

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Army****Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Projects and Activities Associated With Programs at White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), New Mexico**

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DoD; White Sands Missile Range.

COOPERATING AGENCIES: U.S. Air Force; Ballistic Missile Defense Organization; Defense Special Weapons Agency; National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: This notice of availability is for the White Sands Missile Range Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS addresses the potential impacts of several categories of test projects at WSMR. The testing categories include: missile testing (i.e., Multiple Launch Rocket System, Special Launch Vehicle, and Standard Missile), high altitude testing (i.e., High Altitude Balloon Experiment and Research Rockets), environmental testing (Large Blasts, Temperature Testing), and high energy testing (Lasers, Radio Detecting and Ranging (RADAR)).

In the past, WSMR incorporated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements into project planning on a case-by-case basis. To better evaluate the cumulative effects of unrelated actions being planned at the same time, the EIS incorporates all known and future programs. The analysis addresses potential impacts and cumulative effects. Mitigation of these effects is incorporated into the proposed action.

DATES: The public review period for this FEIS will end 30 days after publication of the NOA in the **Federal Register** by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

ADDRESSES: Anyone wishing to receive a copy of the EIS may send a postcard with their name and address to Commander, WSMR, ATTN: STEWS-NRES-C (Robert J. Andreoli), White Sands Missile Range, NM 88002-5048.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Robert J. Andreoli at (505) 678-7926.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The EIS's proposed action and alternatives are described below:

Proposed Action

The proposed action of this EIS is the long-term operation of WSMR with the proposed adoption of specific mitigation measures for the continuation of

existing programs and the future testing of scientific, military, and commercial systems. This proposed action includes two major components. The first component is the continuation of current project activities and existing operations and services including routine maintenance; modernization or removal of outdated facilities; and improvements in infrastructure, utilities, and services as necessary. The second component consists of changes in the number of projects and programs planned for the next 10-year period, with resulting changes in site usage and services. The proposed action includes adoption of mitigation measures to reduce the effect of WSMR activities on the environment.

Other Alternatives Considered

The no action alternative is the other primary alternative considered. This alternative represents the status quo. Under this alternative, WSMR would remain a viable national range which supports missile development and test programs for the Army, Navy, Air Force, NASA, and other government and private organizations. Chapter 1 of the WSMR Environmental Assessment (1985) describes the current activities at WSMR. The no action alternative is the continuation of existing missions and operations at approximately their current scope and rates, but without the adoption of specific mitigation measures.

The alternative of closing WSMR is considered to be out of the scope of this analysis. There are no Congressional or U.S. Army indications that this option is contemplated. A special NEPA process to address the shutdown and conversion of military bases has been established for such analyses.

The other preliminary alternative identified for consideration in the Notice of Intent (NOI), but not further analyzed in the EIS, focused on testing of future systems and expansion of the mission into nuclear effects testing and launches into WSMR from off the range. Ongoing simulated nuclear effects testing is included in current operations and is analyzed accordingly in the EIS. (This research is more accurately referred to as nuclear effects simulation. It does not involve the testing of actual nuclear weapons.) A parallel NEPA process has been implemented with respect to current off-range launches into WSMR and is briefly discussed in Section 1.5.

Dated: July 23, 1998.

Raymond J. Fatz,

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Environment, Safety and Occupational Health) OASA (I,L&E).

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Army****Notice of Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Activities Associated With Future Programs at the U.S. Army Dugway Proving Ground, Utah**

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Pub. L. 91-190, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, an EIS is being prepared to evaluate environmental implications of proposed operations, and development potential of Dugway Proving Ground (DPG) in terms of environmental carrying capacity. The proposed action includes diversifying DPG operations, the expansion of chemical and biological defensive testing, increased DoD training activities, and implementation of the installation real property master plan. Issues to be considered include new activities projected for the installation, modernization or removal of outdated facilities, and improvements to infrastructure, utilities and service necessary to accommodate new missions and changes in existing test, evaluation, and training missions. Three alternatives are being considered: (1) Increased training intensity without expansion of defensive chemical and biological testing; (2) expanded action (increased training, and diversified and increased testing); and (3) no-action which is the continuation of current operations and management intensity. Cessation of current mission activity is not a decision under consideration. Mitigation measures to minimize adverse environmental impacts may be developed for each alternative.

Scoping: The first step will be to determine the appropriate scope of issues, activities and alternatives to be addressed. Comments received as a result of this notice will be used to assist the Army in identifying potential impacts to the quality of the human environment. Individuals or organizations may participate in the scoping process by written comment or by attending scoping meetings. The Army will conduct scoping meetings in Salt Lake City and Tooele, Utah, prior