

DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE COMBAT SUPPORT TRAINING RANGE AT TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA

INTRODUCTION: The Department of the Air Force (DAF) has prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S. Code [U.S.C.] 4321 et seq.) and Department of Defense NEPA Implementing Procedures. This Draft FONSI herein references the attached EA and has been developed as the final decision document for the EA.

LEAD AGENCY: The DAF is the proponent and lead agency for this action.

PROPOSED ACTION: The Proposed Action includes the development and operations of a Combat Support Training Range (CSTR). CSTRs are being developed to fill gaps in current expeditionary training capabilities for installation and mission support Airmen. CSTRs are a premier training platform with equipment and vehicles, natural and built infrastructure, and realistic threat environment to enable combat support and combat service support teams to build the mission capacity essential to winning future fights. Construction would be planned for Fiscal Year 2028 and would take 12 months.

PROJECT LOCATION: The proposed location is at the Tyndall Air Force Base (AFB) Silver Flag training site in Bay County, Florida.

PURPOSE AND NEED: The purpose of the Proposed Action is to establish a training platform to allow civil engineering combat support teams to develop skills needed to establish, operate, protect, and recover an expeditionary airbase. An expeditionary airbase is a mobile installation that can be established rapidly in the field under a variety of conditions. These installations often consist of simple structures such as concrete block buildings, K-spans, and tents. The concept of an expeditionary airbase allows the DAF to set up an airfield where it is needed, rather than limiting air support to locations where permanent infrastructure exists. Expeditionary airbases support the DAF mission by being ready to set up quickly in the field using small teams that are flexible and trained in a variety of jobs, ready to deploy at any time. A CSTR enables larger units to train together and provides for more complex training events that would not be practical to establish at all home stations.

ALTERNATIVES: Three alternatives were considered: the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1, and Alternative 2. A description of Alternative 2 can be found in the EA. Alternative 1 is the Preferred Alternative.

Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative). Construct and Operate the CSTR Site at Silver Flag and Relocate the Existing Training Area to Taxiway A.

Proposed Construction: Construction-related activities would consist of grading and graveling of an approximately 15-acre site at the location of existing training areas. Construction would include utilities, a Support Depot, a Life Support Area, shower/shave/toilet/laundry facilities, stormwater detention, and equipment storage. In addition, an approximately 6-acre site would

be graded and grubbed for the relocation of the existing training area. No other construction would occur on this site other than the installation of gravel.

Proposed Operations: Operations would consist of approximately 400 trainees who would train for approximately 2 weeks every month. Training would consist of assembling and disassembling structures such as small shelter systems (tents) and medium shelter systems, detonating explosives on the mock runway, and conducting repairs on the runway. It is anticipated that approximately two detonations would occur monthly on the mock runway using a 2.5-pound net explosive weight (NEW) explosive charge. For the purposes of providing a conservative noise and safety analysis, a 42.5-pound NEW charge was also analyzed. Other required CSTR training would occur on existing ranges in the vicinity of Tyndall AFB. These ranges include a small arms range, a full distance range, an off-road (mounted) course, a land navigation (dismounted) course, and a Military Operations on Urban Terrain course.

No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, the action would not take place and critical DAF training requirements would not be met. The No Action Alternative provides baseline conditions and/or a comparative benchmark enabling the reader to compare the magnitude of environmental effects of the Proposed Action alternatives.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE ACTION: Implementation of the Preferred Alternative has the potential for minor effects to public health and safety, air quality, biological resources, water resources, geology and soils, land use, cultural resources, hazardous materials and waste, infrastructure, transportation, and noise (Table 1).

MINIMIZATION MEASURES: The Draft EA analysis concluded that the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1) and the No Action Alternative would not result in significant environmental effects; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

PUBLIC OUTREACH: As part of the planning process for this EA, Tyndall AFB sent introductory project scoping letters to local, state, and federal elected officials; Native American Tribes; and agencies on January 22 and 26, 2026. In accordance within the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106, consultation was conducted with the Florida State Historic Preservation Officer. A copy of the Draft EA with the DAF determination of effects for federally listed species was provided to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Table 1. Summary Comparison of Environmental Consequences

