

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR
THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF AN
“ABILITY-TO-SURVIVE-AND-OPERATE” (ATSO)
TRAINING AREA
(RCS # 02-008, -034, -035)**

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500-1517, Department of Defense Directive 6050.1, and 32 CFR 989, the Department of the Air Force has conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the probable environmental consequences for the development and use of an ATSO training area at Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), Florida.

PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide personnel on Eglin AFB a place to conduct classroom and field exercises in chemical and other training. Today's threat to personnel requires training in nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) defense training so that personnel have experience in a realistic threat/attack scenario. Eglin units have a recurring requirement to conduct ATSO exercises, field training and "just-in-time training" for mobility commitments. Eglin AFB is one of the few air force bases without an ATSO Training Area. Eglin AFB units need a dedicated area on base for wartime training. When this area is not in use for ATSO training, it would also be beneficial if this area could be used for other military activities such as setting up triage units and mobile kitchen trailers and testing weather equipment, but such activity must not interfere with even short-notice ATSO training. The proposed action would provide an area to meet the goal of the Department of Defense to provide realistic training and effective evaluation ensuring proper NBC skills. The proposed area has been used for limited training in the past, and a gas-mask confidence chamber has already been approved for use and has been constructed on-site.

The proposed action is to convert an unused area south of the 33rd Fighter Wing area (south of Nomad Way and buildings 1324 and 1325) into a training area. The Proposed Action has two components, (1) construction of facilities and infrastructure and (2) training activities. The first component would have three phases, (1) construction of a 50-car parking lot with service drive and two concrete slabs to serve as hardstands for classroom tents; (2) partial clearing of a wooded area for a bivouac site, installing utilities to a central point in the bivouac site, construction of an access road to the site and construction of wooden platform hardstands for sleeping tents; (3) construction of a classroom facility and bathhouse facility. The access road would be a 15-foot wide gravel road that runs immediately parallel to the existing paved bicycle/pedestrian path. Training would include use of a propane cannon, smoke grenades and chemical warfare simulators. The bivouac site would be used to set up a tent city/cantonment area. Frequency of training would range from annually to three times per week.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Preferred Alternative. The preferred alternative is the proposed action.

No Action Alternative. The gas-mask confidence chamber already on-site would be used for training, but no other improvements or training activities would occur.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS SUMMARY

This assessment indicates that the proposed action would not have any significant, adverse environmental impacts. The proposed action would not impact the following: coastal zone, socioeconomics, cultural resources, wetlands, threatened or endangered species, or environmental justice issues.

The proposed action would have minor impacts to infrastructure, air quality, noise, soils, vegetation and the use of hazardous materials. Minor impacts to on-base utilities would occur from extension of lines to service the site. The proposed access road to the site would be restricted to vehicular traffic allowed only during training exercises. Minor impacts to air quality would result from minor, temporary increases in air emissions from construction activities. Generators would be used for on-site electrical supply until utilities are extended (Phase II). Devices used for training activities (propane cannon, smoke grenades, chemical agent simulators) would have minor, localized, temporary impacts to air quality. Noise levels would increase temporarily during construction and training. Noise from training activities would include loud, single event bursts from a propane cannon. Noise attenuation over distance and within closed buildings would result in minor noise intrusions to occupants of the facilities closest to the training site. Occupants of these facilities would have higher tolerance levels for noise (occupants are proponents for the training area or similar training areas). In addition, the noise environment at the site is primarily dominated by aircrafts using the nearby airfield. Minor impacts to soils would occur from the construction of facilities and extension of underground utilities. These impacts would be minimized through the use of Best Management Practices. Vegetation in the bivouac area would be impacted from partial clearing of the site. Construction activities would have to be permitted for compliance with stormwater regulations as appropriate. Contractor-maintained dumpsters would handle solid waste. Any hazardous waste generated would be disposed of properly. Hazardous materials associated with training activities would be used in negligible quantities. No impacts to or from Installation Restoration Program sites would be expected. There would be no impacts to minority or low-income populations, or to children. The proposed action, in conjunction with other activities with similar minor impacts, would not contribute to cumulative impacts on resources; in particular, land use, air quality, or noise.

CONCLUSION

The EA has shown that the preferred alternative (proposed action) does not represent a significant impact to the environment; the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.



