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

JUN 12 2008

Ms. Clara Caufield
Northern Cheyenne Tribal Administration Offices
600 S. Cheyenne Ave.
Lame Deer, MT 59043

Dear Ms. Caufield,

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.

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).

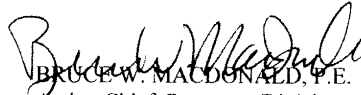
As part of this Environmental Impact Analysis Process, and in continuance of Government-to-Government consultation initiated by Colonel Scott Vander Hamm, 28 BW/CC, Ellsworth AFB SD, we request your assistance in gathering information concerning previous archaeological and historic studies for the areas under the affected region. We would appreciate any assistance you could provide in identifying and retrieving this important information, as well as concerns you may have about the potential effects of the proposal on significant cultural resources. 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.

Global Power For America

The Air Force is committed to community outreach and we appreciate the opportunity to hold a community meeting at the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Administration Building Council Chambers on Tuesday, June 24, 2008 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Open communication of issues is a critical element of the EIS process, and we would appreciate your assistance in posting the attached meeting flyers (Atch 2) around the community and encouraging public participation. The Air Force intends to coordinate public involvement for the purpose of Section 106 review under the NHPA with public involvement in the EIS prepared under the Environmental Impact Analysis Process. Meetings with public, agency, and Native American stakeholders during this scoping process will help identify the full range of reasonable alternatives, potential impacts, and key issues to be considered in the environmental impact analysis process.

To ensure the Air Force has sufficient time to consider your input in the preparation of the Draft EIS, please provide information and/or comments to Ms. Linda DeVine, HQ ACC/A7PP, 129 Andrews Street, Rm 317, Langley AFB VA 23665-2769 not later than August 4, 2008. If you have any specific questions about this request, please feel free to contact Ms. Linda DeVine at (757) 764-9434, or by electronic-mail at acc.prtc@langley.af.mil. 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.

Sincerely,


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

Attachment:

1. Scoping Meeting Brochure
2. Flyer

The National Environmental Policy Act guides the PRTC EIS.

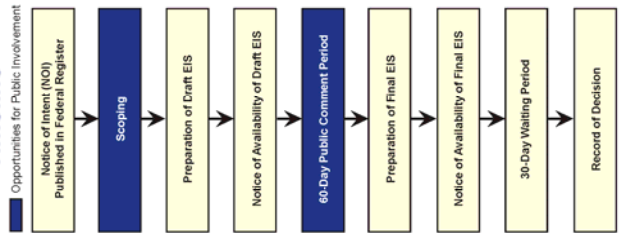
NEPA requires federal decision makers to consider potential environmental consequences of proposed actions and reasonable alternatives, including a No-Action Alternative in an EIS. The EIS complies with environmental regulations and documents potential impacts to the natural and human environment.

Resources initially identified for analysis in the EIS include (but are not limited to) the following:

- **Airspace Operations**
Airspace, Noise, Air Quality, and Safety (ground and air)
- **Natural Resources**
Physical and Biological Resources
- **Cultural Resources**
Cultural, Native American, Traditional, and Historic Resources
- **Human Resources**
Land Use, Quality of Life, Socioeconomics, and Environmental Justice



The EIS Process Timeline



Your input is essential to the environmental analysis process!

Providing Comments

To provide comments, please fill out a comment sheet. Please give your comments to an Air Force representative or place it in the comment box. Comment forms, or your own letter, may also be mailed to:

Ms. Linda DeVine
HQ ACCIA7PP
129 Andrews Street, Room 317
Langley AFB, VA 23665-2769

To ensure your comments are considered in the Draft EIS, please submit your comments before August 4, 2008.

Public comments on this Draft EIS are requested pursuant to the NEPA, 42 USC 4321, et seq. All written comments received during the comment period will be made available to the public and considered during EIS preparation. Your provision of private address information with your comment is voluntary. Your private address information will not be released in the EIS or for any other purpose, unless required by law. However, your private address information may be used to complete the mailing list for EIS distribution. Failure to provide such information will result in your name not being included on the distribution list.



Scoping Meetings for the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Welcome!

