

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Army****Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR) Transformation and Installation Mission Support, Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) and Fort Polk, LA, and Long-Term Military Training Use of Kisatchie National Forest Lands****AGENCY:** Department of the Army, DoD.**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Army, the USDA Forest Service, and the DOT Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announce the availability of the FEIS for the 2d ACR Transformation and Installation Mission Support, Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) and Fort Polk, Louisiana, and Long-Term Military Training Use of Kisatchie National Forest Lands. The FEIS evaluates environmental impacts associated with the Army's proposal for implementing force transformation and mission capability enhancements at the installation and at England Industrial Airpark, along with long-term military training use of Kisatchie National Forest lands. The Army's proposed action involves fielding of new vehicles and equipment; construction and improvement of firing ranges, roads, stream crossings, and support facilities; land use agreements and leases; training and deployment of Army troops; and continued environmental stewardship. In addition, the FEIS considers a Forest Service proposal to thin approximately 21,500 acres of upland pine stands on the Vernon Unit, Calcasieu Ranger District of the Kisatchie National Forest to improve habitat conditions for the endangered red-cocked woodpecker. The FAA proposes to approve an amendment of the Alexandria International Airport Layout Plan as influenced by proposed Army projects and activities at England Industrial Airpark.

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

ADDRESSES: Written comments or requests for copies of the FEIS may be submitted to: Dan Nance, Fort Polk Public Affairs Office, 7073 Radio Road, Fort Polk, LA 71459-5342; phone: (337) 531-7203; fax: (337) 6014; e-mail: eis@polk.army.mil.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions about the FEIS may be directed to Ms. Stacy Basham-Wagner,

Joint Agency Liaison, Attention: AFZX-PW-E (Basham-Wagner), 1799 23rd Street, Fort Polk, LA 71459; telephone (337) 531-7458, fax: (337) 531-2627. For further information on the Forest Service's Record of Decision, contact Ms. Cynthia A. Dancak, 2500 Shreveport Highway, Pineville, LA 71360; phone (318) 473-7160.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In support of Army initiatives to meet evolving security requirements, the Army has designated the 2d ACR to transform to the 2d Cavalry Regiment, a medium-weight force equipped with Stryker vehicles that will be strategically responsive and more rapidly deployable by air. In addition to transformation of the 2d ACR, units stationed at other Army installations would participate in exercises at the JRTC and Fort Polk on a rotational basis. To these ends, the Army proposes to implement force transformation and installation mission support activities at the JRTC and Fort Polk with respect to home station training (maneuver and gunnery exercises for Army units assigned to Fort Polk), rotational unit exercises, and facilities construction. The Army also proposes renewal of a Special Use Permit agreement with the Forest Service for continued use of Kisatchie National Forest lands to support military training. The areas of the Kisatchie National Forest proposed for Army use are known as the Intensive Use Area and Limited Use Area of the Vernon Unit, Calcasieu Ranger District and the Special Limited Use Area (also known as Horse's Head) of the Kisatchie Ranger District.

Proposals for installation mission support involve 20 construction projects that would occur on Army lands, national forest lands, and at England Industrial Airpark in Alexandria, Louisiana. The projects include 13 facilities in the Fort Polk cantonment area, digitization and expansion of the Multi-Purpose Ranger Complex on Fort Polk's main post, road construction/improvements and construction of a sniper range in the Intensive Use Area, construction of 20 stream crossings in the Limited Use Area, construction of 20 stream crossings in the Limited Use Area, and 3 deployment support facilities at England Industrial Airpark. The JRTC and Fort Polk also propose to create additional helicopter training areas and to conduct limited types of non-live fire training on private lands.

The Army is the lead agency in preparing the FEIS, and the Forest Service and FAA are cooperating agencies. The decision to be made by the Army, based on the results of the

EIS and upon consideration of all relevant factors (including mission, cost, technical factors, and environmental considerations) is how to provide for military training, readiness, and facilities requirements while ensuring the sustained use of resources entrusted to the stewardship of the Army. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) intends to rely on analyses in this EIS to make decisions concerning the Alexandria International Airport Layout Plan as it may be affected by three Army projects proposed to occur at the airport and consequent movement of aircraft, materiel, and personnel through that facility.

Based on the FEIS, the Forest Service has decided to authorize certain Army activities and land uses on Kisatchie National Forest lands and to thin, over a 10-year period, approximately 21,500 acres of upland pine stands in the Intensive Use Area to enhance habitat conditions for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. The Forest Service (in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) has also decided to classify as "deleted" red-cockaded woodpecker clusters documented to have been inactive for a five-year period.

The FEIS identifies eight alternatives, two of which are analyzed in detail: (1) The proposed action, summarized above, and (2) a no action alternative. The FEIS also includes a mitigation and monitoring plan developed by the Army and Forest Service to rectify, reduce, or eliminate adverse effects to land cover, soils, water quality, and biological resources.

The Forest Service's decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.11. A written appeal, including attachments, must be postmarked or received within 45 days after the date of the legal notice of the decision is published in the Alexandria Daily Town Talk. The Appeal shall be sent to USDA, Forest Service, ATTN: Appeals Deciding Officer, 1720 Peachtree Rd., NW., Suite 811N, Atlanta, Georgia 30309-9102, within 45 days of the date of the legal notice. Appeals may be faxed to (404) 347-5401. Hand-delivered appeals must be received within normal business hours of 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Appeals may also be mailed electronically in a common digital format to appeals-southern-regional-office@fs.fed.us. Appeals must meet the content requirements of 36 CFR 215.14. If no appeal is received, implementation of the decision may occur on, but not before, five business days from the close of the appeal filing period. If an appeal is received, implementation may not occur for 15 business days following the

date of appeal disposition (36 CFR 215.9).

