



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 28TH BOMB WING (ACC)
ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE SOUTH DAKOTA

JUN 30 2014

Colonel Kevin B. Kennedy
Commander, 28th Bomb Wing
1958 Scott Drive, Suite 1
Ellsworth AFB SD 57706-4710

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
Mr. Dave Archambault II, Chairman
P.O. Box D
Fort Yates ND 58538

Dear Chairman Archambault

Last November we sent the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe the proposed Powder River Training Complex (PRTC) programmatic agreement (PA) and 36 CFR 800.11(e) Supporting Documentation, which were updated based on comments from the various consulting parties. Since then we have continued to refine the proposal and the PA. This letter forwards the current version of the PA and its supporting documentation as a read ahead prior to our distribution of the document for signature, about a week from now. We also include for your information an overview that describes for the non-specialist how the Air Force intends to fly in the PRTC during routine operations and occasional large force exercises.

We understand and appreciate the convictions of Standing Rock Sioux tribal representatives and members who commented on the proposed undertaking. Their perspectives have helped shape modifications of the proposal, which would reduce potential impacts. In particular, the floor for proposed training overflights above the Standing Rock Reservation has been raised from 500 feet above ground level to 12,000 feet above mean sea level. Other mitigations to the proposed undertaking, such as limiting the overflights above certain sensitive sites off tribal lands, appointment of a senior officer as a tribal liaison, aircrew cultural awareness training, implementation of an avoidance protocol, and monitoring with reporting, would also avoid or decrease the effects.

We are also committed to continuing the consultation to address any unidentified adverse effects discovered during implementation of the proposed undertaking. In our analysis, we determine that implementation of the undertaking after this modification would result in no adverse effects to historic properties on Standing Rock Sioux tribal lands. Furthermore, we believe the procedures in the programmatic agreement would help assure a critical training asset for our Nation's future security while confirming the deep attachment of the Standing Rock Sioux people to their lands, its plants, animals, and sacred places.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly at 605-385-2801, or my airspace manager and tribal liaison, Mr. George Stone, at 605-385-1260, or george.stone@ellsworth.af.mil.

Sincerely



KEVIN B. KENNEDY, Colonel, USAF

cc:

Ms. Wašté Wiy Young, THPO

Ms. Katharine Kerr, ACHP

3 Attachments

1. Programmatic Agreement

2. Section 106 Supporting Documentation

3. Supplementary USAF comments on Military Flying Operations in the Proposed PRTC