The United States Air Force is conducting scoping meetings for the PRTC EIS. The Air Force is preparing an EIS to determine the potential environmental consequences of a proposal to expand the Powder River Complex to create the PRTC. The PRTC would allow for more effective use of limited resources and finite flying hours by providing, locally, the realistic training needed by B-1 and B-52 aircrews flying from Ellsworth and Minot AFBs. The options being analyzed could:

- 1 Restructure and reconfigure the existing PRC Military Operations Areas (MOAs) and associated Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace (ATCAA) and add new MOA/ATCAA airspace with a floor of 500 feet above ground level (AGL).
- 2 Increase sortie-operations (aircraft training) in the new and modified training airspace.
- 3 Support additional ground-based simulated threat emitters under the MOAs.
- 4 Authorize use of training chaff and flares throughout the new and modified airspace.
- 5 Permit supersonic flight above 10,000 feet AGL.



Scoping meetings provide the public an opportunity to learn about the proposed PRTC and provide input into this environmental impact analysis process. The scoping process helps us identify and address community-specific issues and concerns regarding the proposed airspace use.

Meeting Agenda

- Open House.....4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- View video presentation
 - Visit information booths
 - Discuss proposal with Air Force personnel
 - Submit written comments

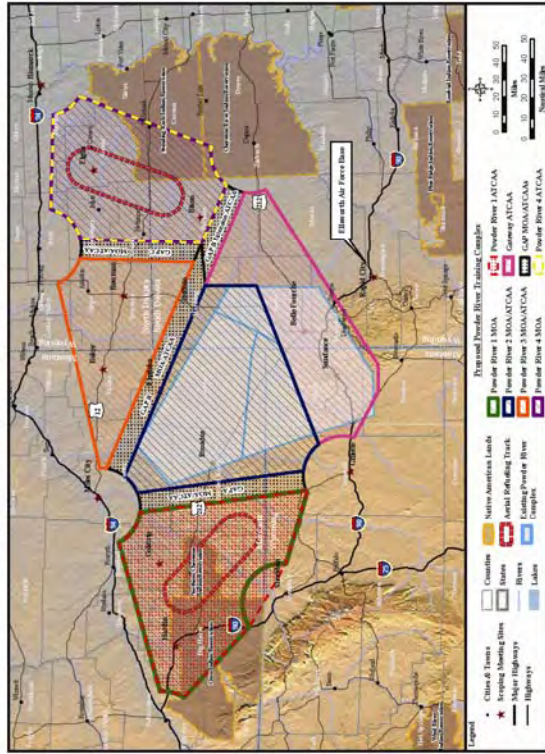
The Air Force is committed to community outreach and will consider your input to determine the scope of the issues to be addressed and to help identify the significant environmental issues to be analyzed in depth. Your involvement and input are vital to help us focus the environmental analysis.



Why is the PRTC Needed?

- Aircrews need adequately sized, configured, and available airspace to train as they fight during worldwide deployment.
- Increasing training in local airspace optimizes the limited amount of training hours allocated.
- Reducing commute time to remote training ranges like Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) reduces fuel consumption.
- Use of chaff and flares allows aircrews to deploy defensive countermeasures as they would in combat.
- Supersonic training assists aircrews to train for show of force and for quick reaction to enemy threats in combat.
- More effectively use limited resources and finite flying hours.

Proposed Alternative A Airspace Changes



The proposed action would make the following modifications to the existing PRC.

Create PRTC Airspace: create new low altitude (500 feet AGL - 17,999 feet MSL) MOA airspace and new high altitude (18,000 - 60,000 feet MSL) ATCAA airspace and restructure and reconfigure the existing PRC MOAs and ATCAAs.

Increase Flight Operations: increase number, frequency and variety of sortie-operations.

Employ Large Force Exercises (LFE): use entire proposed PRTC for LFEs of 4 to more than 20 aircraft during scheduled exercises (typically once a quarter).

Support Training Transmitters: support additional ground based simulated emitters under the MOAs.

Permit Supersonic Flight: authorize above 10,000 feet AGL within the proposed PRTC.

