

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE
2023-2027
WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE
INTEGRATED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN**

PREPARED FOR:

White Sands Missile Range
Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division
Building 163 Springfield Ave
WSMR, NM 88002

March 2023



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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 08-11-2022		2. REPORT TYPE Environmental Assessment		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) 01-Oct-2022 to 30-Sept-2027	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Environmental Assessment for the Implementation of the 2022-2027 White Sands Missile Range Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S) Steven A Bumgarner- Contractor Eco, Inc			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Garrison White Sands Missile Range 100 Headquarters Avenue White Sands Missile Range, NM 88002			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Garrison White Sands Missile Range Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division White Sands Missile Range, NM 88002			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) EA2022-001268		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT This environmental assessment contains the results of an impact analysis of the proposed action and the No Action alternative on the affected environment, including cultural resources, air quality, airspace, noise, geological resources/soils, biological resources, surface water resources, facilities, traffic/transportation, socioeconomic, environmental justice and protection of children, health and safety, climate change and greenhouse gases, and hazardous waste and hazardous materials. No significant impacts to the environment have been identified for the implementation of the 2022-2027 WSMR Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			Brian Knight
U	U	U	UU	24	19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code) 575 678-2225

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, NEW MEXICO

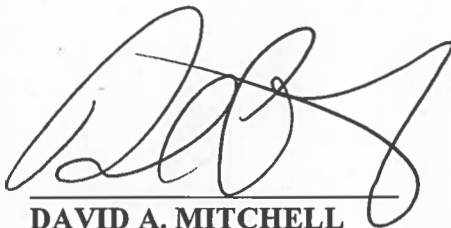
NAME OF THE PROPOSED ACTION: Environmental Assessment (EA) for the 2023-2027 White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) revision.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed action is to adopt and implement the 2023-2027 INRMP. The WSMR Environmental Division, Directorate of Public Works, has reviewed the Integrated Cultural and Natural Resources Management Plan 2015-2019 and proposed the following changes: create stand-alone natural and cultural resources management plans; include Mendiburu Ranch within the administrative jurisdiction of natural resource management; introduce adaptive management strategies for addressing potential impacts from climate changes; update references, objectives and strategies to meet environmental requirements; support biodiversity; maintain or replicate natural ecosystem processes, and support recreation opportunities.

PURPOSE AND NEED: The purpose of the INRMP is to review and update installation-specific natural resource management goals and objectives in accordance with Department of Defense (DOD), State of New Mexico, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Sikes Act Improvement Act (SAIA), and U.S. Army policy.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: This EA contains the results of the impact analysis of the No-Action Alternative and the Action Alternative on the affected environment; including impacts to air quality, airspace, soils, surface water resources, biological and cultural resources, noise, facilities, traffic, transportation, health and safety, waste and hazardous materials, socioeconomic, environmental justice, and greenhouse gases/climate change. No significant impacts upon the environment were identified.

CONCLUSIONS: The Action Alternative, adopting the proposed 2023-2027 WSMR INRMP has been selected as the Preferred decision. Based on the analysis in this EA and consideration of the mitigation measures listed in the EA in Table 4-1, and in accordance with the guidelines for determining the significance of proposed federal actions (32 CFR §651 [2002]; 40 CFR §1508.27) and Environmental Protection Agency criteria for initiating an Environmental Impact Statement (40 CFR §6.207), WSMR has concluded that adoption of the updated INRMP will not result in a significant effect on the environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact is hereby submitted.



DAVID A. MITCHELL
COL, LG
Commanding

8 MAY 2023
Date

U.S. ARMY WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE
WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, NEW MEXICO 88002-5048
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

TITLE: Environmental Assessment for the Implementation of the 2023-2027 White Sands
Missile Range Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan

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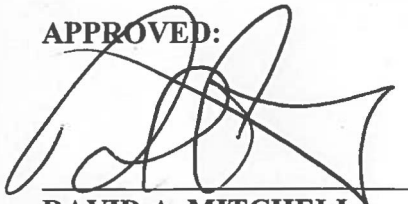
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1 INTRODUCTION

White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) is an Army Garrison managed by the U.S. Department of the Army and operated to support Department of Defense (DOD) readiness programs, including research, development, testing and evaluation (RDT&E) of weapons and space systems, and also supports military training. WSMR's military mission requires expansive and varied terrain as well as a diverse natural environment to provide a realistic setting for testing and training (Fig. 1-1). The military mission is facilitated and sustained by maintaining its lands as natural ecosystems with diverse and thriving plant and animal communities. This is accomplished through responsible natural resources management. WSMR Garrison is the lead agency responsible for maintaining the Range and sustaining the environment. The Garrison is also the lead agency directing the completion of the 2023-2027 WSMR Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) and its associated environmental assessment (EA). The Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division has prepared this EA in order to consider the potential environmental effects and socioeconomic impacts from implementing the INRMP. All Army installations review their INRMPs annually with a formal update every five years to ensure that goals, strategies, objectives and projects are in alignment with military mission and environmental requirements.

This EA fulfills requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500 to 1508, 32 CFR 651 Environmental Analysis of Army Actions (United States [U.S.], Army 2011), 32 CFR Subpart 651.10 (b) whereby environmental management programs (such as an INRMP) must undergo environmental impact analysis, as well as provide the public an opportunity to review and comment on proposed management approaches and Army policy (DOD 2013).

The proposed action to implement the INRMP does not meet Army screening criteria for a categorical exclusion as described in 32 CFR 651.29. INRMPs are considered actions that require environmental analysis (32CFR 651.10 [2002], Sikes Act, AR 200-2). Furthermore, using the NEPA process provides the public the opportunity to review and comment on proposed natural resource management approaches.

An INRMP provides useful information for planning and managing natural resources at an integrated landscape level in order to conserve ecosystem components while supporting the military mission(s). INRMPs detail how the installation will meet the U.S. Army's environmental vision: *'The U.S. Army will be a national leader in environmental and natural resource stewardship for present and future generations as an integral part of our mission.'*

The INRMP is a living document designed to be a valuable, dynamic management tool that changes as the military missions or natural resources conditions change. It is a practical guide for the management, sustainment, and stewardship of all natural resources present on WSMR, thus helping to insure that there is no net loss in mission capabilities.

The INRMP establishes installation-specific natural resource management goals and objectives consistent with DOD, Sikes Act Improvement Act (SAIA), and U.S. Army policy and guidance. Additionally, the INRMP presents projects and activities that would enhance natural resources for multiple use, sustainable yield, and biological integrity without affecting other installation plans,

activities, or the overall mission. The INRMP goals and objectives would allow WSMR to manage its natural resources through an integrated, adaptive, ecosystem management approach that is designed to sustain and be consistent with, the military mission.

An INRMP is considered implemented if an installation does the following:

- Actively requests, receives, and uses funds for “must fund” projects and activities,
- Ensures that sufficient numbers of professionally trained natural resources management personnel are available to perform the tasks required by the INRMP,
- Coordinates annually with the cooperating offices that are signatories to the INRMP,
- Documents specific INRMP action accomplishments undertaken each year,
- Evaluates the effectiveness of past and current management activities and adapts those activities as needed to implement future actions (DOD 2013).

1.1 Purpose and Need

The purpose of this INRMP EA is to evaluate if there are any significant environmental impacts to the human and natural environment if the INRMP is implemented.

The need of this EA is to meet the requirements associated with adopting the INRMP and comply with the Sikes Act (16 US Code 670), the SAIA, DOD Instruction 4715.03, and Army Regulation (AR) 200-1 *Environmental Protection and Enhancement* (U.S. Army 2007), as well as other applicable environmental laws and regulations.

1.2 Scope

Per CEQ’s updated NEPA regulations promulgated in July 2020, this EA considers the potential impacts of the Proposed Action and Alternatives on the affected environment and the degree of the effects of the action. Specifically, this EA considers short- and long-term environmental effects; beneficial and adverse effects; effects on public health and safety; and effects that would violate federal, state, tribal, or local laws protecting the environment.

The area that the INRMP provides guidance for includes the lands managed by the Army on WSMR, which encompasses approximately 2.2 million acres across portions of five counties (Doña Ana, Otero, Sierra, Lincoln, and Socorro) in south central New Mexico and is DoD’s largest single land holding (Figure 1-1). WSMR comprises several major physiographic features, including the Organ Mountains, San Andres Mountains, Mockingbird Mountains, Oscura Mountains, Chupadera Mesa, Tularosa Basin, Carrizozo Lava Beds, and the northern end of the Jornada del Muerto Basin (also called Stallion Basin). The INRMP also includes management for the Army-owned Mendiburu Ranch, which is adjacent to portions of the northern boundary of WSMR. The Army took title to approximately 12,000 acres of the Mendiburu Ranch in 2001 and now has administrative oversight of the entire ranch and the associated grazing leases on New Mexico State land, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands, and on Army fee-owned land (about 72,000 acres). The Mendiburu Ranch has been leased from the Army for cattle grazing since 2010 (pers. comm., Patrick Morrow).

1.3 Decision(s) to be Made

The U.S. Army WSMR Garrison is the lead agency responsible for the completion of this EA. If the EA finds that there are no significant environmental impacts by adopting the INRMP, then the decision is to proceed with implementation of the INRMP. If it is determined that adopting the revised plan will have significant environmental impacts, then there would be a Notice of Intent (NOI) issued into the Federal Register requiring the Army to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (Army 2007).

1.4 Related Environmental Documents

32CFR651 allows for the use and incorporation of existing environmental documents as references when they are within the scope of existing NEPA documents (DOD 2013). Analysis and conclusions from the following EAs and EIS are incorporated into the evaluation of potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the INRMP. The following documents are accessible through links provided within the INRMP or are publicly available online.

Integrated Pest Management Plan/EA: This plan, updated in 2021, provides management guidance for plant and animal pest management on WSMR.

Pupfish Recovery Plan/EA: This plan was written in 2015 and provides goals and objectives for the recovery and conservation of the White Sands pupfish.

