

Draft EIS to evaluate the potential environmental consequences of bringing the Boca Chica Airfield at Naval Air Station Key West into substantial compliance with Federal Aviation Administration safety regulations and DON air operations requirements.

The DON will conduct one public hearing to receive oral and written comments on the Draft EIS. 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 Draft EIS. This notice announces the date and location of the public hearing for this Draft EIS.

DATES AND ADDRESSES: One public hearing will be held on December 07, 2006 at the Doubletree Grand Key Resort, 3990 South Roosevelt Boulevard, Key West, FL. Open information sessions will precede the scheduled public hearing and will allow individuals to review the data presented in the Draft EIS. Navy representatives will be available during the information sessions to clarify information related to the Draft EIS. The open information sessions are scheduled from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., followed by the public hearing from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Southern Division (NAVFAC Southeast), 2155 Eagle Drive, North Charleston, SC 29406, Attn: Mr. Timothy Cardiasmenos, telephone 843-820-7340, facsimile 843-820-5563; E-Mail: timothy.cardiasmenos@navy.mil

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A Notice of Intent to prepare this Draft EIS was published in the **Federal Register**, August 6, 2004. A public scoping meeting was held on Tuesday, August 24, 2004, at the Doubletree Grand Key Resort, 3990 S. Roosevelt Boulevard, Key West, FL.

The proposed action is to implement corrective measures that meet airfield safety clearance criteria and allow for the compliance with Naval Air Systems Command waivers.

Because of the size and complexity of this action, implementation will extend over several fiscal years, enabling the DON to incorporate lessons learned as the project evolves. Both restoration and maintenance measures will be completed in various locations at Boca Chica Field. Restoration measures include trimming and/or removal of vegetation that protrudes into vertically controlled airfield surfaces or those that should not be present in laterally controlled surfaces, clearing and

grubbing, grading, filling low areas, replanting some areas with native salt marsh vegetation, and supplemental improvements to drainage conditions. Restoration methods will include the use of hand-clearing or mechanized methods (i.e., traditional construction equipment or specialized equipment). Maintenance methods will include mowing, hand-clearing, and others (i.e., herbicide and prescribed burning).

The Draft EIS considers three alternatives: (1) Restoration of Original Clear Zones; (2) Restoration of Clear Zones to meet Permanent Waivers, which includes a combination of vegetation management, and wetland and salt marsh conversion; and (3) The No-Action Alternative in accordance with section 1502.14(d) of the NEPA regulation. Alternative 2 is considered the Preferred Alternative. The DRAFT EIS evaluates the environmental effects associated with vegetation removal on airspace, safety, earth resources, land use, socioeconomic resources, infrastructure, cultural resources, and biological resources, including endangered and sensitive species, specifically the Lower Keys marsh rabbit (LKMR) and mangroves. Methods to reduce or minimize impacts to these species and essential fish habitat provided by mangroves in the clear zones are also addressed. The analysis includes an evaluation of the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts. Implementation of the proposed action is not expected to result in any significant short- or long-term impacts on physical, socioeconomic, or biological resources, with the exception of the LKMR.

The Draft EIS has been distributed to various Federal, state, and local agencies, elected officials, and interested parties, and is available for public review at the Monroe County Public Library, Key West Branch, 700 Fleming Street, Key West, FL 33040.

Oral statements presented at the public hearing will be recorded, 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 Draft EIS and will be responded to in the Final EIS. Equal weight will be given to both oral and written statements.

In the interest of available time and to ensure that all who wish to give an oral statement have the opportunity to do so, each speaker's comments will be limited to three minutes. If a longer statement is to be presented, it should be summarized at the public hearing and the full text submitted in writing either at the hearing or faxed or mailed to:

NASKW EIS, c/o Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Southern Division (NAVFAC Southeast), 2155 Eagle Drive, North Charleston, SC 29406, Attn: Mr. Timothy Cardiasmenos, telephone 843-820-7340, facsimile 843-820-5563, E-Mail: timothy.cardiasmenos@navy.mil. All written comments postmarked by January 08, 2007, will become part of the official public record and will be responded to in the Final EIS.

Date: November 14, 2006.

M.A. Harvison,

Lieutenant Commander, Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Navy, Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Navy

Notice of Extension of Public Scoping Period for the Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for Atlantic Fleet Active Sonar Training and To Announce an Additional Public Scoping Meeting

AGENCY: Department of the Navy, DoD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), and Executive Order (E.O.) 12114 "Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions" (44 FR 62,18722 (Mar. 29, 1979)), the Department of the Navy (DON) published a notice of intent to prepare a combined NEPA EIS and E.O. 12114, OEIS, and announced public scoping meetings in the **Federal Register**, 71 FR 57489 on September 29, 2006. This notice announces the extension of the public scoping period from December 1, 2006 to December 15, 2006, and announces an additional public scoping meeting.

DATES: Written comments on the scope of the EIS/OEIS should be postmarked no later than December 15, 2006. Comments may be mailed to Atlantic Division Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Attn: Code EV21 (Atlantic Fleet Sonar PM), 6506 Hampton Boulevard, Norfolk, VA 23508-1278.

