL A. McCUE, RMR, hereby certify: That I am a Registered Merit Reporter for Heartland Court Reporters and Notary Public for the State of Alaska; that the foregoing proceedings, the Public Scoping Meeting proceedings, taken December 3, 1997, were written by me in computerized machine shorthand and thereafter transcribed under my direction; that the transcript constitutes a full, true and correct record of said proceedings taken on the date and time indicated therein; Further, that I am a disinterested person to said action. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my hand and affixed my official seal this ____ day of _____, 1997. _____ CAROL A. McCUE, RMR Registered Merit Reporter Heartland Court Reporters My Commission Expires: February 15, 1998 HEARTLAND COURT REPORTERS 907-452-6727

U.S. ARMY ALASKA LANDS WITHDRAWAL RENEWAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SCOPING COMMENT SHEET

DATE: 3 Dec 97 MEETING LOCATION: Carlson Center

COMMENTOR'S NAME: LTC Martin Travis

COMMENTOR'S ADDRESS: 1357 Moimandy CT
FWW AK

COMMENTOR REPRESENTING: SELF ☐ ORGANIZATION ☒

ORGANIZATION NAME: Tundra Flyers

ADDRESS: _____

PLEASE SEND ME: DRAFT EIS ☐ SUMMARY REPORT ☒

COMMENTS: _____

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Donnelly dome should be
opened w a 4X4 trail to
the top for hang gliding.
It is ok to walk up but it
takes 1 hour w a 50lb load.

U.S. ARMY ALASKA LANDS WITHDRAWAL RENEWAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SCOPING COMMENT SHEET

DATE: 12/3/97 MEETING LOCATION: Fairbanks

COMMENTOR'S NAME: Bill Larny

COMMENTOR'S ADDRESS: 1817 College Rd
Fairbanks

COMMENTOR REPRESENTING: SELF ☒ ORGANIZATION ☐

ORGANIZATION NAME: -Business in Fairbanks

ADDRESS: 1817 COLLEGE RD
FBKS

PLEASE SEND ME: DRAFT EIS ☐ SUMMARY REPORT ☐

COMMENTS: Partner Dr. Hugh Felt

1. Access/Can Bill come in on (OLD VALDEZ TRAIL) North
Winter Trail - Does he have to have a Greeley Pass or can
he use his Wainwright Pass

2. What is legal set up for ADFG ~~passes~~ to Kvule Lake
+ Greeley passes. They give out maps showing
access to Greeley Does everyone need passes
Hunts, Fishing, Fish Trapper (15 yrs) Only way
to get to cabin is on trail

12-6-97

Alaska Army Lands Withdrawal - Environmental Impact Statement

Carlson Center Fairbanks, AK

Scott Heidorn
PO Box 84591
Fairbanks, Ak 99708
907-474-5558 sheidorn@igloo.admin.uaf.edu

Representing the Fairbanks Snow Traveler Inc. An organization with a membership of 273 families and 20 businesses.

Fairbanks Snow Traveler Inc.
PO Box 80053
Fairbanks AK 99708
Please send the Draft EIS and the Summary Report to FST

Comments:

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The principle area of concern for trail users in general is the confusion over access to military lands and the potential for the military to render the lands unusable for public use in the future.

We would like the EIS to reflect the social and economic importance of trails and recognize the growing trend in the publics need for more widespread outdoor recreation opportunities closer to the community. We do not support the withdrawal of these lands if it will result in permanent closure to public access. The use of this land is a privilege and if the military use will contaminate or some how render the land unusable to the general public then we are opposed to its continued use by the military. The portions of the maneuver areas that are currently contaminated are lost to public use but the remaining areas need to be protected from contamination and the public use value evaluated.

There exist a number of historical trail routes in the maneuver areas. If these routes are closed their is the potential for a significant economic hardship for Interior communities. In particular there is an effort to connect Alaska to the Trans-Canada trail. When this occurs snowmobilers from all across the snowbelt will have trail access to Fairbanks and one of the proposed trail routes is along the Fairbanks-Valdeze trail. A review of RS 2477 rights of way should be included in the EIS along with a thorough evaluation of the trail use not associated with RS 2477 or existing management plans. To maintain these trail opportunities it may be necessary to re-route existing trails.