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27 JAN 2003

Date

**Environmental Assessment for
the Development and Use of an
Ability-to-Survive-and-Operate
(ATSO) Training Area
(RCS #02-008, -034, -035)**

**The United States Air Force
Eglin Air Force Base, Ft. Walton Beach
Florida**

November 2002



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List of Acronyms

33 FW	33 rd Fighter Wing
96 ABW	96 th Air Base Wing
AAC/EMC	Air Armament Center/Environmental Management Directorate, Compliance Division
AAC/EMCE	Air Armament Center/Environmental Management Directorate, Compliance Division, Engineering Branch
AAC/EMCP	Air Armament Center/Environmental Management Directorate, Compliance Division, Pollution Prevention Branch
AAC/EMH	Air Armament Center/Environmental Management Directorate, Cultural Resources Division
AAC/EMSN	Air Armament Center/Environmental Management Directorate, Stewardship Division, Natural Resources Branch
AFB	Air Force Base
AICUZ	Air Installation Compatible Use Zone
ATSO	ability to survive and operate
BMP	Best Management Practice
CAA	Clean Air Act
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	carbon monoxide
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
dB	decibel
DNL	day-night sound level
DOD	Department of Defense
EA	Environmental Assessment
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
F.A.C.	Florida Administrative Code
FCMP	Florida Coastal Management Program
FDEP	Florida Department of Environmental Protection
FLUM	Future Land Use Map
ft	feet
HAP	Hazardous air pollutant
INRMP	Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan
IRP	Installation Restoration Program
MCLs	minimum contaminant levels
MGD	millions of gallons per day
MKT	mobile kitchen trailers
MLD	millions of liters per day
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards

List of Acronyms, (cont.)

NBC	nuclear, biological, and chemical
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide
NO _x	nitrogen oxides
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NWFWMD	Northwest Florida Water Management District
O ₃	ozone
ODS	ozone depleting substance
ORI	Operational Readiness Inspection
PM ₁₀	particulate matter of 10 microns or less
SEL	sound exposure level
SF	square foot
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SO _x	sulfur oxides
USAF	United States Air Force
USC	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
UXO	unexploded ordnance
VOC	volatile organic compound

Executive Summary

Type of Document

This document is an Environmental Assessment (EA).

Name of Proposed Action

This EA addresses the primary environmental issues associated with the development and use of an “ability to survive and operate” (ATSO) Training Area at Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), Florida.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide personnel on Eglin AFB a place to conduct classroom and field exercises in chemical and other training. Eglin AFB units have a recurring requirement to conduct ATSO exercises, field training, and “just-in-time training” for mobility commitments, and the proposed project would fulfill this need. Eglin AFB units need a dedicated area on base for wartime training. When this area is not in use for ATSO training, it would also be beneficial if this area could be used for other military activities such as setting up triage units and mobile kitchen trailers (MKTs) and testing weather equipment, but such activity must not interfere with even short-notice ATSO training. The 96th Air Base Wing (96 ABW) proposes converting an unused area south of the 33rd Fighter Wing (33 FW) area for this use. This area fulfills this need because it is on base, yet still detached from the normal working areas. This area has been used for limited training in the past and a gas mask confidence chamber has already been approved for use and has been constructed on-site.

Description of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action has two components: (1) construction of facilities and infrastructure, and (2) training activities. In order to conduct training around the construction, under the first component, there are three phases:

- Phase I: Construction of a 50-car paved parking lot (210 feet [ft.] by 80 ft.) with a service drive (500 ft. long by 22 ft. wide), and two concrete slabs to serve as hardstands for classroom tents;
- Phase II: Partial clearing of a 60,000 square foot (SF) wooded area to serve as a bivouac area, installing utilities for power, water, communication, and sewer to a central point in the bivouac area, and building an access road to the site and wooden platform hardstands for sleeping tents; and
- Phase III: Erecting a 150-person classroom, and a separate bathhouse/latrine.

Only the bivouac area would require the clearing of vegetation; the rest of the site is an open field. In addition, two improvements would be made to the confidence chamber already on-site: concrete apron would be added around the perimeter of the confidence chamber, and potable water lines would be extended to the facility for the eyewash and safety shower. Under Phase I (prior to extension of utilities to the site), portalets, water supply trucks, and generators would be used on-site.

An access road to the site would be constructed for use during training exercises. This road would connect from the service drive behind the shoppette to the ATSO training area (see Figure 1-3). The road is proposed to be gravel, 15-ft. wide, and would run immediately parallel to the existing bicycle/pedestrian path. An alternative consideration for the road is to extend the existing bicycle/pedestrian path to accommodate vehicular traffic for the training exercises. The road (whether a new gravel road or an extension of the path) would be closed to all thru traffic, and would be used only during training exercises to/from the ATSO training area.

