

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

RELOCATION OF THE DEFENSE NON-TACTICAL GENERATOR AND RAIL EQUIPMENT CENTER

1. PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed action and subject of the environmental assessment (EA), which is hereby incorporated by reference, is the relocation of the current Defense Non-tactical Generator and Rail Equipment Center (DGRC) mission from Hill Air Force Base (AFB) to one of four Army Organic Industrial Base (OIB) installations—Anniston Army Depot (ANAD), McAlester Army Ammunition Plant (MCAAP), Red River Army Depot (RRAD), or Tooele Army Depot (TEAD). The proposed relocation would involve a combination of existing facility renovation, new construction, and demolition and the subsequent operation of the new DGRC.

2. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: Five alternatives, including the No Action Alternative, were evaluated for implementing the proposed action. The Army would relocate the DGRC under Alternative A to ANAD, under Alternative B to MCAAP, under Alternative C to RRAD, and under Alternative D to TEAD. The EA characterizes the impacts on the environment and human health that would likely result from relocating the DGRC under alternatives A through D and the No Action Alternative.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND MITIGATION MEASURES: A detailed analysis of the impacts to the following resources was conducted: land use, aesthetics and visual resources, air quality, noise, geology and soils, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, socioeconomic, traffic and transportation, utilities and solid waste, and hazardous and toxic substances. The analysis in the EA indicates that implementing the proposed action under alternatives A through D will have no greater than minor to moderate adverse impacts on the resource areas fully evaluated and will have no significant adverse cumulative impacts. To protect potential wetlands at RRAD, the Army would survey the proposed site for wetlands and comply with the terms of a Clean Water Act section 404 permit issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, including avoiding, minimizing and mitigating impacts as necessary. At ANAD, a new memorandum of agreement protective of continued operations of historic buildings within the Nichols Industrial Complex is being prepared. Because impacts to all resource areas for each alternative were determined to be below the level of significance, no mitigation measures, other than those mentioned above for RRAD and ANAD, are required. The mitigation measures at RRAD or ANAD will be realized only if the proposed action is implemented at either installation. Best management practices, however, will be implemented at the selected installation during construction and operation of the DGRC.

4. FACTORS CONSIDERED IN THE FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The EA considered the nature of the proposed action, the environmental factors at each potential installation and the individual sites considered for implementing the proposed action, and the likely environmental impacts, including cumulative impacts, on all relevant resource areas associated with implementing the proposed action.

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5. PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT: The EA and draft finding of no significant impact (FNSI) were available for public review and comment from September 15, 2016 to October 18, 2016. A notice of availability of the documents was advertised in newspapers local to each proposed installation and Hill AFB and included the *Anniston Star* and *Daily Home* (ANAD), the *McAlester News-Capital* (MCAAP), *Texarkana Gazette* (RRAD), *Tooele Transcript* (TEAD), and the *Hilltop Times* and *Ogden Standard Examiner*. The notice of availability was advertised in the *Tooele Transcript* and the *Hilltop Times* on September 15, 2016, and in the remaining papers on September 18, 2016. The documents were available by accessing the U.S. Army Materiel Command environmental Web page at <http://www.amc.army.mil/amc/environmental.html>. Copies were also available for review at the Public Library of Anniston-Calhoun County, 108 East 10th Street, Anniston, AL 36201 (ANAD); McAlester Public Library, 401 N 2nd Street, McAlester, OK 74501 (MCAAP); Tooele City Public Library, 128 W Vine St, Tooele, UT 84074 (TEAD); and Bowie County Courthouse, 710 James Bowie Drive, New Boston, TX 75570 (RRAD). Interested parties were encouraged and invited to submit comments on the EA and draft FNSI by standard mail to Julie Halstead, HQAMC G-3/4 Environmental Division, AMCOL-IE, 4400 Martin Road, Huntsville, AL 35989, or by electronic mail using the HQAMC environmental webpage mailbox at <http://www.amc.army.mil/amc/environmental.html> or the HQAMC organizational email at usarmy.redstone.usamc.mbx.amc-environmental@mail.mil. Further, notification of the availability of the EA and draft FNSI for public review was sent by mail to applicable Native American tribes and state agencies for each installation.

Before the conclusion of the public comment period, correspondence specific to the review of the EA and draft FNSI was received from the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), the Texas Historical Commission (THC), the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), and the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana. The correspondence is provided in Appendix A of the EA and will be included in the project administrative record.

Comments by the ADEM:

The ADEM noted that the ANAD DGRC site is within the Nichols Industrial Complex of the depots Southeast Industrial Area (SIA) and is subject to Resource Conservation and Recovery Act corrective action. However, ADEM acknowledged that the proposed railroad track extension and the refurbishing of the Field 9A test stand are not within an area of the SIA that is under environmental investigation. While the DGRC track extension and Field 9A test stand do not appear to be within an environmental investigation area, the ADEM indicated that coordination with the depot environmental office and ADEM along with careful planning of excavation and/or other construction activities should prevent any problems with ongoing environmental investigations.

