

SUMMARY: This announces the availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) which assesses the potential environmental impacts of the exchange of tracts of land between Fort Benning and the City of Columbus (hereafter referred to as the City.)

Section 2829 of Public Law 101-510, enacted November 5, 1990, authorized a land exchange between the City and Fort Benning. The proposed action is to transfer the North Tract (ranging in size from 2,113 acres to 2,760 acres) to the City in exchange for the South Tract (ranging in size from 2,156 to 2,848 acres). The City intends to use the North Tract land for economic development and passive recreation. Fort Benning would use the land it receives for dismantled light infantry training.

DATES: Written comment received on or before March 10, 1999 for this action will be considered by the Army during final decision making.

ADDRESSES: To obtain copies of the FEIS contact: U.S. Army Infantry Center, Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Management Division, (ATTN: Mr. John Brent), Fort Benning, Georgia 31905-5122, or send e-mail to BrentJ@benning.army.mil.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: U.S. Army Infantry Center, Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Management Division, (ATTN: Mr. John Brent), Fort Benning, Georgia 31905-5122; telephone (706) 545-4766; e-mail BrentJ@benning.army.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department of the Army prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which assessed the potential health and environmental impacts of each of five alternatives, including a "No Action" alternative, of this proposed action. A Notice of Availability was published on October 30, 1998 (63 FR 58380) outlining the five alternatives, and also providing notice that the DEIS was available for comment. Public information meetings were held on November 18 and 19 and December 8, 1998. Comments from the DEIS and public meetings have been considered and responses are included in this FEIS.

On June 26, 1996, Fort Benning conveyed 346 acres to the City for landfill development in exchange for 380 acres, as authorized under the same enabling legislation as the currently proposed exchange. An Environmental Assessment was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, and a Finding of No Significant Impact was prepared for the landfill land exchange. This notice of availability pertains only to the

remaining acreage of the proposed North-South Tract land exchange FEIS, which involves the remaining 2,760 acres of Fort Benning land (the North Tract) and 2,848 acres of the City land (the South Tract). The FEIS includes an analysis of the cumulative environmental impacts from both the proposed North-South Tract exchange and the complete landfill land exchange.

The preferred alternative considered with the other four alternatives in this FEIS is Alternative V: Development of Reduced North Tract Without the Habitat Conservation Area (HCA). This alternative would reduce the North Tract to 2,113 acres in exchange for a South Tract of 2,156 acres. Most of the area identified for an HCA would remain with Fort Benning.

Approximately a 690 acres Parks and Recreation Area would be established on the North Tract and may be used for wetlands protection, leaving approximately 1,423 acres of developable land. The Army would use the South Tract for dismantled light infantry training. The City would continue timber production on the portion that it would retain from the South Tract (692 acres).

The FEIS concludes that the proposed land exchange as presented in the preferred alternative (Development of Reduced North Tract Without the HCA) meets the needs and purposes of the action while minimizing the potential environmental impacts through mitigation.

The FEIS is available for public review at the following locations: W.C. Bradley Memorial Library, 1120 Bradley Drive, Columbus, Georgia; South Lumpkin Library, 2034 South Lumpkin Road, Columbus, Georgia; Sawyers Library, Building 93, Fort Benning, Georgia; Simon Schwob Memorial Library, Columbus State University, 4225 University Avenue, Columbus, Georgia; Columbus Chamber Commerce, 901 Front Street, Columbus, Georgia; and Columbus Government Center Tower, Columbus, Georgia.

Dated: January 29, 1999.

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 Enter Into a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement Concerning CAST™

AGENCY: U.S. Army Research Laboratory, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Army Research Laboratory (ARL), Weapons and Materials Research Directorate and the University of Delaware Center for Composite Materials, are actively seeking a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) partner for the further development and commercialization of the Composite Analysis Software Tools (CAST™) technology. CAST™ is a suite of computer codes designed to predict the behavior of composite materials both during and after manufacturing. A brief description of each of the codes within the CAST™ suite and their capabilities can be found at <http://www.federallabs.org/flc/ma/pl>.

The software is already utilized in the composites research and development community, and enhancements could greatly broaden its utility for the academic and commercial sectors. The CRADA partner will assist in enhancing, documenting, distributing, maintaining, and providing user support for the software. A meeting will be held at the University of Delaware Center for Composites Manufacturing, 14 April 1999, to discuss the specifics of the proposed CRADA. The meeting will be held at the Composites Manufacturing Science Laboratory from 1000-1200. Please register for this conference at <http://wee.federallabs.org/flc/ma/pl>. If you do not have Internet access, you may register by contacting the U.S. Army Research Laboratory, Technology Transfer Office at 410-278-5028.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael D. Rausa, U.S. Army Research Laboratory, Office of Research and Technology Applications, ATTN: AMSRL-CS-TT/Bldg. 433, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland 21005-5425, telephone: 410-278-5028 or e-mail mrausa@arl.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: None.

Mary V. Yonts,

Alternate Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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