Integrated Wildland Fire Management Plan/EA: This plan was rewritten in 2018 and included updated Fire Management Units and strategies. It was determined that the updated plan remained within the scope of the 2004 Wildland Fire Management Plan EA.

Oscura Mountains Ecosystem Management Plan/EA: This programmatic plan was written in 2019 and provides land management objectives, projects, and strategies specific to the greater Oscura Mountains ecosystem area.

White Sands Missile Range Integrated Natural and Cultural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment (INCRMP): This plan was written in 2015 and updated the 2002 Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan. It also updated the 2004-2009 Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan and combined both plans into a single document. The INCRMP contained an imbedded EA for required NEPA documentation.

2009 Final Environmental Impact Statement for Development and Implementation of Range-Wide Mission and Major Capabilities at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico. Vol. 1 and 2.

1.5 Public Scoping

The Army maintains a policy of open communication with interested parties and invites public participation. The Army urges all federal and state agencies, public and private organizations, and members of the public that have a potential interest in the Proposed Action—including minority, low-income, disadvantaged, and Native American groups—to participate in the Army's NEPA

and decision-making processes, as guided by CEQ regulations at 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508 and 32 CFR Part 651.

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) are signatories to the WSMR INRMP. Interagency coordination with these agencies occurred during development of the plan. Additionally, military units that utilize the land and airspace provided by WSMR were consulted and coordinated with in order to provide input to the plan.

The EA and INRMP and Finding of No Significant Impacts (FNSI) will be available online to federal, state, and local agencies, Native American tribes, and the public for review and comment for 30 days at <https://home.army.mil/wsmr/index.php/about/garrison/directorate-public-works-dpw/environmental>.

WSMR plans to publish a Notice of Availability with the entirety of the FNSI in the Albuquerque Journal and the Las Cruces Sun-News newspapers. The EA, the INRMP, and FNSI will be available for viewing at the following libraries:

- Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, 200 E. Picacho Avenue, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001
- White Sands Missile Range Post Library, Building 465, White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico 88002
- Alamogordo Public Library, 920 Oregon Avenue, Alamogordo, New Mexico, 88310
- Socorro Public Library, 401 Park Street, Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Following the 30-day public review period, the Army will address all relevant comments received. If the review process does not identify additional significant impacts, the Army will finalize the EA and the INRMP and sign the FNSI.

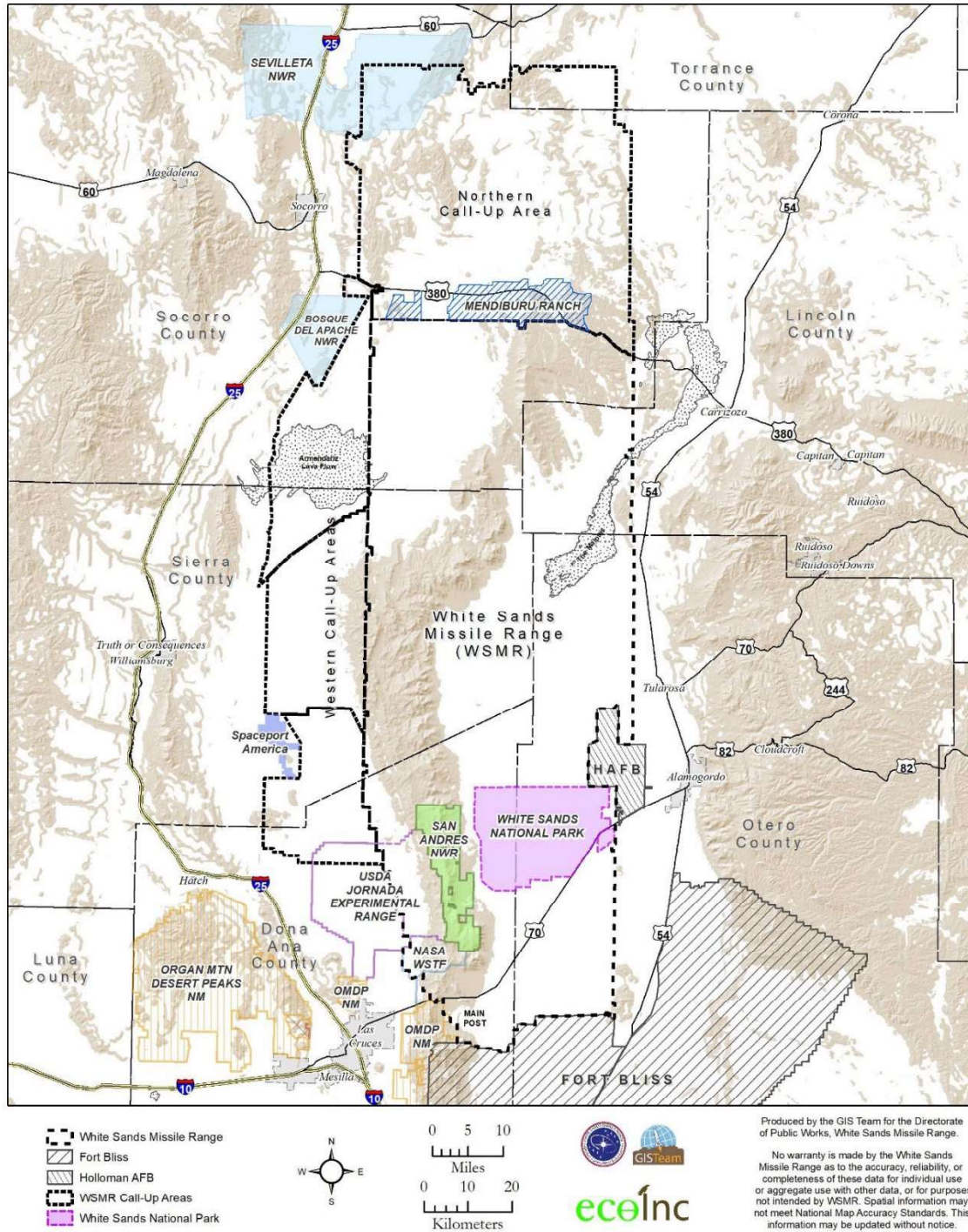


Figure 1-1. WSMR and Region

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

To address the purpose and need, this EA analyzes two alternatives: the Action Alternative and the No Action Alternative (mandated in CEQ 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508 and in Environmental Analysis of Army Actions 32 CFR Part 651.34). Section 2.1 describes the Action Alternative, Section 2.2 describes the No Action Alternative, and Section 2.3 describes the alternatives WSMR considered but did not carry forward for analysis.

2.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action is to adopt the INRMP, which contains new goals, objectives, and management practices.

The Conservation Branch, Environmental Division, Directorate of Public Works, WSMR Garrison, reviewed the Integrated Cultural and Natural Resources Management Plan 2015-2019 (INCRMP) and proposed the following changes for the 2023-2027 INRMP:

- Creation of a stand-alone INRMP and ICRMP. This will facilitate ease of use for persons interested in natural resources or cultural resources. The separate documents will be shorter and easier to follow.
- Introduction of new/updated program objectives and strategies for the management of natural resources in order to meet new WSMR goals:
 - Goal 1: 100% Compliance with Natural Resource Laws and Regulations, Executive Orders, Instructions, and other DoD/Army/WSMR Policies.
 - Goal 2: Maintain the Biodiversity of Native Flora and Fauna.
 - Goal 3: Maintain or Replicate Natural Ecosystem Processes.
 - Goal 4: Support Morale, Welfare, and Recreation for Residents and the Workforce.
- Inclusion of Mendiburu Ranch within the administrative jurisdiction of natural resource management.
- Introduction of adaptive management strategies for adjusting practices needed to endure climate changes.
- Acknowledgement of potential impacts of climate changes on natural resources and the RDT&E mission.
- Update references with new information.

2.1.1 Environmental Review Process

In order for missions/projects to be implemented on WSMR grounds, the mission proponent must first submit a project action description (PAD) to the Garrison Environmental Division, Customer Support Branch, who initiates an environmental review. A PAD contains sufficient critical details for the Customer Support Branch and other subject matter experts and internal stakeholders to determine if there are any potential environmental impacts. During the review process, subject matter experts can add conditions of use to prevent environmental impacts or alert the proponent to other environmental requirements. The review process also facilitates coordination between subject matter experts and the proponent. Comments received on a PAD provide information

considered by the Customer Support Branch who determine if the proposed action meets the screening criteria for a categorical exclusion. When a PAD meets the screening criteria for a categorical exclusion, such as those for Construction and Demolition (32 CFR 651 App B Sec II (c)) and Cultural and Natural Resource Management Activities (32 CFR 651 App B Sec II (d)), the determination is documented in a Record of Environmental Consideration (REC). When a categorical exclusion does not apply, the action may still fall within the scope of existing EAs and would be documented in a REC. However, if there are extraordinary circumstances, then a “harder look” may be required which may mean completing an EA.

The Environment Division’s Conservation Branch participates in the environmental review process in two ways. The Conservation Branch contains subject matter experts that provide input to the environmental review process, prescribing best management practices or mitigations to minimize impacts to natural resources. This involvement meets the goals of the INRMP. The other means for participating in the environmental review process is when the Conservation Branch plans to implement a specific activity from the INRMP that requires an environmental review. The subject matter expert would submit a PAD for review as a proponent and internal stakeholders would then review and comment on the specific actions described in the PAD. The Customer Support Branch would consider all comments and then determine the level of environmental analysis needed to satisfy NEPA requirements.

2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed management measures set forth in the revised WSMR INRMP would not be implemented. WSMR would continue to manage its natural resources based on the information presented in the 2015 INCRMP. The No Action Alternative would not comply with the Sikes Act Improvement Act (SAIA), which requires a formal INRMP revision every five years. The No Action Alternative serves as the baseline against which federal actions are evaluated, and as such, inclusion of the No Action Alternative is prescribed by CEQ regulations (DOD 2013).