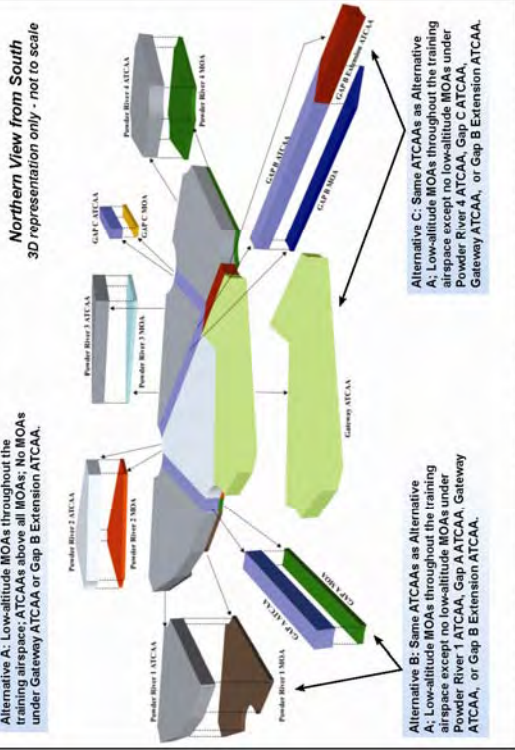
Authorize Defensive Countermeasures: allow training chaff and flare deployment throughout the proposed PRTC.

Alternative A

Under Alternative A, training aircraft in high-altitude ATCAAs would overfly approximately 37,800 square miles and training aircraft in low-altitude MOAs, under the ATCAAs, would overfly approximately 31,700 square miles.

- Expand existing Powder River A/B MOAs and rename expanded airspace - Powder River 2 MOA (500 feet AGL to 17,999 feet MSL).
- Establish Powder River 1, 3, and 4 MOAs (500 feet AGL to 17,999 feet MSL).
- Combine and modify existing Crossbow and Powder River 1 ATCAAs to overlie Powder River 2 MOA and rename the ATCAAs - Powder River 2 ATCAA.
- Modify the Gateway ATCAA to lie adjacent to Powder River 2 ATCAA.
- Create the Powder River 1, 3, and 4 ATCAAs to connect/correspond with underlying MOAs.
- Establish Gap MOAs and ATCAAs between the Powder River 1, 2, 3, and 4 MOA/ATCAAs.

Proposed Action: Create Powder River Training Complex (PRTC)



Alternative A: Low-altitude MOAs throughout the training airspace; ATCAAs above all MOAs; No MOAs under Gateway ATCAA or Gap B Extension ATCAA.

Alternative B: Same ATCAAs as Alternative A; Low-altitude MOAs throughout the training airspace except no low-altitude MOAs under Powder River 1 ATCAA, Gap A ATCAA, Gateway ATCAA, or Gap B Extension ATCAA.

Alternative C: Same ATCAAs as Alternative A; Low-altitude MOAs throughout the training airspace except no low-altitude MOAs under Powder River 4 ATCAA, Gap C ATCAA, Gateway ATCAA, or Gap B Extension ATCAA.

All or portions of the following Reservations/counties have the potential of being affected by the training airspace under 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, and Ziebach counties; and Wyoming: Campbell, Crook, Sheridan, and Weston counties.

Alternative A Continued

- Configuration of the MOAs matches their corresponding and overlying ATCAAs, except Powder River 1 MOA.
- Locate two aerial refueling tracks (one each in Powder River 1 and 4 ATCAA).

Alternative B

Same as Alternative A except no low-altitude MOAs under proposed Powder River 1 or proposed Gap A ATCAA. Training aircraft in high-altitude ATCAAs would overfly approximately 37,800 square miles and training aircraft in low-altitude MOAs, under the ATCAAs, would overfly approximately 22,800 square miles.

Alternative C

Same as Alternative A except no low-altitude MOAs under proposed Powder River 4 or proposed Gap C ATCAA. Training aircraft in high-altitude ATCAAs would overfly approximately 37,800 square miles and training aircraft in low-altitude MOAs, under the ATCAAs, would overfly approximately 24,500 square miles.

No-Action Alternative

Training aircraft would continue to train in the existing PRC and to overfly parts or all of the following counties: Montana: Carter, Custer, Powder River, South Dakota: Butte, Custer, Harding, Lawrence, Meade, Pennington, Wyoming: Campbell, Crook, Weston.

