

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE****Department of the Air Force****Notice of Intent (NOI) To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the New Mexico Training Range Initiative (NMTRI)**

**AGENCY:** Air Combat Command, United States Air Force, DoD.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), and Air Force policy and procedures (32 CFR part 989), the Air Force is issuing this notice to advise the public of its intent to prepare an EIS to assess the potential environmental impacts of a proposal known as the New Mexico Training Range Initiative (NMTRI).

The NMTRI proposal consists of three elements: creation and modification of training airspace, authorization for supersonic operations in Cannon Air Force Base's centrally located training airspace and use of chaff and flares in the new and modified training airspace. The purpose of the NMTRI is to provide more effective and realistic training conditions for the current airframes and munitions of the 27th FW and the New Mexico Air National Guard. In addition to the proposed action, two other alternatives and the no-action alternative, will be analyzed in the EIS.

The Air Force will conduct a series of scoping meetings to solicit public input concerning the proposal. The scoping process will help identify issues to be addressed in the environmental analysis. In addition to the comments received at the scoping meetings, written comments on the scope of the EIS will be accepted by the Air Force at the address below through Feb. 24, 2004. The Air Force will accept relevant comments at any time during the environmental analysis process.

Notices will also be made in local areas of concern. Scoping meetings will be held at the following locations:

Portales, NM, January 26, 2004, 6–8 p.m., Becky Sharpe Auditorium, Eastern New Mexico University College of Business;

Fort Sumner, NM, January 27, 2004, 6–8 p.m., Community Services Bldg., 514 Avenue C;

Vaughn, NM, January 28, 2004, 4–6 p.m., Vaughn Elementary Multi-Purpose Bldg., 101 East 4th Street;

Roswell, NM, January 29, 2004, 6–8 p.m., Goddard High School, 701 E. Country Club Rd.

*Point of Contact:* Please direct any written comments or requests for information to Ms. Brenda W. Cook, HQ ACC/CEVP, 129 Andrews St., Suite 102, Langley AFB, VA 23665–2769, (757) 764–9339.

**Pamela Fitzgerald,**

*Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.*

[FR Doc. 03–32015 Filed 12–30–03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 5001–05–P**

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE****Department of the Navy****Public Hearing for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Stabilization of In-Water Facilities at Fox Island Laboratory, Fox Island, Washington**

**AGENCY:** Department of the Navy, DoD.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the regulations implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), the Department of the Navy (Navy) has prepared and filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the stabilization of in-water facilities at Fox Island Laboratory (FIL) on Carr Inlet in southern Puget Sound, Washington. The Navy will conduct a public hearing to receive oral and written comments on the DEIS. Federal, state, and local agencies and interested individuals are invited to be present or represented at the public hearing. Navy representatives will be available to clarify information related to the DEIS.

**DATES:** The public hearing will be held on Wednesday, January 21, 2004, from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The public hearing will be held at the Nichols Community Center, 690 9th Ave, Fox Island, Washington.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mrs. Kimberly Kler, Environmental Planner, Engineering Field Activity, Northwest, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Poughsbo, WA. Telephone: (360) 396–0927, facsimile (360) 396–0856, or E-Mail: [EFPB-EISFox@navy.mil](mailto:EFPB-EISFox@navy.mil).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A Notice of Intent to prepare this DEIS was published in the **Federal Register**, 67 FR 14921, March 28, 2002. The public scoping meeting was held on April 17, 2002, at the Nichols Community Center,

Fox Island, WA. The scoping meeting was advertised in the *Tacoma News Tribune* on April 7, 11, and 15, 2002, and in the *Peninsula Gateway* on April 10 and 17, 2002.

The proposed action is to stabilize the in-water facilities at Fox Island Laboratory on Carr Inlet in southern Puget Sound. In-water elements of the facility, consisting of several barges, a pier, and associated mooring components, have sustained substantial weather-related damage, and portions of the facility have reached a point of questionable structural integrity. The DEIS analyzes four alternatives, including the No Action Alternative. The Preferred Alternative is installation of a 240-foot pontoon barge and replacement of the existing mooring system. The Preferred Alternative is not expected to result in any significant short or long-term impacts on physical, biological, socio-economic resources, or on beach processes and erosive action occurring to the northwest of FIL.

The DEIS has been distributed to various Federal, state, and local agencies, elected officials, Native American Indian Tribes, and interested parties, and is available for public review at the Peninsula Branch Pierce County Library, 4424 Pt. Fosdick Drive NW, Gig Harbor, WA. The DEIS and other information may be viewed at the following Internet address: <http://www.dt.navy.mil/div/news/foxislandeis.html>.

Oral statements presented at the public hearing will be heard and transcribed by a stenographer; however, to ensure the accuracy of the record, all statements should be submitted in writing. All statements, both oral and written, will become part of the public record on the DEIS and will be responded to in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Equal weight will be given to both oral and written statements.

Written comments and statements can be submitted at the public hearing or mailed to: Commander, Engineering Field Activity, Northwest, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Attn: Mrs. Kimberly Kler, Code 053C3.KK, 19917 7th Ave NE., Poughsbo, WA, 98370. All written comments postmarked by February 2, 2004, will become part of the official public record and will be responded to in the FEIS.

Dated: December 23, 2003.

**S.K. Melancon,**

*Paralegal Specialist, Office of the Judge Advocate General, Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer.*

[FR Doc. 03–32105 Filed 12–30–03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3810–FF–P**