2.3 Alternatives Considered but Not Analyzed Further

(1) Inclusion of properties that the WSMR Army Garrison manages beyond the contiguous boundaries of WSMR, such as Fort Wingate and Green River. Jurisdictional management of Fort Wingate natural resources will be developed in the future.

(2) Inclusion of properties used by White Sands Missile Range that are within the jurisdiction of another government agency and associated with a real estate instrument such as a lease agreement or grant of right of way. These properties include Alamo Peak and Sacramento Peak on US Forest Service lands, Rose Peak on Bureau of Land Management lands, and the Co-use Areas—such as White Sands National Park, San Andres National Wildlife Refuge, and the USDA Jornada Experimental Range.

The reason for not evaluating either of these alternatives further is a jurisdictional one, as WSMR follows the environmental requirements mandated by the previously mentioned land management agencies or directorates.

3 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This chapter presents a description of the environmental resources and baseline conditions that could be affected from implementation of the INRMP. This revision of the INRMP consists primarily of administrative changes within the document. Strategies, methods, and practices will continue as they have been implemented in the past. The affected environment is determined using criteria found within NEPA, CEQ, and the Army NEPA Guidance Manual (USAEC 2013).

The action area for the INRMP is defined as the area that could be affected directly or indirectly by a Proposed Action—not merely the immediate impact area involved in the action. For this EA, the action is to adopt the INRMP. The INRMP includes management of the Mendiburu Ranch, which is a change from the INCRMP that dealt solely with management of lands within the continuous, legislatively determined boundaries of WSMR.

The EA applies a method to evaluate Valued Environmental Components (VECs) that are typically addressed in Army NEPA analyses (USAEC 2013). This analytical process allows a level of consistency in evaluating and comparing impacts across installations to help with Army-wide decision-making. It also advocates a process for focusing analysis on areas where impacts are most likely to occur, considering the type of actions involved in a geographic context. Participants included subject matter experts at WSMR who have extensive knowledge of the various resources on the installation.

The VEC table below summarizes the degree to which each VEC would potentially be affected by the Proposed Action. Possible ratings for each VEC range from low, moderate, to high. All VECs were analyzed, and all rated as low due to the determination that changes within the INRMP are mostly administrative in nature. The analysis indicated that potential impacts to natural resources and the human environment were considered to be negligible or nonexistent.

Implementation of specific actions (projects) always go through the WSMR environmental review process to determine if additional environmental analysis is required or if modifications or mitigations are needed or if the project/action can proceed as described.

Table 3-1. Evaluation of Potential Impacts from INRMP Implementation

VEC	Evaluation of Potential Impacts from INRMP Implementation	Rating
Air Quality	Specific actions that could have an impact to air quality include projects such as prescribed wildland fires, and road maintenance projects. These projects' implementation would create temporary and minor increases in air emissions from the use of fire and heavy equipment (combustion emissions), and the disturbance of soils (fugitive dust).	Low
Airspace	New golden eagle management guidelines specify that there are avoidance perimeters of a minimum of one-half mile from occupied nests for all aircraft (pers. comm. Trish Cutler). Implementation of the goals of the INRMP is to support military activities that are dependent on the use of airspace.	Low

Cultural Resources	The adoption of the INRMP uses the environmental review process as a means to improve coordinated efforts between land managers and mission proponents for avoiding impacts to cultural resources.	Low
Noise	The adoption of the INRMP incorporates the environmental review process as a means to improve coordinated efforts and screen for potential impacts to wildlife from noise generated by military activities.	Low
Geological Resources/ Soils	Adopting the INRMP will include updated goals and strategies to protect unique geological features, most of which have been identified and protected, including fossils, unique soils, caves, and the newly discovered megafauna trackways.	Low
Biological Resources	Biological resources have the potential to impact military activities. Adoption of the INRMP will serve as a management plan to sustain biological resources for the long-term, thereby reducing the potential for negative impacts to WSMR missions and includes the following mitigations: New golden eagle management guidelines specify that there are avoidance perimeters of a minimum of one-half mile from occupied nests for all aircraft (pers. comm. Trish Cutler). Golden eagle management activities provide the RDT&E mission with updated guidelines, BMPs and monitoring to insure that mission impacts to golden eagles and their nests are minimized. Gray vireo nests are buffered for 300m to exclude chemical treatments that target oneseed juniper reduction.	Low
Surface Water Resources	Adopting the INRMP includes goals and strategies that value and protect surface water resources including the White Sands Pupfish Habitat Rehabilitation and Protection Plan which contains guidelines and protection measures to maintain streambanks and water quality.	Low
Facilities, Traffic, and Transportation	Adopting the INRMP has no impact on this VEC.	Low
Socioeconomic	Adopting the INRMP has no impact on this VEC.	Low
Environmental Justice and Protection of Children	Adopting the INRMP has no impact on this VEC.	Low
Health and Safety	Adopting additional measures for controlling oryx population will have a beneficial effect due to a reduction in potential collisions and encounters with humans.	Low
Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials	Adopting the INRMP will not generate any hazardous waste or hazardous materials nor have any impacts on this VEC.	Low
Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases	Wildland fire activity has the potential to generate greenhouse gases, particularly during prescribed fires and wildfires allowed to burn for ecosystem benefits. These emissions would be temporary in nature and would not create large increases in greenhouse gases due to the light fuel loads associated with burning grasses and brush. Carbon sequestration is important for sequestering greenhouses gases, but it occurs mostly in heavy fuels that are not found in mass quantities across the landscapes of WSMR.	Low

4 POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF ADOPTING THE PROPOSED ACTION OR THE NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

4.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, WSMR would not meet the requirements of the Sikes Act Improvement Act, Department of Defense Instruction and Manual 4715.03 Natural Resources Conservation Program, and U.S. Army Regulation 200-1. WSMR would continue to manage its resources as detailed within the INCRMP 2015-2020, the MOUs, MOAs, and guidelines, rules, regulations currently in place. The No Action Alternative would not adequately address the long-term management of the natural resources from a sustainability prospective, and the goals and objectives would not be updated or reflect current needs.

4.2 Proposed Action Alternative (Preferred)

The proposed action alternative adopts the WSMR INRMP 2023-2027 (INRMP) for the management of natural resources for the next five years. The INRMP meets the requirements of the Sikes Act Improvement Act, Department of Defense Instruction and Manual 4715.03 Natural Resources Conservation Program, and U.S. Army Regulation 200-1. The INRMP is a revision of the WSMR INCRMP 2015-2020 and, as such, reviews the natural resource activities undertaken since its implementation, and proposes new projects and initiatives and establishes goals, objectives and management actions that will guide the installation and ensure no net loss of military lands dedicated for the testing and evaluation of military-grade weapons systems. The INRMP supports the military mission by ensuring activities on WSMR operate consistently with respect to environmental laws, regulations, and executive orders. The INRMP provides the basis and criteria for protecting and enhancing natural resources using landscape and ecosystem perspectives. Implementation of the WSMR INRMP will help to ensure compliance with federal and state laws and should result in no net loss of military lands for its dedicated missions.

4.3 Comparison of Impacts of the No Action Alternative versus the Proposed Action Alternative

Environmental impacts to natural, cultural, and man-made resources can vary in degree or magnitude from a slightly noticeable change to a total change in the environment. For the purpose of this analysis, the intensity of impacts are classified as negligible, minor, moderate, or major (Table 4-1). The intensity thresholds are defined as follows:

- **Negligible:** A resource would not be affected, or the effects would be at or below the level of detection, and changes would not result in any measurable or perceptible consequences.
- **Minor:** Effects on a resource would be detectable, although the effects would be localized, small, and of little consequences to the sustainability of the resource. BMPs, if needed to offset adverse effects, would be simple and achievable.
- **Moderate:** Effects on a resource would be readily detectable, long-term, localized, and measurable. BMPs, if needed to offset adverse effects, would be extensive and likely achievable.
- **Major:** Effects on a resource would be obvious, long-term, and would have substantial consequences on a regional scale. Extensive mitigation measures to offset the adverse effects would be required and success of the mitigation measures would not be guaranteed.

Table 4-1. Comparison of Environmental Impacts between Alternatives and WSMR BMPs for Minimizing Potential Environmental Impacts

Valued Environmental Component	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action Alternative	Best Management Practices to Mitigate Potential Environmental Impacts
Air Quality	Negligible. Air quality would continue to be managed in accordance with the 2015 INCRMP, the WSMR EIS (WSMR 2009), and the Federal, State, and U.S. Army laws and regulations governing air emissions.	Negligible. Adopting the INRMP would not affect this VEC.	Guidelines for use of prescribed fires and associated smoke emissions are found in the 2018 IWFMP and would be followed, including mitigation measures to reduce smoke emissions and for obtaining appropriate burn registrations from the New Mexico Environment Department's Air Quality Bureau. Required prescribed fire burn plans contain provisions to reduce smoke impacts and emissions. For example, burning when plants are dormant or low in live/dead fuel moisture to help with rapid fuel consumption and reduce smoldering combustion phase (Bumgarner, 2018).
Airspace	Negligible. Airspace would continue to be managed in accordance with existing WSMR EISs and the Federal, State, and U.S. Army laws and regulations governing restricted airspace.	Negligible. There are new golden eagle management guidelines in the INRMP that specify avoidance perimeters of a minimum of one-half mile from occupied nests for all aircraft (Pers. comm. Trish Cutler).	Use the environmental review process to coordinate activities to avoid impacts to golden eagles.
Cultural Resources	Negligible. Cultural resources would continue to be managed through the INCRMP (WSMR 2015).	Minor, beneficial. Cultural resources would be managed through the new ICRMP. The INRMP is compatible with the cultural resource protection measures as stated in the ICRMP.	Use the environmental review process to help avoid impacts to cultural resources and to inform project proponents if cultural surveys are needed.
Noise	Negligible. Noise would continue to be managed through the INCRMP (WSMR 2015)	Negligible. Adopting the INRMP would not affect this VEC.	Use the environmental review process to screen for potential impacts from noise that may impact wildlife.