Under the second component, the site would be used for training activities. Approximately 2 to 3 times per week, the area would be used for classroom/exercise training. This training would include approximately 150 students per class and would last 4 hours. The exercises would consist of a simulated attack using a propane cannon and smoke grenade; ATSO techniques; chemical warfare training using chemical agent simulators; and gas-mask confidence testing in the gas-mask confidence chamber. ATSO techniques include Self-Aid Buddy Care, unexploded ordnance (UXO) identification, and simulated damage assessment. The chemical warfare training generally includes testing chemical agent detection paper (M8/M9) by spraying a few drops of a chemical agent simulator (e.g., Raid insect killer) on the paper and looking for a color change (to indicate the presence of a chemical agent).

In addition to this regular classroom/exercise training, bivouac training, Phase II training, and Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) training would occur at the proposed site. Bivouac training consists of setting up a tent city / cantonment area. Bivouac training would occur approximately one to two times per year, and lasts approximately three days at a time. Phase II training consists of approximately 300 people on 12-hour shifts (for four to five days), and would occur two times per year. ORI training consists of approximately

600 people on 12-hour shifts (for four to five days), and would occur once every two years. As described above, these training activities would include simulated attacks, ATSO techniques, chemical warfare training, and bivouac/tent city.

Alternatives

Alternatives considered in this EA are the Preferred Alternative and the No-Action Alternative. Under the No-Action Alternative, the gas mask confidence chamber on-site would be used. No other construction or training would occur.

Summary of Environmental Impacts

No significant, adverse impacts would occur from the Proposed Action. Minor impacts to on-base utilities would occur from extension of lines to service the site. Minor impacts to air quality would result from minor, temporary increases in air emissions from construction activities. Generators would be used for on-site electrical supply until utilities are extended (Phase II). Devices used for training activities (propane cannon, smoke grenades, chemical agent simulators) would have minor, localized, temporary impacts to air quality. Noise levels would increase temporarily during construction and training. Noise from training activities would include loud, single event bursts from a propane cannon. Noise attenuation over distance and within closed buildings would result in minor noise intrusions to occupants of the facilities closest to the training site. Occupants of these facilities would have higher tolerance levels for noise (occupants are proponents for the training area or similar training areas). In addition, the noise environment at the site is primarily dominated by aircraft using the nearby airfield. Minor impacts to soils would occur from the construction of facilities and extension of underground utilities. These impacts would be minimized through the use of best management practices (BMPs). Vegetation in the bivouac area would be impacted from partial clearing of the site. No threatened or endangered species have been reported in the vicinity of the site. Construction activities would have to be permitted for compliance with stormwater regulations as appropriate. No surface water bodies or wetlands are within the vicinity of the project. Solid waste would be handled by contractor-maintained dumpsters. Any hazardous waste generated would be disposed of properly. Hazardous materials associated with training activities would be used in negligible quantities. No impacts to or from Installation Restoration Program (IRP) sites would be expected. There would be no impacts to minority or low-income populations, or to children. The Proposed Action, in conjunction with other activities with similar minor impacts, would not cause significant cumulative impacts on resources; in particular, land use, air quality, or noise.

1

Purpose of and Need for Action

1.1 Introduction

The United States Air Force (USAF) proposes the development and use of a new “ability to survive and operate” (ATSO) Training Area on Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), Florida. Eglin AFB is located in Northwest Florida, along the Gulf of Mexico (see Figure 1-1). The main contiguous parcel of Eglin AFB contains approximately 464,000 acres and is located in Walton, Okaloosa, and Santa Rosa counties.

The 96th Air Base Wing (96 ABW) and the 33rd Fighter Wing (33 FW) propose to use the ATSO Training Area. In addition to these tenants, other groups propose to use the site to practice various components of military activities, such as setting up triage units, mobile kitchen trailers (MKTs), and testing weather equipment. All other activities are expected to have less environmental impact than the ATSO training, so impacts are analyzed for the more intense ATSO activities.

