



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR COMBAT COMMAND
LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, VIRGINIA

JUN 3 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

FROM: HQ ACC/A7P
129 Andrews Street, Room 317
Langley AFB VA 23665-2769

SUBJECT: Powder River Training Complex, Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

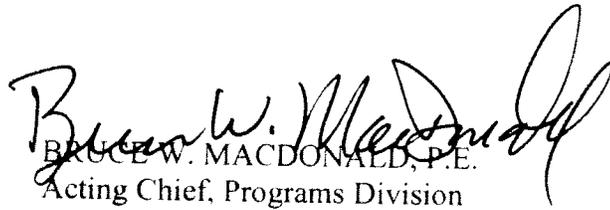
1. The United States Air Force (Air Force) is in the process of preparing an EIS to assess the potential environmental consequences of a proposal to expand and enhance the existing Powder River Complex (PRC) near Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB) SD. The proposal would create the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC). The PRTC would more effectively use limited resources and finite flying hours by providing locally the realistic training needed by B-1 and B-52 aircrews flying from Ellsworth AFB SD and Minot AFB ND, respectively. This airspace proposal addresses the training and other limitations affecting the existing PRC training assets as they are currently configured.
2. The proposed action would restructure and reconfigure the existing Powder River Military Operations Areas (MOAs) and associated Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspaces (ATCAAs). The PRTC proposal would establish two air refueling routes, create additional low altitude MOA (500 feet Above Ground Level [AGL] up to, but not including, 18,000 feet above Mean Sea Level [MSL]) and high-altitude ATCAA (18,000-60,000 MSL) combinations in portions of South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming and Montana. The proposal would support additional ground-based assets to simulate threats and an increase in aircraft training flights, permit the use of training chaff and flares, and authorize supersonic flight above 10,000 AGL. Three action alternatives and a no-action alternative have currently been identified for analyses and are discussed in the attached meeting brochure (Atch 1). All or portions of the following locations have the potential of being affected by the proposal's overhead training airspace due to one or more of the alternatives: **Montana**—Crow and Northern Cheyenne Reservations and the counties of Big Horn, Carter, Custer, Fallon, Powder River, Rosebud, Treasure, and Yellowstone; **North Dakota**—Standing Rock Reservation and Adams, Billings, Bowman, Golden Valley, Grant, Hettinger, Morton, Sioux, Slope, and Stark counties; **South Dakota**—Standing Rock and Cheyenne River Reservations, and Butte, Corson, Harding, Lawrence, Meade, Pennington, Perkins, Ziebach counties; and **Wyoming**: Campbell, Crook, Sheridan, and Weston counties.
3. Recognizing that open communication of issues is a critical element of the EIS process, the Air Force will host numerous public meetings in communities underlying and/or adjacent to the proposed action (Atch 2). The scoping meetings will be held in an open-house format, where Air Force representatives will describe the proposed action and alternatives, the National Environmental Policy Act process which we are undertaking, outline opportunities for public involvement, and answer questions on the proposal. The meetings will last from 4:00 to 7:00 pm

at all locations, and interested parties or citizens are welcome to come at any time since information will be provided throughout the duration of the open house.

4. Meetings with public and agency stakeholders during this scoping process will help identify the full range of reasonable alternatives, potential impacts, and key issues throughout the environmental impact analysis process. The Air Force intends to coordinate public involvement for the purpose of Section 106 review under the National Historic Preservation with public involvement in the EIS prepared under this Environmental Impact Analysis Process. The Federal Aviation Administration has accepted the Air Force's request to be a cooperating agency for this action and has appointed the Central Service Area as their office of primary responsibility for this EIS.

5. The Air Force will accept comments at any time during the environmental process and any information you feel would assist us in this process would be appreciated. To ensure the Air Force has sufficient time to consider public input in the preparation of the draft EIS, information and comments should be submitted to Ms. Linda DeVine, HQ ACC/A7PP, 129 Andrews Street, Room 317, Langley AFB VA 23665-2769 by August 4, 2008.

6. If you have any specific questions about this proposal, please feel free to contact Ms. DeVine at (757) 764-9434, by electronic-mail at acc.prtc@langley.af.mil or contact the public affairs office at Ellsworth AFB SD, 605-385-5056. You may also obtain information including the two attachments to this letter, from our website at www.acplanning.org. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter.


BRUCE W. MACDONALD, P.E.
Acting Chief, Programs Division

Attachments:

1. Scoping Meeting Brochure
2. Flyer

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