Geological Resources/Soils	Negligible. Soils and ecosystems would continue to be managed under the provisions of the 2015 INCRMP (WSMR 2015), the WSMR ITAM five-year plan FY12-16 (WSMR 2011), and as analyzed in the EIS (WSMR 2009).	Minor, beneficial. New INRMP goals, objectives, and projects would have a beneficial long-term impact on conservation of soil resources and ecosystems by reducing soil erosion and sedimentation throughout WSMR.	Use the environmental review process in place on WSMR to consider locations of proposed activities and protect important features such as unique soils, megafauna's trackways, karst, and lava flows. Proposed soil erosion control projects include the rehabilitation of incised arroyos, rerouting of roads out of arroyos and low-lying areas, increased use of culverts, and closing and reclaiming redundant roads.
Biological Resources	Negligible. The biotic environment would continue to be managed as detailed within the 2015 INCRMP; the MOUs, guidelines, rules, and regulations currently in place that govern threatened, endangered, rare and sensitive plants and animals; and as analyzed in the EIS (WSMR 2009).	Moderate, beneficial. New goals and objectives in the INRMP would be established that would have a beneficial long-term impact on the biotic environment. Updated management practices would be implemented based on science and BMPs that would mitigate negative impacts from WSMR test missions on the biotic environment.	Use the environmental review process on WSMR for considering potential impacts to wildlife and plant communities. Such projects as modifying or relocating existing fences to be more wildlife friendly, construction of additional wildlife water sources, prescribed fires for ecosystem benefit, using controlled chemicals to reduce or eliminate noxious, invasive plants, and rehabilitating and stabilizing eroded areas will increase ecosystem heterogeneity and help promote sustainability of the mission and reduce potential for loss of wildlife species and their habitats.
Surface Water Resources	Negligible. Surface water resources would continue to be managed under the provisions of the 2015 INCRMP and as analyzed in the EIS (WSMR 2009).	Minor, beneficial. New INRMP goals, objectives, and projects would be established that would have a beneficial long-term impact on surface water resources by reducing soil erosion and sedimentation into surface water resource areas.	Use the environmental review process on WSMR to assess potential impacts to surface water resources. Surface water quality projects should seek to maintain healthy arroyo riparian buffers along waterways by limiting activities in these areas; additional practices include the rehabilitation of incised arroyos and rerouting of roads out of arroyos and low-lying areas.
Facilities, Traffic, and Transportation	Negligible. The human-built environment would continue to be managed under the provisions of the 2015 INCRMP and as analyzed in the EIS (WSMR 2009).	Negligible. Adopting the INRMP would not affect this VEC.	Use the environmental review process to assure the human-built environment is properly considered and human safety is not compromised.
Socioeconomics	Negligible. Ongoing contracts and projects would continue under the guidance of the 2015 INCRMP, WSMR	Negligible. Adopting the INRMP would not affect this VEC.	None identified.

	EISs, and Army regulations.		
Environmental Justice and Protection of Children	Negligible. Populations with children, minority or low-income do not occur where existing natural resource management objectives are being implemented.	Negligible. Adopting the INRMP supports outreach to the community with specific actions that look for opportunities for public education and increase awareness of natural resource management and conservation.	Continue the wildlife education outreach to the local population, including school children.
Health and Safety	Negligible. Health and safety would continue to be managed under current guidelines, rules, and regulations currently in place (US Army 2011) and as analyzed in the WSMR EIS.	Negligible. Adopting the INRMP would not affect this VEC.	Continuing the WSMR Hunt Program is necessary to keep numbers of free-ranging oryx within acceptable population limits and for reducing vehicle accidents with wildlife (WSMR 2019c). Additional BMPs include practices that exclude or discourage animals and pests from roosting, nesting, and inhabiting buildings, managing nuisance wildlife, pest management and reducing vegetative fuel loads in specific areas.
Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials	Negligible. Hazardous waste and materials would continue to be considered for use on a case-by-case basis.	Negligible. Adopting the INRMP would not affect this VEC.	Compliance with recovery and use of hazardous wastes and materials is included in BMPs during the environmental review process for proposed projects.
Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases	Negligible. Due to the pre-dominantly low fuel loads found across WSMR landscapes, greenhouse gases increases would be minimal during prescribed fires and wildfires.	Minor, adverse. Adopting the INRMP could increase greenhouse gas generation due to allowing more wildfires to burn across landscapes and with increased use of prescribed fire treatments for ecosystem benefits.	Continue to follow guidelines for reducing smoke emissions as found under the Best management practices described for Air Quality above.

5 CONCLUSION OF IMPACTS ANALYSIS

An analysis of the environmental effects as proposed by goals, objectives, projects and initiatives in the INRMP was completed by WSMR Conservation Branch, Environmental Division of the Directorate of Public Works. Adoption of the INRMP is mostly administrative in nature. There are no specific changes that would trigger the need for an Environmental Impact Statement. Many existing projects and initiatives listed within the INRMP have already been analyzed for NEPA compliance and incorporated by reference, or they qualify as a categorical exclusion (32CFR651). Best management practices and mitigations identified throughout the NEPA process are applied accordingly. The WSMR internal environmental review process would be used to evaluate implementation of new actions. This EA has determined that the revisions and changes in the INRMP are administrative in nature and are considered to be negligible to minimal in potential environmental impacts.

6 REFERENCES

- Bumgarner, S.A. 2018. White Sands Missile Range Integrated Wildland Fire Management Plan. Prepared for U.S. Army Garrison - White Sands by ECO Inc., Las Cruces, NM. 120pp.
- DOD. 2007. Environmental protection and enhancement. Army Regulation 200-1. Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, DC. 13 December 2007.
- DOD. 2019. Report on Effects of a Changing Climate to Department of Defense. Prepared by Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment. 22pp.
- U.S. Army 2015. The Army Safety Program. Rapid Action Revision Issue Date: 23 February 2015. Army Regulation 385-10.
- U.S. Army 2021. Integrated Pest Management Plan for White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico. Prepared for Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico, by Cristina Rodden, Integrated Pest Management Coordinator, WSMR, NM. 205 pp.
- U.S. Army Environmental Command (USAEC). Integrated natural resources management plan (INRMP) implementation manual. Number 4715.03. Updated August 31, 2018
- WSMR. 2009. Final environmental impact statement for development and implementation of range-wide mission and major capabilities at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico. Vol. 1 and 2. WSMR, NM. 532 pp. + appendices.
- WSMR. 2010. Final White Sands Missile Range land use and airspace strategy plan. WSMR, NM.
- WSMR. 2015. White Sands Missile Range Integrated Natural and Cultural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment. Prepared for U.S. Army Garrison White Sands by DPW-E-ES and Gene Stout and Associates, Loveland CO. 356pp.
- WSMR. 2019. Oscura Mountains Ecosystem Management Planning Area Environmental Assessment. Prepared by WSMR PW-E-CS. 104pp.
- WSMR. 2019b. Proposal to the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI). Proposal to the REPI Program for: White Sands Missile Range, Exported from REPI proposal system on: September 10, 2019. 53pp.
- WSMR. 2019c. Garrison Policy Letter #12: White Sands Missile Range Installation Hunting Program. 10pp.
- WSMR and HAFB. 2015. White Sands pupfish conservation plan. Prepared for WSMR and HAFB by Blue Earth Ecological Consultants, Inc., Santa Fe, NM 121pp.

APPENDIX A PUBLIC SCOPING DOCUMENTATION

US Fish and Wildlife Service Comments and WSMR Responses

Page Number	Line # or Section Name	Comment/Edit	Response
1-7	14	Should be "Material" Command?	Changed
1-7	28-30	These USACE projects do not appear to be referenced anywhere else in the plan. Might help to indicate where there information is available and/or how it is being used for natural resource management.	Added verbiage
1-8, and throughout	15	Where references are cited as pers. comm., (e.g., Mike White), might be helpful to indicate both the name and position or affiliation. This assumes that some personnel will change over the life of the INRMP, and knowing the appropriate source of information when the same individual may no longer be present would add utility to the document.	Accepted and changed throughout document
1-8	36	The mission of the Fish and Wildlife Service is to " work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people".	Accepted and changed
1-16	35	Scientific name should be "Zapus hudsonius luteus ".	Changed
2-7	28-31	The short community description of Tularosa seems a bit uneven with the others. Perhaps the Village of Tularosa (https://www.villageoftularosa.com/history.html) or the White Sands National Monument (https://www.nps.gov/whsa/learn/historyculture/cultural-history-of-the-tularosa-basin.htm) websites have information that could lead to sources for a more effective description.	Added verbiage
2-8	14	The term "backwater canyons" sounds like it should have a hydrologic reference, which doesn't seem to fit here. Perhaps a more clear term could be substituted.	Changed
2-16	1-10, 42-44	Would be helpful if there is some discussion of what is known about the relationship between groundwater and the springs described on the page's first paragraph. Any information that could support protection of both the surface water and groundwater sources of the springs, particularly those that support White Sands pupfish, would be beneficial.	Added verbiage
2-18	6-18	Are there any trends in the distribution or abundance of invasive plant species? If so, would be helpful the include here.	Referenced Final Report for African Rue
2-21	23-24	Would recommend ending the paragraph on lines 23-24 by stating that "USFWS is not scheduled to complete a formal	Added verbiage