ADEM also acknowledged that other buildings being proposed for the DGRC at ANAD are already being used to support similar functions and the integration of new operations does not appear to pose any issues with current environmental work.

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Army responses to the comments by the ADEM:

The Army agrees with the assessment by the ADEM that the proposed railroad track extension and the refurbishing of the Field 9A test stand are not within an area of the SIA that is under environmental investigation. The Army also agrees that coordination and careful planning of excavations and/or other construction activities should prevent and problems with ongoing environmental investigations in this area, and is committed to continuing its practice of coordinating and planning excavation and/or construction activities in this area with the ADEM.

The Army appreciates and notes the determination by the ADEM that other buildings being proposed for the DGRC at ANAD are already being used to support similar functions and the integration of new operations associated with the relocation of the DGRC to ANAD does not appear to pose any issues with current environmental work

Comment by the THC:

The THC concluded that no historic properties at RRAD would be affected.

Army Response to the comment from the THC:

The Army appreciates and notes the comment from the THC.

Comments from the TPWD:

The TPWD acknowledged their review of the EA, and indicated that it adequately assessed potential impacts to fish and wildlife resources, and added that the TPWD Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program did not anticipate significant adverse impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species, or other fish and wildlife resources.

Army response to the comments from the TPWD:

The Army appreciates and notes the comment from the TPWD.

Comment from the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana:

The Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana also acknowledged their review of the EA, concurred with the finding of no significant impact determination, and declared that consultation regarding this project was unnecessary.

Army response to the comments from the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana:

The Army appreciates and notes the comment from the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, and concurs with the determination that no consultation in regards to this project is required or anticipated.

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After the conclusion of the comment period, comments specific to the review of the EA were also received. The comments didn't rise to a level that would invalidate the analysis or the EA's determination. The comments included a recommendation that the Army select a preferred alternative in the EA; a recommendation that the Army implement best management practices to reduce potential air quality impacts and improve construction waste management; a recommendation that the Army consult with two Native American tribes concerning possible tribal burial mounds at MCAAP, and to document Tribal consultations in the EA; an assertion that the region of influence (ROI) used to determine impacts to environmental justice at MCAAP and RRAD should have been more broadly defined; a recommendation that the Army promote water conservation and efficiency through the use of water efficient products and practices; a recommendation that the Army comply with all wetland protection requirements at RRAD, and a request that the Historic Preservation Department of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma be contacted if any Native American cultural materials or human remains are encountered during the construction activities associated with the relocation of the DGRC.

The Army notes the recommendation to select a preferred alternative in the EA, and intentionally elected not to do so because other considerations beyond the scope of environmental impacts will be considered as part of the decision regarding the relocation of the DGRC.

The Army notes the recommendation to implement best management practices during construction activities to reduce potential short-term air quality impacts and is already committed to doing so. Construction and waste disposal would also be handled in accordance with applicable local, state and federal statutes and regulations.

The Army notes, but disagrees with the recommendation to consult with the Poarch Band of Creeks and the Muscogee Creek Nation in regards to possible tribal burial grounds at MCAAP; and notes the recommendation to document Tribal consultation in the EA. All applicable Native American tribes for each installation were notified of the proposal to relocate the DGRC by letter, and this communication is documented in the EA. No Native American tribe indicated a desire or need to consult with the Army regarding the proposed relocation of the DGRC. Consulting with the Poarch Band of Creeks and the Muscogee Creek Nation over possible burial mounds at MCAAP is not required because the mounds are not part of the developed industrial site being proposed for the DGRC at MCAAP.

The Army notes but disagrees with the assertion that the ROI used to determine impacts to environmental justice at MCAAP and RRAD should have been more broadly defined. The ROI used to determine environmental justice impacts in the EA are appropriate and meet the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) environmental justice guidance.

The Army notes and agrees with the recommendation that the Army promote water conservation and efficiency through the use of water efficient products and practices.


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The installation selected for the DGRC would, in accordance with existing Army policy and guidance, use established best management practices to promote water conservation and efficiency by using water efficient products and practices as appropriate.

The Army notes the comment regarding requirements to protect wetlands at RRAD, and, as described in the EA and this FNSI, would conduct a wetland delineation of the proposed site if wetland impacts are expected. If wetlands are found, the installation would acquire a CWA section 404 permit prior to construction. Delineation efforts and permitting would only be considered if the DGRC is relocated to RRAD.

The Army acknowledges the request from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma that they be contacted if any Native American cultural materials or human remains are encountered during the construction activities associated with the relocation of the DGRC. The Army further notes that each of the installations considered as a potential relocation site for the DGRC have Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plans that contain inadvertent discovery provisions that specifically address how the Army will respond to the unexpected discovery of archeological resources, cultural materials or human remains.

6. CONCLUSIONS: Based upon my review of the facts, the analysis presented in the EA, and the public comments received, I conclude that implementing the proposed action at either Army OIB installation ANAD, MCAAP, RRAD, or TEAD would have no significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on the quality of the natural or human environment; and that, consequently, the analysis in the EA supports a finding of no significant impact. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act is not required.



Gustave F. Perna
General, United States Army
Commanding



Date