Environmental Resources	No Action Alternative	Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative)	Alternative 2
Public Health and Safety	No significant effects would occur to public health and safety with implementation of the No Action Alternative.	Health and safety effects could occur, but effects would be reduced to less than significant with proper training, hearing protection, and BMPs.	Health and safety effects could occur, but effects would be reduced to less than significant with proper training, hearing protection, and BMPs.
Air Quality	Air emissions and resulting air quality effects under the No Action Alternative would remain unchanged from existing conditions.	Compliance with permit requirements would ensure that implementation of Alternative 1 would result in less than significant air quality effects.	Compliance with permit requirements would ensure that implementation of Alternative 2 would result in less than significant air quality effects.
Biological Resources	No significant effects to biological resources would occur with implementation of the No Action Alternative.	Implementation of Alternative 1 may have effects on vegetation, wildlife, migratory birds, and invasive and exotic species, but no significant effects are anticipated.	Effects associated with Alternative 2 would be the same as those described for Alternative 1 and, therefore, would not be significant.
Water Resources	No significant effects to water resources are anticipated with implementation of the No Action Alternative.	Implementation of Alternative 1 may have effects on surface water management, but no significant effects are anticipated.	Implementation of Alternative 2 may have effects on surface water management, but no significant effects are anticipated.
Geology and Soil Resources	No significant effects to geology and soil resources are anticipated with implementation of the No Action Alternative.	No significant effects to geology and soil resources are anticipated with implementation of Alternative 1.	No significant effects to geology and soil resources are anticipated with implementation of Alternative 2.
Land Use	No significant effects to land use would occur with implementation of the No Action Alternative.	No significant effects to land use would occur with implementation of Alternative 1.	No significant effects to land use would occur with implementation of Alternative 2.
Cultural Resources	As no historic properties would be affected by the No Action Alternative, no adverse effects to cultural resources are anticipated from the implementation of the No Action Alternative.	As no historic properties would be affected by implementation of Alternative 1, no adverse effects to cultural resources are anticipated from the implementation of Alternative 1.	There is potential to affect cultural resources with the implementation of Alternative 2 due to the unevaluated status of Site 8BY00116 regarding NRHP eligibility. In the event Alternative 2 is implemented, mitigation efforts would be coordinated through the SHPO and federally recognized tribes to ensure compliance with the NHPA.
Hazardous Materials and Wastes	There would be no changes to hazardous materials and hazardous wastes, toxic substances, ERP sites, or live fire and munitions in the ROI beyond baseline conditions with implementation of the No Action Alternative.	Implementation of Alternative 1 would not result in significant effects to the hazardous materials and wastes resource area.	Implementation of Alternative 2 would not result in significant effects to the hazardous materials and wastes resource area.

Table 1. Summary Comparison of Environmental Consequences (continued)

Environmental Resources	No Action Alternative	Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative)	Alternative 2
Infrastructure	No significant effects to infrastructure would occur with implementation of the No Action Alternative.	With implementation of Alternative 1, changes in demand to infrastructure would be minimal, and the increased demand would not create a service disruption to existing users or substantially increase demand in the region.	With implementation of Alternative 2, changes in demand to infrastructure would be minimal, and the increased demand would not create a service disruption to existing users or substantially increase demand in the region.
Transportation	No significant effects to transportation would occur with implementation of the No Action Alternative.	Effects to transportation could occur, but effects would not be significant from the implementation of Alternative 1.	Effects to transportation could occur, but effects would not be significant from the implementation of Alternative 2.
Noise	Under the No Action Alternative, no new noise-generating activities would occur. Existing conditions would not change, and there would be no significant noise effects.	The loudest noise generated by activities proposed under Alternative 1 (i.e., cratering charge detonations) would be infrequent—at a tempo of two charges per month—and noise levels at the closest noise-sensitive location would be at levels associated with a low risk of complaints. Other proposed activities would be the same as ongoing activities and/or would be inaudible at the closest sensitive locations. There would be no significant noise effects.	Noise-generating activities proposed under Alternative 2 would be the same as under Alternative 1 and would not result in significant noise effects.

BMP = best management practice; ERP = Environmental Restoration Program; NHPA = National Historic Preservation Act; NRHP = National Register of Historic Places; ROI = region of influence; SHPO = State Historic Preservation Officer

FINDING: After review of the attached EA prepared in accordance with the requirements of NEPA, as amended (Title 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), which is hereby incorporated by reference, I have determined that the Preferred Alternative and the No Action Alternative would not have significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared. This decision was made after considering all submitted information, including a review of agency and public comments submitted during the 30-day public comment period, and considering a full range of practical alternatives that meet project requirements and are within the legal authority of the DAF.

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Date