Page Number	Line # or Section Name	Comment/Edit	Response
		status review of desert massasauga for potential inclusion as a threatened or endangered species under the ESA."	
2-21	36	As of 2022, there have been 551 bird species verified in New Mexico (from New Mexico Ornithological Society).	Changed
2-21	Section 2.3.2.5 Birds	It would be good to include FWS Birds of Conservation Concern for BCR 35. WSMR may also include portions of BCR 18 and/or 16, but BCR 35 would be most appropriate for WSMR. For BCR 35 this would add ferruginous hawk, Woodhouse's scrub jay, thick-billed longspur, Cassin's sparrow, Baird's sparrow, eastern meadowlark, Scott's oriole, Virginia's warbler, Grace's warbler, and pyrrhuloxia to birds already included under DOD PIF lists. There is likely plenty of overlap between BCC and SGCN species, but not entirely. Other birds on the BCR 35 list would either not likely be found on WSMR or are already included.	Added species
2-21 and on to subsequent page	38	Mentions ESA and PIF species here, but mention of the MBTA as it relates would be appropriate. Could be in lines 38-44 where discussing native and exotic species present.	Added verbiage
2-22	16	Place <i>Tringa melanoleuca</i> in italics.	Changed
2-28	5-7	Might be worth mentioning here that White Sands pupfish is scheduled to have a species status assessment and 12-month finding on a petition to list the species under ESA and, if warranted, a listing proposal in Fiscal Year 2025 (National Domestic Listing Workplan, https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/national-domestic-listing-workplan_0.pdf)	Added verbiage
2-30	Birds	Here Birds of Conservation Concern are mentioned, but list does not include all the species within the list. Would recommend including the full list.	Added species
2-32	Table 2.3-3	Pinyon jay lists a status of declining but the rest of the table doesn't include population trends, just abundance. Could list status as common but declining, or uncommon and declining, whatever the case may be. Could list status including trends the same way for gray vireo or other species. Since the table is listing abundance, not trends, I'd be sure to include abundance information and then include trends on the installation where data are available.	
2-31	12	Interior least tern was delisted from the federal list of threatened and endangered species, effective February 12, 2021, due to recovery of the species.	Removed from list

Page Number	Line # or Section Name	Comment/Edit	Response
2-31	Table 2.3-3	How is this table ordered? It doesn't appear to be taxonomic or alphabetic, or by status. Might be helpful to organize more systematically, or explain ordering.	Added explanation
2-33	Golden Eagle	This section talks about some threats and management for golden eagles, but has no mention of the draft golden eagle management plan. We believe this plan will be beneficial, and would like to see it finalized and implemented. The plan include a discussion of threats, remediation, success of remediation, etc.	Added verbiage
2-34	Bald Eagle	It may be worth mentioning that bald eagle populations are expanding and increased encounters with the species are likely. We would not expect bald eagles to breed on WSMR, though. Use of gut piles by bald eagles also underscores the importance of understanding lead issues and encouraging lead-free ammunition.	Added verbiage
2-35	26	Recommend stating that the restoration effort was unsuccessful "in establishing a re-introduced population of aplomado falcons...". Presence of aplomado falcons from natural dispersal or colonization events is still possible, given maintenance of suitable habitat conditions.	Added verbiage
2-37	Gray Vireo	This section mentions pre-treatment monitoring for herbicide treatments. We also recommend post-treatment monitoring of bird response (in addition to discussed vegetation response) after implementation of minimization measures, to understand efficacy. Ideally this would include an evaluation immediately post-treatment, and also a few years after treatment.	Added verbiage
2-38	Pinyon Jay	In addition to the stated objectives, an inventory of pinyon jay occurrence on WSMR is possible.	Added verbiage
2-38	Pinyon Jay	Can add somewhere in this section, possibly in the first paragraph, that on April 25, 2002, USFWS was formally petitioned to list pinyon jay as threatened or endangered under ESA, and to designate critical habitat (https://defenders.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/2022.4.25_FWS_Listing%20petition_Pinyon%20Jay.pdf). USFWS will begin the 90-day finding process to determine whether the petition presents substantial information indicating that the petitioned action may be warranted, and if so, will initiate a status review of the species and issue a 12-month finding indicating whether the petitioned action is warranted or not warranted.	Added verbiage
2-41	1	The correct current reference for the zones of the MWEPA would be the revision to the nonessential experimental	Changed reference

Page Number	Line # or Section Name	Comment/Edit	Response
		population of the Mexican wolf, published July 1, 2022 (87 FR 39348).	
2-51	40-44	Is there anything relevant to include here about the groundwater supply for Salt Creek (trends or sources), and whether or not the aquatic biota includes nonnative species? If so, this would the description more parallel to the one below for Barrel and Guitez Springs.	Added verbiage
2-65	31	Note that as of August 26, 2022, we have a new 5-year review for Todsens pennyroyal (https://ecos.fws.gov/docs/tess/species_nonpublish/3925.pdf). New/updated recommendations for the species include field surveys for potential new occurrences in the vicinity of Chupadera Mesa north of highway 380 (which seems to be consistent with the INRMP's statement about remaining survey areas limited to Mendiburu Ranch area, but should explain if different); continued monitoring; experimental fire and fuels management at one occupied site, with associated monitoring; better understanding of the limitations on sexual reproduction by this species; and revising the recovery plan and goals when workload permits.	Changed
2-69	Table - Fauna	Federal Status for White Sands pupfish should read "Under Review".	Changed
2-75	6	Reference should be spelled " Muldavin ".	Changed
2-78	7-13	Does the tree management plan include guidance related to timing of maintenance etc. to reduce potential for impacts to migratory birds? It would be beneficial to convey such guidance to resource managers, either through the tree management plan or by other means.	Added verbiage
2-78	36	Understanding that the verbiage here relates to public perception, I would try to avoid reinforcing the idea that bats are pests. While limited circumstances may require management of bat activity relative to particular structures etc., education and co-existence are likely the most effective approaches in dealing with bats.	Changed
2-79	5	If there is more information about what "wildlife" reside in test structures, it would be helpful to include.	Changed
3-6	42	Not clear what this "provision" refers to. Is it section 7(a)(2)? Should clarify here.	Changed
3-6 to 3-7	Sections 3.4 to 3.6	Somewhere in the discussion of requirements and compliance with various applicable laws, it would be	Added section

Page Number	Line # or Section Name	Comment/Edit	Response
		appropriate to include the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, also.	
3-7	3-4	This sentence as written seems to suggest that compliance is only required for proposed species or critical habitat. This doesn't seem to be the intent, and perhaps should rewrite to clarify.	Changed
3-7	14	Recommend ending this sentence with "...after which, the USFWS has an additional 45 days to prepare a biological opinion."	Added verbiage
3-7	36-37	These references cited pre-date the most recent definition of "waters of the United States", and therefore it is unclear if the current definition is being utilized here. Clarification of the relationship from the information in these references and the current waters of the U.S. definition would be helpful.	No change warranted per Brent Nickels
3-10	11-15	It would be helpful to state whether there have been any observed impacts to range or vegetation communities since elk became established.	No change, not enough data
3-12	10-11	This section states that javelina have become increasingly established across WSMR. Including the time period over which this has occurred would be useful.	Added verbiage
3-16	22-24	We are encouraged and interested about the research regarding outdoor lighting and potential impacts to nocturnal migrants. Please keep us informed of this work and how it is being applied, through annual INRMP reviews and sharing of reports etc., where possible.	Concur
3-17	37	Should this sentence read "...flood risk to infrastructure"?	Changed
3-18	41	A statement in this section includes rationale that monitoring of surface water presence can help inform decisions regarding supplemental water. It's not clear from reading this where supplemental water might originate or be available for natural resource applications under projected future climate conditions. It might be more realistic to reference something like decisions regarding "allocation of available water" rather than a description implying that additional water sources are anticipated.	Added verbiage
4-1	18-19	In addition to developing and updating the INRMP, it would be valuable to add to this objective the documentation of annual INRMP accomplishments (as described in section 5.1.4), and dissemination of reports (if shareable) detailing these accomplishments with NMDGF and USFWS . If progress hasn't been made toward an objective in a given year, these annual reviews should also include	Added verbiage

Page Number	Line # or Section Name	Comment/Edit	Response
		documentation of why progress was not achieved, and any resolution or future work to address those objectives. USFWS and NMDGF can assist as needed in identifying means or formats for summarizing annual accomplishments under this objective and in section 5.1.4.	
4-2	Objective 2, lines 6-7	In carrying out surveys, monitoring, etc., we recommend these be prioritized for special status species (ESA, BCC, SGCN, etc.), but include all MBTA species whenever possible.	Added verbiage
4-1	Objective 3	This objective should include a bullet to ensure staff are aware of protocols for reporting mortalities of federally protected species, especially golden eagles or any species listed under ESA.	added verbiage
4-2	39	Should this sentence read "...species listed as Proposed, Threatened, or Endangered"?	Changed
4-3	5	It might be helpful if this objective clarified whether developing an endangered species management component for each species includes Chiricahua leopard frog (occurrence described on page 2-72 and 2-73). If not, some information for managers describing how Chiricahua leopard frog activities interface with the species recovery plan or other management guidance would be beneficial.	Added verbiage that WSMR not responsible for frogs
4-3	25-26	Where would the guidance for size of buffers from pollutants be obtained? USFWS may have some applicable references, if needed.	
4-3	33	It is not clear whether "invasive species" applies to both plants and animals under this objective. Some brief explanation in the Objective title/description could be helpful.	Changed per Cristina
4-4	11	What does "when appropriate" refer to relative to spaying of vehicles to reduce spread of invasive species? Without a more defined set of circumstances under which this would occur, it's hard to project how and what level of benefits would accrue to the species from this action.	Changed per Cristina
4-5	18	It's not clear what it would mean to "legitimize" grazing on WSMR. This objective should clarify whether these agreements would just be instruments to maintain the status quo, or means of applying criteria to help achieve sustainability or ecosystems etc.	Changed
4-5	22-35	This is great to see an explicit objective for establishment and utilization of GIS data and resources. If and where possible, it would be highly beneficial for releasable	Concur

Page Number	Line # or Section Name	Comment/Edit	Response
		species-related data to be available for sharing among WSMR and the cooperating state and federal fish, wildlife, and plant managers, and/or the state Natural Heritage program.	
4-6	40-41	I am assuming the continued collection of hunting fees would go into the Army Fish and Wildlife Conservation Fund (from page 3-9). Might be helpful here to include some description of what the collection of these fees should ultimately be used for- monitoring, habitat improvement, etc. If there are priorities or ways that these revenues most effectively complement other funding sources, this seems like a opportunity to provide even some general guidance or recommendations.	Changed

Comments from NM Department of Game and Fish – WSMR staff incorporated all of the suggestions for changes requested by NMDGF into the INRMP.

