

Dated: October 24, 1997.

Richard E. Newsome,

Acting Deputy Assistance Secretary of the Army (Environmental, Safety and Occupational Health) OASA, (I, L&E).

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Renewal of the McGregor Range, New Mexico, Military Land Withdrawal

AGENCY: U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Center and Fort Bliss, Fort Bliss, Texas and New Mexico, Department of the Army, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The United States Army will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to assess the potential environmental impacts of renewal of the McGregor Range, New Mexico, military land withdrawal. McGregor Range, New Mexico, is an integral part of the U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Center and For Bliss (USAADACENFB). The current land withdrawal and reservation of the McGregor Range was established by the Military Lands Withdrawal Act of 1986 (Pub. L. 99-606) for the period ending November 6, 2001. The Act provides that the Army may seek renewal of the McGregor Range withdrawal, in connection with which the Secretary of the Army will publish a Draft EIS consistent with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. In preparing the DEIS, the Army and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) have mutually agreed to use the legislative environmental impact statement (LEIS) process pursuant to 40 CFR 1506.8 to comply with the requirements of P.L. 99-606. This LEIS will be prepared in cooperation with BLM and will be completed by November 6, 1998, in accordance with P.L. 99-606. Therefore, pursuant to the LEIS process, a Final LEIS (FLEIS) will be prepared and a Notice of Availability of the FLEIS will be published in the **Federal Register**; however, there will not be a Record of Decision.

The purpose of the proposed McGregor Range renewal is to retain a military training and testing range essential to near and long-term preparedness of the U.S. Army and other military services. Renewing the land withdrawal will provide for the continuation of on-going training and

testing missions for air defense artillery systems while maintaining the flexibility to adapt to the training needs of new technologies and doctrine as they develop. McGregor Range provides a combination of attributes that serve this training requirement, including favorable location and weather; sufficient land and airspace; diverse terrain; and developed training support facilities. McGregor Range includes approximately 608,385 acres of withdrawn public domain land in Otero County, New Mexico, containing a complex of facilities, ranges, and safety areas to support training and test activities of the U.S. Army and other organizations.

As a result of the Military Lands Withdrawal Act of 1986, the Army and BLM co-manage McGregor Range with military requirements having priority over non-military uses. This management arrangement is defined in a Memorandum of Understanding between Fort Bliss and the BLM which define agency responsibilities related to energy and mineral resources, wildlife habitat management, grazing, recreation, hunting, visual and cultural resources, fire management, wilderness study areas and areas of environmental concern.

The LEIS will consider reasonable alternatives including renewal of the current public domain land withdrawal for military use. Without limiting the priority military use, non-military co-use activities would continue to be managed in part by the BLM. The No Action (allowing the current withdrawal to expire) alternative required by NEPA will be evaluated. Other reasonable alternatives will also be considered.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before January 9, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Please direct written comments concerning the scope of the McGregor Range, New Mexico, Military Land Withdrawal Renewal LEIS to: Dr. A. Vliet, Program Manager, McGregor Range Withdrawal, U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Center and Fort Bliss, ATTN: ATZC-CSA, PO Box 6020, Fort Bliss, Texas 79906; telephone (915) 568-6708.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES: Continuance of military and non-military multiple use of McGregor Range, in particular the area known as Otero Mesa will be addressed.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public scoping meetings in connection with this LEIS will be held in three communities: Las Cruces and Alamogordo, New Mexico, and El Paso, Texas. Meeting times and locations will be published in local newspapers. These

meetings will provide the opportunity for the public to become aware of the LEIS and for the Army to gather public input regarding the scope of the study and reasonable alternatives. Those unable to attend the scheduled scoping meetings may submit written comments regarding the scope of the LEIS through January 9, 1998, to the address above.

A mailing list has been prepared for public scoping and review throughout the process of preparation of this LEIS. This list includes local, state and federal agencies with jurisdiction of other interests in the project. In addition, the mailing list includes adjacent property owners, affected municipalities and other interested parties such as conservation organizations. Anyone wishing to be added to the mailing list may request to be added by contacting the person identified below.

Dated: October 24, 1997.

Richard E. Newsome,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Federal Interagency Coordinating Council Meeting (FICC)

AGENCY: Federal Interagency Coordinating Council, Education.

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice describes the schedule and agenda of a forthcoming meeting of the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council. Notice of this meeting is required under section 685(c) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended, and is intended to notify the general public of their opportunity to attend the meeting. The meeting will be accessible to individuals with disabilities.

DATES AND TIMES: November 20, 1997, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: Hubert Humphrey Building, Room 305A, 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Libby Doggett or Kim Lawrence, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 3080, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2644. Telephone: (202) 205-5507 or 205-9068. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call (202) 205-0754.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Interagency Coordinating Council (FICC) is established under