We would like to be included in any mailings of notices and we would like a copy of the draft EIS. Thank you for the opportunity to comment .



Scott Heidorn
Fairbanks Snow Travelers, Board Member

TO: Ms Cindy Herdrich
Center for Ecological Management
of Military Lands
Vocational Education Building
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523

11 DEC 97

From: Mr/Mrs Brian and Valery Rook
3404 Chetana Drive
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709
Phone 907-457-3404

We were unable to attend the initial EIS scoping meeting dealing with the U.S. Army request to renew land withdrawals used as artillery and bombing ranges. Please include us on the mailing list so we can follow the EIS process.

We are interested in knowing what the military services do to keep these areas from becoming junkyards? What chemical residues are left in the soils and how much migrates into rivers, streams and lakes?

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Will these areas be cleaned up when no longer needed by the military and how long will it take?

Thank you.



Brian D. Rook

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phenomenon in which electromagnetic radiation of a wavelength greater than the wavelength of visible light, a British physicist first in the late 1860s. It is called "watching Interior" because it will shine for about 4 hours, however, it will rise no more than 180 degrees above the horizon, which means the sun is in the sky for 15 minutes. It's called "watching sunset" because it is at permanent sunset. Scattering is happening, but it's not moving aside so we could see it.

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E-MAIL: hpyne@earthlink.net (www.earthlink.net/~hpyne)

"THE '98 MODELS COME WITH AN OPTIONAL AIR BAG ON/OFF SWITCH, BUT YOU HAVE TO ASK THE MANDATORY FEDERAL NANNY FOR PERMISSION TO USE IT."

Army wants land reserves extended

Maybe they should clean them up first

When military bases are closed in the Lower 48, the property is turned over to another federal agency or a local group, or it's offered for sale. When military bases are closed in Interior Alaska they're mothballed and the federal government retains the property. Alaskans should take a hard look at this process, and the Department of Interior is opening a window for that right now. The U.S. Army Alaska is starting the environmental impact statement process to renew the land withdrawal for two huge training areas, one east of North Pole and the other south and west of Delta Junction. They total 871,537 acres.

These and nearby related withdrawals are long-term sore points with Interior residents. They seriously crowd our outdoor recreation activities and they close vast areas potentially rich in minerals and timber. There are several reasons the feds don't want to give up military land in Alaska, even when they're not using it. First, the land is so polluted and abused that restoring it would cost a vast amount, even by U.S. Army standards.



Fred Pratt

The Army and U.S. Air Force have used these lands as artillery and bombing ranges for decades. They're covered with "dud" warheads and hazardous waste.

One training area east of Fort Wainwright borders the Chena River Recreation Area, and in the last round of planning documents the Army admitted that it's so contaminated and dangerous that it will never be opened for public use. This blocks the southward expansion of the recreation area.

Regions like the Yukon Training Area, Blair Lakes Bombing Range and Fort Greely Maneuver Area should be declared Superfund sites and cleaned up, just like the federal government forces on our gas stations and battery shops. Instead, the land withdrawals are automatically renewed and the contamination keeps building up.

Fort Greely has not officially been "closed," but has had its buildings boarded up and its personnel and functions "reassigned" to Fort Wainwright.

The EIS process started with a scoping meeting in Fairbanks

Wednesday. The Army contracted the job out to Colorado State University, which doesn't believe in giving the public any hard information about how the uses of these areas might change under the new base alignment or what land use issues might be involved. They'll give you essentially nothing in writing.

They claim to want to know how Fairbanksans feel about the land withdrawals, but the meeting was obviously set up only to feel out opposition early in the process. They're not going to deal with us honestly, and this should be the first point of attack by Alaskans.

The car dealers and the military groups will loudly cry that these training areas are vital to our national defense and an economic value to our community, and everything they say will be true and valid. But Alaskans are not asking too much in wanting the Army to show some respect for our public land, and this EIS process gives us the leverage to press that issue.

You can get on the mailing list and follow through the EIS process by writing:

Ms. Cindy Hendrich
Center for Ecological Management of Military Lands
Vocational Education Building
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
Another military land withdrawal

drawal has been launched on state lands north of Nome. The Alaska Army National Guard wants the state to give it a 25-year lease for "public and charitable" purposes on 25,600 acres of the Stewart River valley.