7 September 2022

Mr. Patrick Morrow, Wildlife
Biologist Department of the Army
US Army Garrison White Sands
Environmental Division (Bldg.
163/DPW) ATTN: Conservation
Branch
White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico 88002-5000

**Re: *White Sands Missile Range Integrated Natural Resource
Management Plan Revision; NMERT No. 1937***

Dear Mr. Morrow:

The Department of Game and Fish (Department) has reviewed the White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan (INRMP) and accompanying materials. This INRMP is a revision to the 2015 INRMP.

As stated on p. 3, the INRMP is prepared in accordance with the Sikes Act Improvement Act, Department of Defense Instruction and Manual 4715.03 Natural Resources Conservation Program, and U.S. Army Regulation 200-1. The purpose of the INRMP is to provide guidance for the implementation and management of natural resources during the 5-year period from 2023 through 2027. This INRMP uses an integrated, adaptive, ecosystem management approach for sustainability and consistency with the WSMR military mission. The Department of Defense, with the assistance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Department, are responsible under the Sikes Act for carrying out programs and implementing management strategies to conserve and protect biological resources on WSMR lands.

7 General Comments

The INRMP is thorough and contains much useful information on the status of natural resources at WSMR. To help the Department and the USFWS track progress toward implementation of INRMP goals and objectives, we provide the following recommendations to standardize the INRMP revision and annual update process for all major military installations in New Mexico that are required to develop an INRMP.

Page 1-15, section 1.11 **INRMP Implementation Accomplishments** provides a broad narrative of natural resource management and conservation activities achieved since the 2015 INRMP was finalized. The Department requests that additional narrative be added to this section that relates each accomplishment to their relevant goals and objectives identified in Chapter 4 **Natural Resource Management Actions**.

Section 5.1.4 **Documentation of Annual INRMP Accomplishments** on p. 5-2 states: "The annual review cycle will document accomplishments from specific INRMP actions. The documentation will be maintained as part of the administrative record for Sikes Act implementation". The Department requests that this INRMP include a statement that annual INRMP accomplishment reviews will be

coordinated with the Department and USFWS, as we believe the Sikes Act Amendment intends. As stated above, relating annual review accomplishments to their respective INRMP goals and objectives will assist the Department and USFWS to track INRMP achievements. Annual report accomplishments can then easily be summarized for INRMP revisions.

8 INRMP Specific Comments

Page 1-16 states that the WSMR Golden Eagle Management Plan is in draft form, and mentions a study of eagle use of oryx gut piles (relative to the potential for lead poisoning) that has been completed, with data being currently analyzed. The Department requests an opportunity to review these reports when they are completed.

Page 2-28, information for White Sands pupfish (*Cyprinodon tularosa*) could be updated to document that additional translocations and fish health testing has been conducted recently. In 2020, a fish health analysis was conducted in Malpais Spring in preparation for translocations in 2021. No pathogens were detected. In 2021, Department staff translocated 25 fish each to North Mound and South Mound Springs from Malpais Spring to supplement the current refuge populations. A fish health analysis was also conducted in Salt Creek in 2021 in preparation for translocations later this fall to Mound Spring and potentially Lost River. No pathogens were detected.

Page 2-34, lines 38-39, states: “Nocturnal surveys are needed [for flammulated owls] to understand if and where this species breeds on WSMR”. Page 2-35, lines 9-10 states: “A resurvey of former locations [of burrowing owls] is necessary to determine if they are still present in historic locations on WSMR”. The Department recommends considering adding surveys for these two species as an objective to Goals 1 and/or 2.

Page 2-31, line 12: The interior least tern was delisted in 2021 and is no longer federally endangered.

Page 2-32, line 2: The western distinct population segment of yellow-billed cuckoo is federally threatened (not the species range-wide).

Page 2-33, line 32 includes a typo.

Page 2-35, line 4 mentions breeding season detections of burrowing owl. The Department requests clarifying if WSMR has documented any burrowing owl detections during the nonbreeding season.

Page 2-37, lines 39-41 states: “Research needs for the gray vireo include...response to treatments...”. The Department recommends that WSMR consider adding this task as objective for Goals 1 and/or 2.

Page 2-39, lines 26-28 for the Sprague’s pipit/chestnut collared longspur section states: WSMR has submitted a funding request to install a Motus Wildlife Tracking System in grasslands to document species tagged elsewhere that fly through WSMR. The Department submitted some preliminary info to WSMR biological staff

regarding installation of Motus towers and their tracking capabilities, and strongly supports the installation of a Motus tower at WSMR to monitor birds tagged at other locations, as well as potentially deploying tags on WSMR. The Department recommends that WSMR consider adding this task as an objective to Goal 2.

Pages 3-10 and 3-11, **Bighorn Sheep section**: The Department recommends that in this section it is important to add narrative stating that, although unknown at the time, more recent testing and strain-typing indicates that the desert bighorn sheep translocated from Kofa National Wildlife Refuge transmitted *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* to the San Andres herd, which may have facilitated the pneumonia-related mortalities seen post-translocation.

Page 3-11, line 4: Department records show the population was estimated at 85-95 in the fall of 2008; not 80-90 stated in the INRMP.

Page 3-11, line 5: Department records show the population was estimated at 95-105 in the fall of 2009; not 95-100 stated in the INRMP.

Page 3-11, line 10: The Department recommends modifying this sentence to state: "Ram hunting on WSMR began in 2012 post-delisting, with two tags per year in 2012-2014, three tags in 2015, four tags in 2016, and five tags since 2017".

Page 3-11, line 13: Our records indicate the population estimate for 2021 is 190-230; not 225- 250 stated in the INRMP.

Page 3-11, lines 20-24: The Department believes the topic of mule deer population limitation is more complex than described. We recommend the addition of a sentence or two such as: "Mule deer populations can be limited by a variety of factors including weather, disease, predation (including number and type of predator species), and anthropogenic effects. The effects of predation may depend on a population's relation to carrying capacity; e.g., at lower population sizes the effect of predation may be greater".

Page 3-11, lines 43-46 state incorrect numbers. The Department recommends replacing this section with the following: "Since 2017, a total of 6 radio-collared sheep have died of predation. Four of these mortalities were attributed to lions, with 1 additional probable though unconfirmed lion kill. If predation is the cause of death and lion presence is confirmed, NMDGF classifies these as lion kills unless there is evidence of other predators. Because studies in the area indicated that lions scavenged in only 2% of cases, NMDGF concludes that lion presence at a bighorn carcass indicates predation rather than scavenging".

Page 3-12, lines 29 & 30 state that there are two once-in-a-lifetime hunt areas. However, once- in-a-lifetime hunt areas have increased. The Department recommends this sentence be modified to state: "There are established once-in-a-lifetime hunt areas that are described annually in the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish's Rules and Information Booklet".

9 Specific Comments-Appendix A, 2014 Avian Protection Plan

Page 1-16 of the INRMP states: “In 2010, there were over 30 reported avian electrocutions at WSMR, but at present there are just three to four reported each year—an approximately 90% reduction”. The Department requests clarification of if poles that are still causing raptor electrocutions are being evaluated for raptor protection measures, and when additional protection measures are scheduled to occur. For example, the APP, page 15-1, section 15.6, states that there is a goal of retrofitting all priority 1 poles/areas within 5 years, all priority 2 poles/areas within 10 years, & all priority 3 & 4 poles/areas. The only reference to this commitment within the INRMP that we could find is a statement on page 1-16, lines 9-10:

“Hundreds of power poles have been retrofitted to be raptor-safe—prioritized according to eagle nest areas...”. Adding narrative to the INRMP and/or the APP regarding the number of priority poles that have been retrofitted, and how many remain to be retrofitted, since finalization of the APP in 2014 would be helpful. We recommend that WSMR consider updating the APP to include more current information as an objective for Goals 1 and/or 2.

Page 14-4, section 14.1.3 states: “WSMR is in the process of plotting all their power line structures and incorporating these data into the facility’s GIS”. The Department requests clarification on that status of this activity and if an updated risk assessment has been completed based on current raptor electrocution problem areas. The Department also requests consideration of if there are there new raptor electrocution mitigation measures that should be incorporated into the APP.

10 Specific Comments-Appendix B, 2007 Endangered Species Management Plan for the Northern Aplomado Falcon

Appendix B2, Endangered Species Management Plan for the Northern Aplomado Falcon includes discussion of reintroductions of captive-raised falcons, which are no longer occurring. Page 2-35 of the INRMP states: “TPF [The Peregrine Fund] initiated a reintroduction program in New Mexico in 2007 on WSMR and adjacent private, state, and federal lands. Releases of over 140 aplomado falcons occurred until 2012. This restoration effort was unsuccessful and was discontinued in 2012. The last confirmed aplomado sighting on WSMR occurred in the summer of 2015 (Hartsough et al. 2015a)”. Because of the potential for wild, non-captive raised northern aplomado falcons to occur on WSMR, the Department recommends WSMR consider adding an objective to Goals 1 and/or 2 of updating this report to reflect the current potential for non- captive raised northern aplomado falcons to occur on WSMR.

11 Specific Comments-Appendix F3, Golden Eagle Standard Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Appendix F3, page 1, *Golden Eagle Mitigation Measures* that are currently being implemented, by WSMR states: “Distribute information to hunters on the use of lead vs. non-lead ammunition”. The Department recommends that information being provided to hunters include a discussion of the threat of ingestion of lead to golden eagles and other raptors from lead poisoning as a result of scavenging on gut piles, which apparently is not currently addressed in materials provided to hunters.