Copies of the FEIS and Forest Service Record of Decision are available for review at the following libraries: Allen Parish Library (Oberlin Branch), 320 S. Sixth Street, Oberlin; Beauregard Parish Library, 205 South Washington Avenue, DeRidder; Calcasieu Public Library, 301 W. Claude Street, Lake Charles; East Baton Rouge Parish Library, 7711 Goodwood Boulevard, Baton Rouge; Lafayette Public Library, 301 W. Congress Street, Lafayette; Lincoln Parish Library, 509 West Alabama Avenue, Ruston; Natchitoches Parish Library, 431 Jefferson Street, Natchitoches; New Orleans Public Library (Orleans Parish), 219 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans; New Orleans Public Library (Algiers Point Branch), 725 Pelican Avenue, New Orleans; Ouachita Parish Library, 1800 Stubbs Avenue, Monroe; Rapides Parish Library, 411 Washington Street, Alexandria; Vernon Parish Library, 1401 Nolan Trace, Leesville; Sabine Parish Library, 705 Main Street, Many; and Shreve Memorial Library (Caddo Parish), 424 Texas Street (71101), Shreveport. The FEIS, as well as additional information concerning the EIS process, may be reviewed at <http://notes.tetrattech-ffx.com/PolkEIS.nsf>.

Dated: March 9, 2004.

Raymond J. Fatz,

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

[FR Doc. 04-5853 Filed 3-15-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3710-08-M

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

National Energy Technology Laboratory; Notification of Plans for a Public Hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Low-Emission Boiler System Proof-of-Concept Project

AGENCY: National Energy Technology Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of public hearing.

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 NEPA regulations (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), and the DOE Regulations Implementing NEPA (10 CFR part 1021), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), has issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (the Draft EIS) for the Low-Emission Boiler System Proof-of-Concept Project in Logan County, IL, and scheduled a public hearing in

Elkhart, IL, to receive comments on the Draft EIS.

The Draft EIS (DOE/EIS-0284) has been distributed to members of Congress, Federal and state regulatory agencies, state and local government officials, national stakeholders, and other interested persons and organizations. Copies of the Draft EIS have been made available at the Elkhart Public Library for public review, and the Draft EIS is also available for review at the following Internet site: <http://www.eh.doe.gov/nepa/docs/deis/deis.html>.

DATES: DOE invites members of Congress; State, local, and tribal governments; other Federal agencies; and the general public to provide comments on the Draft EIS. The comment period on the Draft EIS runs through April 19, 2004; DOE will consider all comments received by that date in preparing a Final EIS. Comments received after April 19, 2004, will be considered to the extent practicable. Written, oral, fax, or e-mail comments will be considered (see **ADDRESSES**). DOE will conduct a public hearing on March 30, 2004, to provide an opportunity for the public to present comments on the draft document, ask questions, and discuss concerns with DOE officials regarding the Draft EIS. The date, time, and location for the public hearing are as follows: March 30, 2004, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., Elkhart Grade School, 206 South Gillett Street, Elkhart, IL. DOE officials will be available beginning at 5 p.m. on the day of the meeting for informal discussions on the project and the NEPA process. Displays and other forms of information about the proposed Low-Emission Boiler System Proof-of-Concept Project will be available.

ADDRESSES: A copy of the Draft EIS may be obtained upon request by writing to Lloyd Lorenzi, U.S. Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, P.O. Box 10940, Pittsburgh, PA, 15236; by telephone (412) 386-6159; by facsimile (412) 386-4822; or by e-mail (llorenzi@netl.doe.gov).

Comments concerning the Draft EIS can be submitted by the means described above or by leaving a message at toll-free number 1-800-276-9851. Specific information regarding the public hearing can also be obtained from the DOE contact noted above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general information on the Low-Emission Boiler System Proof-of-Concept Project or the NEPA process for this Project, please contact Mr. Lloyd Lorenzi at the address provided above. For general information on the DOE

NEPA process, contact Ms. Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance (EH-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-0119; telephone 202-586-4600 or leave a message at 1-800-472-2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Draft EIS evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the Low-Emission Boiler System project that was proposed by Babcock Power, Inc., to demonstrate reliable and economical technologies for meeting the environmental performance requirements of coal-fired power generation. DOE's proposed action is to provide cost-shared funding of approximately \$30 million (about 23.5% of the total cost) for the proposed project. The Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service, is participating as a cooperating agency in the preparation of this EIS, and may provide financing for a portion of the proposed project. The project would involve constructing and operating a 91 megawatt-electric coal-fired generating plant on property owned by Turriss Coal Company adjacent to its existing mining operations near Elkhart, IL. The plant would be owned and operated by Corn Belt Energy Corporation.

The Draft EIS also evaluates the environmental impacts of a no-action alternative under which DOE would not provide cost-shared funding. Alternative sites and technologies that were considered in developing the proposed project are also presented. The Draft EIS analyzes potential impacts on air quality, aesthetics and land use, surface water and groundwater, solid waste, traffic and transportation, ecological and cultural resources, noise, socioeconomics, environmental justice, and other resources.

Public Hearing Process: DOE will conduct a public hearing at the Elkhart Grade School, 206 South Gillett Street, Elkhart, IL, on March 30, 2004, at 7 p.m. In addition, the public is invited to an informal session at this location beginning at 5 p.m. to learn more about the proposed Low-Emission Boiler System project. Displays and other information about the project will be available, and DOE personnel will be present to discuss the proposed project and the NEPA process.

The formal hearing will begin at 7 p.m. DOE invites people who wish to speak at this public hearing to contact Mr. Lloyd Lorenzi, either by phone, fax, e-mail, or in writing (see **ADDRESSES** in this notice). People who do not arrange in advance to speak may register at the