The AANG is a state agency, and it doesn't carry the same political baggage. The draft document I got from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources on the lease says they will use small arms only, will use no weapons capable of leaving "dud" rounds, and will build no permanent structures or roads.

Still, the withdrawal will test DNR's ability to give the AANG a long-term lease under terms fair to the general public. The area is used by hunters and it contains 24 state mine prospecting sites and 94 mining claims. DNR foresees no mineral entry closure during the lease.

One suspicious question here is why the AANG needs a 25-year lease for land where it will build no permanent facilities. It's already using the land now under five-year permits, so what will it gain from the lease?

DNR says AANG needs the lease to "secure funding for establishment of the training site." Obviously there's something in AANG's plans that's not on the table.

Fred Pratt, a Fairbanks freelance writer, is a longtime reporter and columnist for Alaska politics.

12/5/97

DAILY NEWS MINER

MINUTEMAN

MINUTEMAN

Jan 13, 1998

Randy J. Bealer
P.O. Box 796
Delta Junction, Alaska 99737

Ms. Cindy Hendrich
Center for Ecological Management of Military Lands
Vocational Education Building
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523

This was not written directly in response to the U.S. Army renewal request but I think it touches on many environmental concerns that should be addressed.

This letter is in reference to the increase of non-local personnel and decrease of local personnel in the Fort Greely Delta Junction area. This appears to me to be the largest infraction of local hire that I have ever witnessed in the state of Alaska. Local hire has long been a strong issue in our state. I first moved to the area in the late 1950s. The military presence has been a factor since at least that time. The local residents have been tolerant of the military activity due in most part because it provided a basis of income for the community of Delta Junction. But in recent years this activity has been increasing while the one positive point for the community (economic benefit) has more than diminished.

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There has been a marked increase in the military activity, (sonic booms, and artillery blasts, low flying aircraft that rattles windows in our homes, military maneuvers with slow moving vehicles that often have very poor "battle" or "blackout" lights. The ice fog and terrible emissions produced by these slow moving vehicles in the extreme cold weather makes driving a hazard due to poor visibility as well as nauseating other motorists from the fumes of these poorly running engines.

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Fort Greely has long been the recipient of non-environmentally friendly exercises, experimentation, and testing. Fort Greely was the home of one of the first land based nuclear reactors (It is my opinion that Fort Greely was chosen because of the risk assessment of a sparse population). If it was safe why didn't they put it near a high population area where the nuclear scientist could monitor its operation without traveling thousands of miles to a remote arctic location. The abandon reactor still sits there along with hundreds of tons of radioactive waste from a contaminated pipeline that pumped radioactive water into a hole in the ground and into our local creek and river that flow in front of our town. (It seems there is no BRAC funding to finish the cleanup.) Fort Greely was once again chosen as the base for test development of the nerve gas and biological agents. (The same stuff that Iraq has enough of to kill every man woman and child on earth.) I wonder where they got the idea? The Iraq nerve agent even has the same name as what was at the Fort Greely Gerstle site. Well over 100 155MM-howitzer

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canister rounds filled with nerve agents were left unattended on a frozen lake at the Gerstle river site. Summer came and they fell through the ice to the lakebed below. They were eventually recovered but the recovery was viewed as something "them Rabble Rousers" made them do. There are hundreds of tons of hazardous waste from these tests that are buried on the Gerstle site including contaminated vehicles. (This is all documented)

The Base Realignment and Closure committee has selected Fort Greely for downward realignment. It is to be downsized to only 1 military person. The Military has acknowledged the need for all the ranges and land area so they can bring troops, artillery and aircraft from Ft. Wainwright (adjoining Fairbanks), Eielson AFB (near Fairbanks) Fort Richardson (Adjoining Anchorage), Elmendorf AFB (adjoining Anchorage), as well as stateside bases and foreign militaries. This activity has increased tremendously in the past recent years. They all come to Fort Greely because they are not allowed to perform their military missions in their own back yards because the public will not stand for it. We in the Delta/ Fort Greely area are the recipients of all the negative aspects from many combined bases. And now the economic benefit is being taken away.

It is my opinion that the wrong base is closing. If these other bases are so close to high population areas that they cannot perform their mission why are they staying open? Delta Junction gets to live in a peacetime war zone while all the paychecks go to Fairbanks, and Anchorage. It is also my opinion that the federal government got an awful lot for very little from our community. The federal government had a good thing going. Why do they want to screw it up? Could politics have anything to do with it? Could it have anything to do with votes from major population areas? I think possibly so.

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Our Senator Ted Stevens has worked hard and still works hard to make Alaska one large training area of constant military activity. There is a point when it is no longer worth the trade off. (There is no longer even a trade off in Delta Junction. It is all one sided with the military.) Between the military operation area (MOAS) flight operation (low elevation supersonic bombing ranges) and the ground reservations, a very large percentage of Alaska is no longer useable by Alaskans. Flying has been made very difficult for private pilots. . They must now fly narrow corridors at precise elevation during certain hours. Is this conducive with the free spirit of the Alaskan Bush Pilot?

Either close and clean up all of Ft. Greely's 600,000 acres and turn it back to the people of Alaska or re align so we get at least some economic benefit for our more than casual inconvenience. If the negative aspects of the military mission are not acceptable to the people in the communities who receive the benefit of the jobs, then these aspects are certainly no longer acceptable in our community of Delta Junction.

Sincerely


Randy J. Bealer

Jan 13, 1998

Randy J. Bealer
P.O. Box 796
Delta Junction, Alaska 99737

Ms. Cindy Hendrich
Center for Ecological Management of Military Lands
Vocational Education Building
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523

I recently attended the environmental meeting at Fort Greely to address concerns about the renewal of the military reservations. While the movie was playing and saying what wonderful stewards of the land that the military was, another meeting was going on only 50 feet away in the same building. This was also an environmental meeting. It was about cleanup of Fort Greely. It was explained to the attendees that there was no money (an estimated 5 million dollars) to dispose of hundreds of tons nuclear waste dug up from a radioactive line that was used to pump radioactive water into a well and into Jarvis Creek which flows into the Tanana River. Both of these flow right by our town. It was suggested that a fence be placed around the waste. It was said that every time the pile is moved there is another \$100,000 in cleanup of the underlying ground. They did not even address cleanup or removal of the nuclear reactor. With these observations is it unreasonable to not trust the government? I mentioned the mess (litter and unexploded ordinance) in the Delta River bed. I was told that these were targets. Perhaps these were targets and pieces of targets at one time but at some point they become trash and litter. Much of what is out there is scattered residue from blown up targets from many years. (When you buy groceries, at some point what you have left over is no longer considered groceries.).

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Sincerely,


Randy J. Bealer

U.S. ARMY ALASKA LANDS WITHDRAWAL RENEWAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SCOPING COMMENT SHEET

DATE: Feb 4th 98 MEETING LOCATION: _____

COMMENTOR'S NAME: Mike Stredney

COMMENTOR'S ADDRESS: 3121 River Bend RD.
North Pole, Alaska
99705

COMMENTOR REPRESENTING: SELF ☒ ORGANIZATION _____

ORGANIZATION NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PLEASE SEND ME: DRAFT EIS ☒ SUMMARY REPORT ☒

41 COMMENTS: I have two request, 1st to remove all
military lands east of the Richardson Hwy, a
total of 31,590 acres which is less than 10%
of the total the military is asking for. This is
the Buffalo drop zone which the army can easily
duplicate on a number of other sites. This land could
be transferred to BLM as a Buffalo Refuge
which would serve a far greater need for the buffalo
as well as the community of Delta (and the state).

We would have greater access to the buffalo and Granite Mts/Alaskan Range which could lead to an increased economic development in the wake of the closing of Ft. Greeley. Also I would like to see the entire military maneuvers suspended during the calving season of the buffalo n' caribou.

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2nd request would be the removal of all land in the Chena watershed (South Fork of the Chena River). Also the immediate clean-up n' restoration of this land. The Chena is a prime fishery habitat for salmon n' grayling. People live just below the South Fork and that water is their drinking water (thru wells) plus we use the fish which puts us n' our children in the food chain. This watershed must be restored...

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RETURN THIS COMMENT FORM TO:

Ms. Cindy Herdrich
Center for Ecological Management of Military Lands
Vocational Education Building
Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523

OR

SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS AND MAILING REQUESTS VIA THE INTERNET:

<http://www.cemml.colostate.edu/alaskaeis>