12 Specific Comments-Appendix M2, Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Defense and USFWS to Promote the Conservation of Migratory Birds

The Department requests clarification on whether or not this MOU is still active. The addendum provided at the end of the appendix is unsigned (page 17).

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this INRMP. Should you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Mark Watson, Terrestrial Habitat Specialist at (505) 321-5485, or mark.watson@state.nm.us.

Sincerely,

Matt Wunder, Ph.D.

Digitally signed by Matt Wunder,
Ph.D. Chief, Ecological and
Environmental Planning Division
Date: 2022.09.07 13:43:49 -06'00'

CC: Chuck Hayes, USFWS Ecological Services Field Office
Nicole Tatman, NMDGF Big Game
Program Manager, NMDGF Bryan
Bakevich, NMDGF Rio Grande Basin
Native Fish Supervisor Erin Duvuvuei,
NMDGF Avian Ecologist
Joanna Hatt, NMDGF Rio Grande Basin Native Fish Biologist



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
White Sands National Park
P.O Box 1086
Holloman AFB, NM 88330
575.479.6124



IN REPLY REFER TO:
L7619(WHSA)

March 15, 2023

U.S. Army Garrison White Sands
Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Division
Attn: Customer Support
BLDG 163
White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico 88002

RE: Response to the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Implementation of the
2023-2027 WSMR
INRMP

Dear Mr. Brian Knight,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the *DRAFT FINAL White Sands Missile Range INTEGRATED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN at the US Army, White Sands Missile Range (WSMR)*. The document is an 'environmental analysis of adopting the draft integrated natural resource management plan and draft finding of no significant impact statement'.

We appreciate the additional time to comment, per email 2/27/2023 from Ms. Debbie Nethers, Acting Branch Supervisor, Customer Support, Environmental Division, Directorate Public Works, USAG WSMR.

White Sands National Park (WHSA, 'the park') is providing the following comments in response to the DEA for the Implementation of the 2023-2027 WSMR INRMP, for your

consideration. WHSA supports the choice of the Action Alternative as the preferred alternative.

The park, established on 12/20/2019 through the FY2020 NDAA, protects a portion of a gypsum dunefield, which is influenced by eolian (wind-related) processes and surface and groundwater hydrology. The two principal features in the park - the gypsum dunes and playas - typify these processes. Alkali Flat, the largest playa in the park, extends across western half of the park and is the source of the largest gypsum dunefield and associated ecosystem in the world. In 2014, the park was designated a mega-track site with the largest and highest density of Cenozoic era fossilized-gypsum footprints in North America. These highly ephemeral tracks are found in gypsum sand and lake sediments of ancient Lake Otero and range in age from 20,000 to 40,000 years before present. In 2018 to present, researchers have confirmed and published findings confirming the co-occurrence of fossilized human prints contemporaneous with Pleistocene megafauna. Recent publications confirm the age of the human trackways of 21K BP to 23K BP. Researchers continue to document the Pleistocene trackway occurrences found within the Co-Use Area. The entire lakebed of Alkali Flat has a high potential for fossil footprints.

Below is a summary of the NPS comments regarding the INRMP that may both help WSMR achieve its mission while protecting world-class resources at the park. NPS respectfully requests that the INRMP include the following:

1. Reference to the Pleistocene human trackways (aged 21K BP to 23K BP) protected within the WHSA Co-Use area.
2. Including the National Park Service more closely in project action description (PAD) review processes and NEPA/NHPA for projects that involve support of the park.
3. Consideration of the management of Range Road 7 in the INRMP, as called out in the 2020 NDAA which transferred land between WHSA & WSMR.

On September 29, 2022, WHSA and WSMR finalized the fully executed *Memorandum of Agreement between US Army White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) NM and White Sands*

NP, Department of Interior Regions 6, 7, 8 NPS for Promotion and Regulation of Federal Areas. The MOA expires 10 years from the last signature. The MOA represents the latest in a long-standing relationship since the 1970s and states that, the purpose of the agreement is to ensure that both agencies can fulfill their respective missions while providing for public safety and protection of the resources.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments. If you wish further clarification, please contact me at (575)479-6124 x210.

Sincerely,

MARIE SAUTER Digitally signed by MARIE SAUTER
Date: 2023.03.15 13:46:43 -06'00'

Marie Sauter
Superintendent

CC:

Kate Hammond, Associate Regional Director, National Park Service Serving Department of Interior Regions 6, 7, 8

Deanna Greco, Associate Regional Director: Resource Stewardship & Science, National Park Service Serving Department of Interior Regions 6, 7, 8

Karen Skaar, External Review Coordinator, National Park Service Serving Department of Interior Regions 6, 7, 8

David Bustos, Resources Management Program Manager, White Sands National Park



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY GARRISON WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE
100 HEADQUARTERS AVENUE
WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, NEW MEXICO 88002

9 November 2022

Dear Interested Stakeholder,

The White Sands Missile Range Army Garrison Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division has prepared an Environmental Assessment to determine the environmental effects of the implementation of the newly proposed 2023-2027 White Sands Missile Range Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP). The Draft Environmental Assessment evaluated the potential impacts of implementing the revised plan (Preferred Alternative) or continuing to manage natural resources using the old version (No Action Alternative) on valued environmental components. The evaluation has determined there are no significant impacts on the environment if the revised INRMP is implemented.

Your interest in this draft Environmental Assessment, draft Finding of No Significant Impact and draft INRMP is highly valued. A digital versions of the documents can be viewed on the WSMR Garrison Environmental Publication website at <https://home.army.mil/wsmr/index.php/about/garrison/directorate-public-works-dpw/environmental>. A printed versions of the documents can be mailed upon request. All correspondence or comments must be received no later than 30-days after the draft Finding of No Significant Impact is published in local newspapers.

Department of the Army
US Army Garrison White Sands
Environmental Division (Bldg. 163/DPW)
ATTN: Customer Support Branch
White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico 88002-5000
Email to: USARMYGarrisonWSMREnvironmentalAssessments@army.mil
FAX: (575) 678-2048

Sincerely,

KNIGHT.BRIAN.DA
NIEL.1271283330
Brian D. Knight

Digitally signed by
KNIGHT.BRIAN.DANIEL.12712833
30
Date: 2022.11.17 14:46:23 -0700

Chief, Environmental Division
Directorate of Public Works

COMMENT #	SECTION	PAGE	LINE	COMMENTS	RESPONSE
1	N/A	5	N/A	FONSI - Under, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES, please include 'paleontological resources'	Paleontological resources are covered under the Installation Cultural Resource Program, IAW AR 200-1, and will not be addressed in the INRMP or implementing EA. The draft Integrated Cultural Resource Management plan (ICRMP), once ready, will be sent to WHSA for review and comment.
2	1	11	9	Please clarify how the US Army defines 'cooperating office'. NPS White Sands NP is a cooperator through the Interagency Agreement of 9/2022 with DoD WSMR.	In reference to the INRMP and IAW the Sikes Act (16 USC 670), cooperating or signatory agencies only include the USFWS and the NMDGF.
3	Fig 1.1	14	Map	Please add color within the outline of the White Sands National Park boundary to distinguish the park from DOD lands. Additionally, add White Sands NP to the Map LEGEND with the new color.	Completed
4	2.1	15	16	A new ICRMP will allow WSMR to address human fossil prints in the Co-Use area of White Sands NP and other areas of the park that could be impacted by unplanned military mishaps.	The ICRMP will only address human fossil footprints on WSMR jurisdictional lands by Army policy. Management of resources outside of Army owned lands can be done through other vehicles, such as the recent MOA
5	2.1	15	16	The NPS was unable to find reference to human fossil footprints in either the FONSI and INRMP that occur within the Co-Use area of White Sands NP. It will be important to consider the human fossil footprints in the event of unplanned mishaps or cleanup activities related to DOD operations. Please reference paleontological resources, including human footprints dating from 21K BP to 23K BP found on both White Sands NP and possibly White Sands Missile Range.	Correct. The ICRMP will only address paleontological resources on WSMR jurisdictional lands. For potential Army impacts off Army controlled lands we will follow the newest MOA between WSMR and WHSA as well as all appropriate laws and regulations
6	2.1	15	21	White Sands NP would like to alert WSMR of the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. § 470aaa 1-11) which protects paleontological resources on Federal lands administered by the Department of the Interior. This law would align with the INRMP, Goal 1: 100% Compliance with Natural Resource Laws and Regulations, Executive 21 Orders, Instructions, and other DoD/Army/WSMR Policies. Please refer to PRPA.	Paleontological resources are covered under the Installation Cultural Resource Program, IAW AR 200-1, and will not be addressed in the INRMP or implementing EA.

7	2.1.1	15	38	White Sands NP wishes to participate as an internal stakeholder in review of all PADs which describe planned activities over and/or adjacent to the national park. White Sands respectfully requests to review non-classified information for PAD requests from WSMR Customers	The WHSA will be consulted on all non-classified PADS which describe planned activities over and/or adjacent to the NP.
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Interagency Coordination List

Local (City and County) Government	
<p>Ifo Pili City Manager City of Las Cruces 700 N Main Street Las Cruces, NM 88001 agranado@las-cruces.org</p>	<p>Brian Cesar Alamogordo City Manager 1376 E Ninth Street Alamogordo, NM 88310 bcesar@ci.alamogordo.nm.us</p>
<p>Fernando R. Macias Dona Ana County Manager 845 N Motel Blvd Las Cruces, New Mexico 88007 fernandom@donaanacounty.org</p>	<p>Ravi Bhasker Mayor of Socorro 111 School of Mines Road P.O. Box K Socorro, New Mexico 87801 RBhasker@socorronm.gov</p>
<p>Pamela Heltner County Manager County of Otero New Mexico 1101 New York Avenue Alamogordo, NM 88310-6935 Phone: 575.437.7427 pheltner@co.otero.nm.us</p>	<p>Serina Bartoo Sierra County Manager 855 Van Patten Truth or Consequences, NM 87901 Phone: 575.894.6215 sbartoo@sierraco.org</p>
<p>Michael Hawkes Socorro County Manager PO Box 1 Socorro, NM 87801 mhawkes@co.socorro.nm.us</p>	
Legislators	
<p>Senator Martin Heinrich 201 North Church St., Ste. 305 Las Cruces, N.M. 88001 (575) 523-6561</p> <p>Email POC- Ashley Beyer Ashley_Beyer@heinrich.senate.gov 575.644.7200</p>	<p>Senator Ben Lujan 120 South Federal Place, Suite 302 Santa Fe, NM 87501</p> <p>Email POC - Angelo Champion Casework@lujan.senate.gov 505.328.7488</p>
<p>Congressman Gabriel Vasquez, 1517 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515</p> <p>Email POC – TBD TBD Work Cell: TBD</p>	

State	
Ms. Michaelene Kyrala Environmental Impact Review Coordinator New Mexico Environment Department P.O. Box 5469 Santa Fe, NM 87502-5469 michaelene.kyrala@state.nm.us	Ms. Susan Rich Forest and Watershed Health Coordinator Forest and Watershed Health Office EMNRD-Forestry Division 4001 Edith Blvd. NE Albuquerque, NM, 87107 susan.rich@state.nm.us
Abe Franklin Surface Water Quality Bureau, Watershed Protection Section New Mexico Environment Department P.O. Box 5469 Santa Fe, NM 87502-5469 abraham.franklin@state.nm.us	Mr. Blake Roxlau Environmental Design Section Manager Environmental Design Division New Mexico Department of Transportation P.O. Box 1149 Santa Fe, NM 87504 blake.roxlau@state.nm.us
Mr. Mark Watson New Mexico Dept. of Game & Fish P.O. Box 25112 Santa Fe, NM 87504 mark.watson@state.nm.us	Stephanie Garcia Richard Land Commissioner The New Mexico State Land Office P.O. Box 1148 Santa Fe NM 87504 sgarciarichard@slo.state.nm.us 505.827.5760
Federal	
Ms. Susan Millsap U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office 2105 Osuna Road NE Albuquerque, NM 87113-1001 nmesfo@fws.gov	Ms. Corrie Borgman Biologist U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Birds P.O. Box 1306 Albuquerque, NM 87103-1306 Corrie_Borgman@fws.gov
Ms. Amy Lueders Regional Director U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service PO Box 1306 Albuquerque, NM 87103-1306 RDLueders@fws.gov	Mr. Robert Houston Compliance Assurance and Enforcement Division U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200 Dallas, TX 75202 houston.robert@epa.gov
Ms. Jennifer Romero Refuge Manager San Andres National Wildlife Refuge U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 5686 Santa Gertrudis Drive Las Cruces, NM 88012 lindsay_smythe@fws.gov	Mr. Spencer Robison NEPA Holloman AFB 49th Civil Engineer Squadron Asset Management Flight 49 CES/CEIE 550 Tobosa Avenue Holloman Air Force Base, NM 88330-8458 Spencer.robison@us.af.mil

Ms. Marie Frias Sauter Superintendent White Sands National Park U.S. National Park Service P.O. Box 1086 Holloman Air Force Base, NM 88330 marie_frias@nps.gov	Mr. Bill Childress District Manager Las Cruces District Office Bureau of Land Management 1800 Marquess Street Las Cruces, NM 88005-3371 wchildre@blm.gov
Yvette Waychus Conservation Branch Chief USAG Fort Bliss, DPW-E-C 624 Pleasonton Road Fort Bliss, TX 79916 Yvette.m.waychus.civ@mail.mil	Mark Matthews, Field Manager Socorro Field Office Bureau of Land Management 901 S. Highway 85 Socorro, NM 87801-4168 blm_nm_comments@blm.gov
Travis Moseley Lincoln National Forest 3463 Las Palomas Rd. Alamogordo, NM 88310 575 434-7200 SM.FS.LincolnNF@usda.gov	Chuck Schmidt, Field Manager Roswell Field Office 2909 West Second Street Roswell, NM 88201-1287 575 627-0272 BLM_NM_PDO_Mail@blm.gov
Eddie Martinez, President Mescalero Apache Tribe 108 Old Mescalero Blvd. Mescalero, NM 88340	Mark Woommavovah, Chairman Comanche Nation PO Box 908 Lawton, OK 73502
Chairman Kasey Velasquez White Mountain Apache Tribal Council PO Box 700 Whiteriver, AZ 85941	Governor Michael Allen Lente Isleta Pueblo PO Box 1270 Isleta Pueblo, NM 87022
Governor E Michael Silvas Ysleta del Sur Pueblo 117 Old Pueblo Road PO Box 17579 El Paso, TX 79907	

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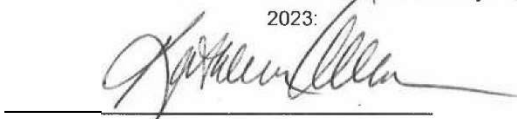
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01/24/2023


Legal Clerk

Subscribed and sworn before me this January 24,
2023:



State of WI, County of Brown

NOTARY PUBLIC

l-l-ef

My commission expires

KATHLEEN ALLEN
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin

Ad # 0005564411
PO #: 5564411
of Affidavit

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WHITE SANDS
MISSILE RANGE, NEW MEXICO

NAME OF THE PROPOSED ACTION: Environmental Assessment (EA) for the 2023-2027 White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) revision.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed action is to adopt and implement the 2023-2027 INRMP. The WSMR Environmental Division, Directorate of Public Works, has reviewed the Integrated Cultural and Natural Resources Management Plan 2015-2019 and proposed the following changes: create stand-alone natural and cultural resources management plans; include Mendiburu Ranch within the administrative jurisdiction of natural resource management; introduce adaptive management strategies for addressing potential impacts from climate changes; update references, objectives and strategies to meet environmental requirements; support biodiversity; maintain or replicate natural ecosystem processes, and support recreation opportunities.

PURPOSE AND NEED: The purpose of the INRMP is to review and update installation-specific natural resource management goals and objectives in accordance with Department of Defense (DOD), State of New Mexico, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Sikes Act Improvement Act (SAIA), and U.S. Army policy.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: This EA contains the results of the impact analysis of the No-Action Alternative and the Action Alternative on the affected environment; including impacts to air quality, airspace, soils, surface water resources, biological and cultural resources, noise, facilities, traffic, transportation, health and safety, waste and hazardous materials, socioeconomic, environmental justice, and greenhouse gases/climate change. No significant impacts upon the environment were identified.

CONCLUSIONS: The Action Alternative, adopting the proposed 2023-2027 WSMR INRMP has been selected as the Preferred decision. Based on the analysis in this EA and consideration of the mitigation measures listed in the EIS in Table 4-1, and in accordance with the guidelines for determining the significance of proposed federal actions (32 CFR §651 [2002]; 40 CFR §1508.27) and Environmental Protection Agency criteria for initiating an Environmental Impact Statement (40 CFR §6.207), WSMR has concluded that adoption of the updated INRMP will not result in a significant effect on the environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact is hereby submitted.

DRAFT AVAILABILITY AND POINTS OF CONTACT: White Sands Missile Range invites members of the public to comment on the draft EA and INRMP. The draft EA, INRMP and FNSI are available at http://qs://home.army.mil/wsmr/inrgg/PL/mil_about/garrison/directorate-public-works-dpw/environment

Hard copies are available to the public by sending a request to the address below, or at the following public repositories.

Thomas Branigan Memorial Library 200 E.
Picacho Avenue
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001

White Sands Missile Range Library WSMR,
New Mexico 88002

Socorro Public Library 401 Park
Street
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Alamogordo Public Library 920 Oregon
Avenue
Alamogordo, New Mexico 88310

Written comments concerning the draft EA, FNSI and INRMP should be directed to the address below. The publication of this notice serves as the start of the 30-day comment period. All comments must be received no later than 30-days after publication of this notice and should be sent via mail, e-mail or fax to:

U.S. Army Garrison White Sands
Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Division Attn:
Customer Support
BLDG 163
White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico 88002
Email: USARMYGarrisonWSMREnvironmentalAssessments@army.mil
Fax: (575) 678-2048

**FINDING OF NO
SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
WHITE SANDS MISSILE
RANGE, NEW MEXICO**

NAME OF THE PROPOSED ACTION: Environmental Assessment (EA) for the 2023-2027 White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) revision.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: This EA contains the results of the impact analysis of the No-Action Alternative and the Action Alternative on the affected environment; including impacts to air quality, airspace, soils, surface water resources, biological and cultural resources, noise, facilities, traffic, transportation, health and safety, waste and hazardous materials, socioeconomic, environmental justice, and greenhouse gases/climate change. No significant impacts upon the environment were identified.

CONCLUSIONS: The Action Alternative, adopting the proposed 2023-2027 WSMR INRMP has been selected as the Preferred decision. Based on the analysis in this EA and consideration of the mitigation measures listed in the EA in Table 4-1, and in accordance with the guidelines for determining the significance of proposed federal actions (32 CFR §651 (2002); 40 CFR §1506.27) and Environmental Protection Agency criteria for initiating an Environmental Impact Statement (40 CFR §6.207), WSMR has concluded that adoption of the updated INRMP will not result in a significant effect on the environment. This Finding of No Sig-

AFFIDAVIT of PUBLICATION

Wanda Moeller, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that she is Chief Executive Officer of the ***El Defensor Chieftain***, printed and published each week in the County of Socorro, State of New Mexico, and of general circulation in the city of Socorro, County of Socorro, State of New Mexico and elsewhere, and the hereto attached

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Request of ***EL DEFENSOR CHIEFTAIN***

By:

Affiant

Wanda Moeller

Subscribed and sworn to me this 26 day of January, 2023
in the County of Socorro, State of New Mexico.

Denise R. Ortega
Notary Public

Notary Public in and for the County of Socorro, State of New Mexico
My Commission Expires: 3/8/23

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