Training aircraft in high-altitude ATCAAs would continue to overfly approximately 14,100 square miles and training aircraft in low-altitude MOAs, under the ATCAAs, would continue to overfly approximately 3,900 square miles.



Please Attend!

***Scoping Meetings for the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC)
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)***

Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB), South Dakota proposes to modify their training airspace.

Please attend a public scoping meeting to:

- Learn more about the proposal
- Provide community-specific input
- Be included on our mailing list

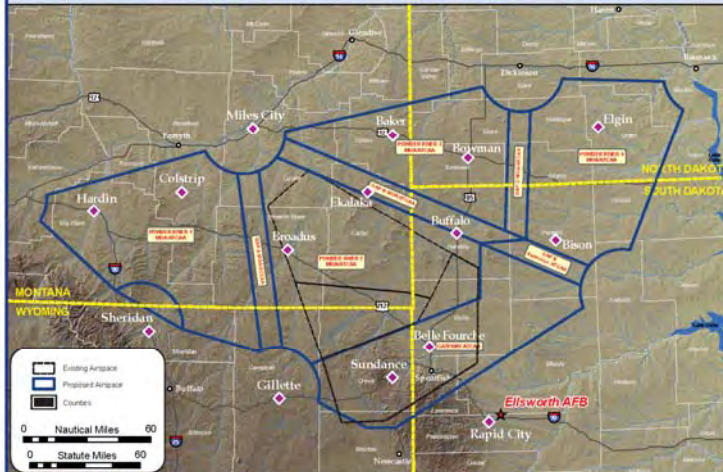


Community Scoping Meetings

Public invited to attend at any time. Information will be available throughout.

<i>South Dakota</i>	<i>Wyoming</i>	<i>Montana</i>	<i>North Dakota</i>
<p>McLaughlin Friday, July 11, 2008 3 - 5 p.m. Bear Soldier District Gym</p> <p>Buffalo Monday, July 14, 2008 4 - 7 p.m. Harding County Memorial Recreation Center West Allison Street</p> <p>Bison Tuesday, July 15, 2008 4 - 7 p.m. Bison School Cafeteria 200 East Carr Street</p> <p>Dupres Wednesday, July 16, 2008 4 - 7 p.m. Multi-Purpose Building Rodeo Drive, Highway 212 West Side</p>	<p>Gillette Thursday, June 19, 2008 4 - 7 p.m. Campbell County Fire Department 106 Rohan Avenue</p> <p>Sheridan Friday, June 20, 2008 4 - 7 p.m. Sheridan Senior Center North Entrance 211 Smith Street</p>	<p>Crow Agency Monday, June 23, 2008 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Apsalooke Center 8731 South Heritage Road</p> <p>Hardin Monday, June 23 4 - 7 p.m. Hardin Chamber of Commerce 10 E. Railroad Street</p> <p>Lame Deer Tuesday, June 24, 2008 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Tribal Administration Building Council Chambers 600 South Cheyenne Avenue</p> <p>Colstrip Tuesday, June 24, 2008 4 - 7 p.m. Isabel Bills Community Learning Center, 520 Poplar Drive</p>	<p>Miles City Wednesday, June 25, 2008 4 - 7 p.m. Miles Community College 2715 Dickinson</p> <p>Broadus Friday, June 27, 2008 4 - 7 p.m. Powder River County District High School 500 North Trautman</p> <p>Bowman Wednesday, July 9, 2008 4 - 7 p.m. City Hall Meeting Room 101 1st Street Southwest</p> <p>Elgin Thursday, July 10, 2008 4 - 7 p.m. Elgin Community Center 305 North Main Street</p> <p>Fort Yates Friday, July 11, 2008 6 - 8 p.m. AJ Agard Community Center</p>

Ellsworth AFB Proposed Airspace Expansion Area



For more information about the meeting contact:

28th Bomb Wing
Ellsworth AFB, Public Affairs
(605) 385-5056

Send comments to:

Ms. Linda DeVine
EIS Project Manager
HQ ACC/A7PP
129 Andrews Street, Room 317
Langley AFB, VA 23665-2769

For additional information visit our website at www.acplanning.org

DISTRIBUTION LIST

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