Public scoping meetings were planned at seven sites to receive comments on environmental concerns that should be addressed in the EIS/OEIS. The November 2, 2006, meeting

in New London, CT, was not properly announced in the local newspaper, and the Navy will hold another meeting as follows: Wednesday, November 29, 2006, 5 p.m.–8 p.m., Radisson Hotel New London, 35 Governor Winthrop Boulevard, New London, CT. Written public comments submitted during the November 2, 2006, meeting are a part of the record and do not need to be resubmitted.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The scoping meeting will consist of an informal, open house session with information stations staffed by DON representatives. Additional information concerning the meetings will be available on the EIS/OEIS Web page located at: <http://AFASTEIS.GCSAIC.COM>.

Dated: November 14, 2006.

M. A. Harvison,

Lieutenant Commander, Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Navy, Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Navy

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Implementation of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Decision To Relocate Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) Activities from Washington, DC to the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda, MD and To Announce Public Scoping Meetings

AGENCY: Department of the Navy, DoD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section (102)(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the regulations implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), and the Department of the Navy NEPA regulation (32 CFR part 775), the Department of the Navy (DON) announces its intent to prepare an EIS to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with relocation of certain WRAMC activities from Washington, DC, to the NNMC in Bethesda, MD per Public Law 101–510, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (BRAC Law). Potential impacts associated with normal future growth expected from changes in mission, force protection, improved security, and accessibility for disabled persons will also be evaluated

and will contribute to the alternatives considered.

The DON will hold public scoping meetings for the purpose of further identifying the scope of issues to be addressed in the EIS. Written and recorded comments will be accepted during this time. To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action will be addressed, representatives from NNMC Bethesda will be available to answer questions and solicit public comments from interested parties during the scheduled public scoping meetings. Following publication of the draft EIS, at a time to be determined, further public meetings will be held to address comments on the draft document.

DATES: The DON will conduct public scoping meetings in Bethesda, Montgomery County, MD, to receive oral and/or written comments. The public meetings will be conducted in English. Both comment sheets and a recorder will be made available to document individual comments received at the public scoping meetings scheduled below:

1. *Open House:* Tuesday, December 12, 2006, 7 p.m.–9 p.m., Bethesda Marriott, 5151 Pooks Hill Road, Bethesda, MD.

2. *Open House:* Tuesday, December 19, 2006, 6:30 p.m.–10 p.m., Bethesda Marriott, 5151 Pooks Hill Road, Bethesda, MD. Open house will begin at 6:30 p.m. followed by a brief Navy presentation at 7:30 p.m.

3. *Open House:* Thursday, December 21, 2006, 1 p.m.–4 p.m., Bethesda Marriott, 5151 Pooks Hill Road, Bethesda, MD.

4. *Open House:* Thursday, December 21, 2006, 7 p.m.–9 p.m., Bethesda Marriott, 5151 Pooks Hill Road, Bethesda, MD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Officer in Charge—BRAC, NNMC, 8901 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20889, telephone 301–295–2722, fax 301–474–5419, e-mail: NNMCEIS@bethesda.med.navy.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Defense BRAC Commission was established by Public Law 101–510, the BRAC Law, to recommend military installations for realignment and closure. Recommendations of the 2005 BRAC Commission were included in a report presented to the President on September 8, 2005. The President approved and forwarded this report to Congress on September 16, 2005, which became effective as public law on November 9, 2005, and must be implemented in accordance with the requirements of the BRAC Law.

The BRAC Law exempts the decision-making process of the Commission from the provisions of NEPA. The Law also relieves the DoD from the NEPA requirement to consider the need for closing, realigning, or transferring functions, and from looking at alternative installations to close or realign. The DON is preparing environmental impact analyses during the process of relocating functions from military installations being closed or realigned to other military installations after the receiving installations have been selected, but before functions are relocated. The analyses will consider direct and indirect environmental and socioeconomic effects of these actions and cumulative impacts of other reasonably foreseeable actions affecting receiving installations.

The BRAC recommendations for realignment of WRAMC, Washington, DC, are as follows: Relocate all tertiary (sub-specialty and complex care) medical services to NNMC, Bethesda, MD, establishing it as the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Bethesda, MD; relocate Legal Medicine to the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Bethesda, MD; relocate sufficient personnel to the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Bethesda, MD, to establish a Program Management Office that will coordinate pathology results, contract administration and quality assurance, and control of DoD second opinion consults worldwide; relocate all non-tertiary (primary and specialty) patient care functions to a new community hospital at Ft. Belvoir, VA.

NNMC Bethesda is a Navy-owned 243-acre military health care, medical education, and research installation located in Bethesda, MD. The National Institutes of Health main campus is directly west of NNMC. Other neighbors surrounding NNMC include Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart, residential housing, North Chevy Chase Recreation Center, Rock Creek Park, and the Columbia Country Club. Interstate 495 is adjacent to the northeastern corner of NNMC.

The proposed action for this EIS is to accommodate the BRAC 2005 law. The BRAC-directed action includes various mission relocations from WRAMC which result in movement of medical, educational, and support services to NNMC. The BRAC-directed action must be completed on or before September 15, 2011. Upon completion of the merger, the existing WRAMC will close and the new premier medical center will be renamed the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda.