

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Air Force****Realistic Bomber Training Initiative**

AGENCY: Department of the Air Force, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Record of decision.

SUMMARY: On March 20, 2007, the United States Air Force signed a Record of Decision for the Realistic Bomber Training Initiative Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. This decision was based on information, analysis, and public comments contained in both the Environmental Impact Statement for the Realistic Bomber Training Initiative (**Federal Register** Notice of Availability February 4, 2000) and the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Realistic Bomber Training Initiative (**Federal Register** Notice of Availability published August 11, 2006), along with other relevant factors. After carefully considering the issues addressed in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and the comments submitted, the Air Force decided not to change the decision described in the initial Record of Decision and to continue implementation of Alternative B of the Realistic Bomber Training Initiative. This alternative includes the use of appropriate training assets associated with Instrument Route IR-178/Lancer Military Operations Area. As indicated above, a Notice of Availability of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement was published in the **Federal Register** on August 11, 2006 (Volume 71, Number 155, Page 46220). The required 30-day waiting period for a Record of Decision has been completed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sheryl K. Parker, Headquarters Air Combat Command, A7ZP/ Comprehensive Planning Branch, 129 Andrews St., Suite 102, Langley AFB, VA 23655 or call (757) 764-9334.

Bao-Anh Trinh,

Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.
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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Army****Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 05 Realignment and Transformation Actions at Fort Benning, GA**

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of availability (NOA).

SUMMARY: The U.S. Army announces the availability of the DEIS, which evaluates the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts of transformation activities at Fort Benning, Georgia. These transformation proposed actions include implementation of the 05 BRAC Commission recommendations, the Global Defense Posture Realignment (GDPR) overseas re-stationing actions, Army Modular Force (AMF) initiatives, and other discretionary stationing activities.

DATES: The public comment period for the DEIS will end 45 days after publication of an NOA in the **Federal Register** by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Monica Manganaro, Fort Benning Public Affairs Office at (706) 545-3438, or Mr. Brandon Cockrell at (706) 545-3210 during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Proposed Action and subject of the DEIS covers the construction activities and movement of personnel associated with the BRAC actions, proposed transformation activities at Fort Benning, Georgia, and follow-on operations and training.

The 2005 BRAC Commission recommended the relocation of the Armor Center and School from Fort Knox, Kentucky, to Fort Benning, as well as several other unit relocations, which would increase the Fort Benning population by approximately 4,486 military and 1,226 civilian personnel, and an annual student/trainee population of approximately 8,357. Fort Benning also proposes to implement other transformation actions as the Army undergoes restructuring to meet the demands of the 21st century. The AMF initiative involves the Army's transition from a division-centric design to a standard brigade organization. The reshaping of the domestic military force structure also includes provision for the return of units currently based overseas to United States installations as part of the GDPR. Finally, discretionary stationing actions (activations,

inactivations, realignments and relocations) are proposed, which contribute to and are interrelated with the transformation process.

The proposed action will provide the facilities, infrastructure, and equipment needed to support the transformation activities at Fort Benning. All construction activities associated with the proposed action would occur on Fort Benning. The proposed construction, renovation, and expansion of administrative, supply/storage, maintenance, barracks, commercial services, community facilities, medical and dental, and recreation facilities, as well as associated infrastructure support, is focused on the already-established cantonment areas: Main Post, Kelley Hill, Sand Hill, and Harmony Church. Throughout the cantonment areas, new facility construction will be sited to coincide with and/or be a complement to existing missions, facility operations, and functions. In order to minimize potential impacts to the environment (e.g., avoiding sensitive species habitat), existing infrastructure would be used to the greatest extent possible, and transformation activities would be located on previously distributed/developed areas. Training assets, in the form of ranges and maneuver areas, currently are found throughout the Installation. The proposed improvements/upgrades to existing ranges and maneuver areas and proposed new ranges were selected to align with these existing assets. Training range and maneuver area construction and operation/maintenance activities will occur on approximately 157,000 acres set aside for such activities.

In development of the DEIS, three alternatives were carried forward for analysis: (1) Transformation Alternative A, which entails cantonment area development, construction of small- and large-caliber weapons ranges, heavy maneuver areas and corridors, a driver's training course, off-road driver's training area, and vehicle recovery area to support the training range requirements; (2) Transformation Alternative B (the Army's Preferred Alternative), is similar to Transformation Alternative A with a combination of existing ranges and development of new tank training areas in the Good Hope area; and (3) the No Action Alternative, under which Fort Benning missions would continue as they were being performed in November 2005, when the BRAC Commission recommendations became law.

Environmental resources addressed in the DEIS include land use, aesthetics and visual resources, noise,