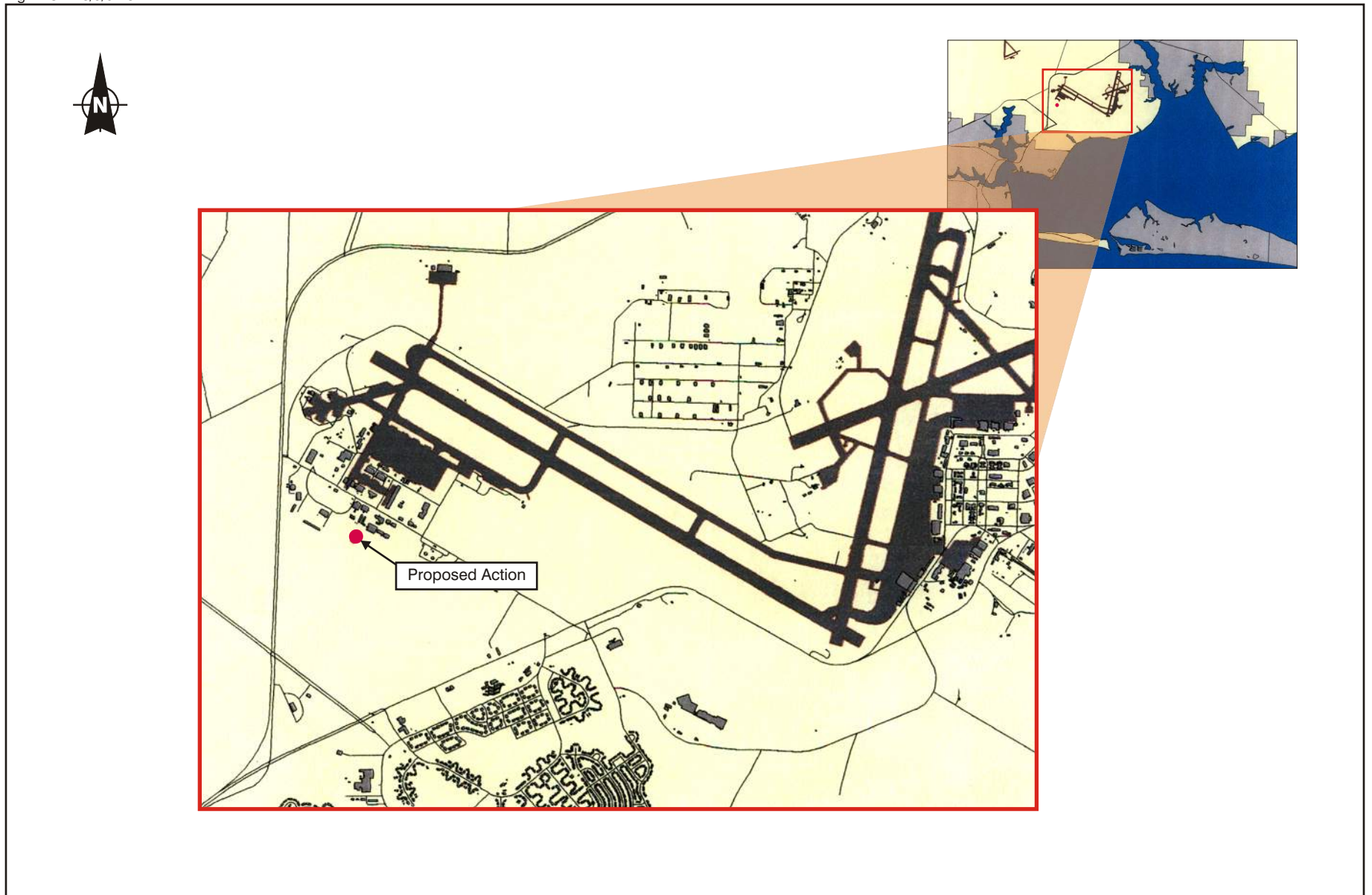
1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide personnel on Eglin AFB a place to conduct classroom and field exercises in chemical and other training. Today’s threat to personnel requires training in nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) defense training so that personnel have experience in a realistic threat/attack scenario. Eglin units have a recurring requirement to conduct ATSO exercises, field training, and “just-in-time training” for mobility commitments. Eglin AFB is one of the few air force bases without an ATSO Training Area. Eglin AFB units need a dedicated area on base for wartime training. When this area is not in use for ATSO training, it would also be beneficial if this area could be used for other military activities such as setting up triage units and mobile kitchen trailers (MKTs) and testing weather equipment, but such activity must not interfere with even short-notice ATSO training. The Proposed Action would provide an area to meet the goal of the Department of Defense (DOD) to provide realistic training and effective evaluation ensuring proper NBC skills. The 96 ABW proposes converting an unused area south of the 33 FW area (south of Nomad Way and south of Buildings 1324 and 1325) into a training area (see Figures 1-2 and 1-3). This area fulfills this need because it is on base, yet still detached from the normal



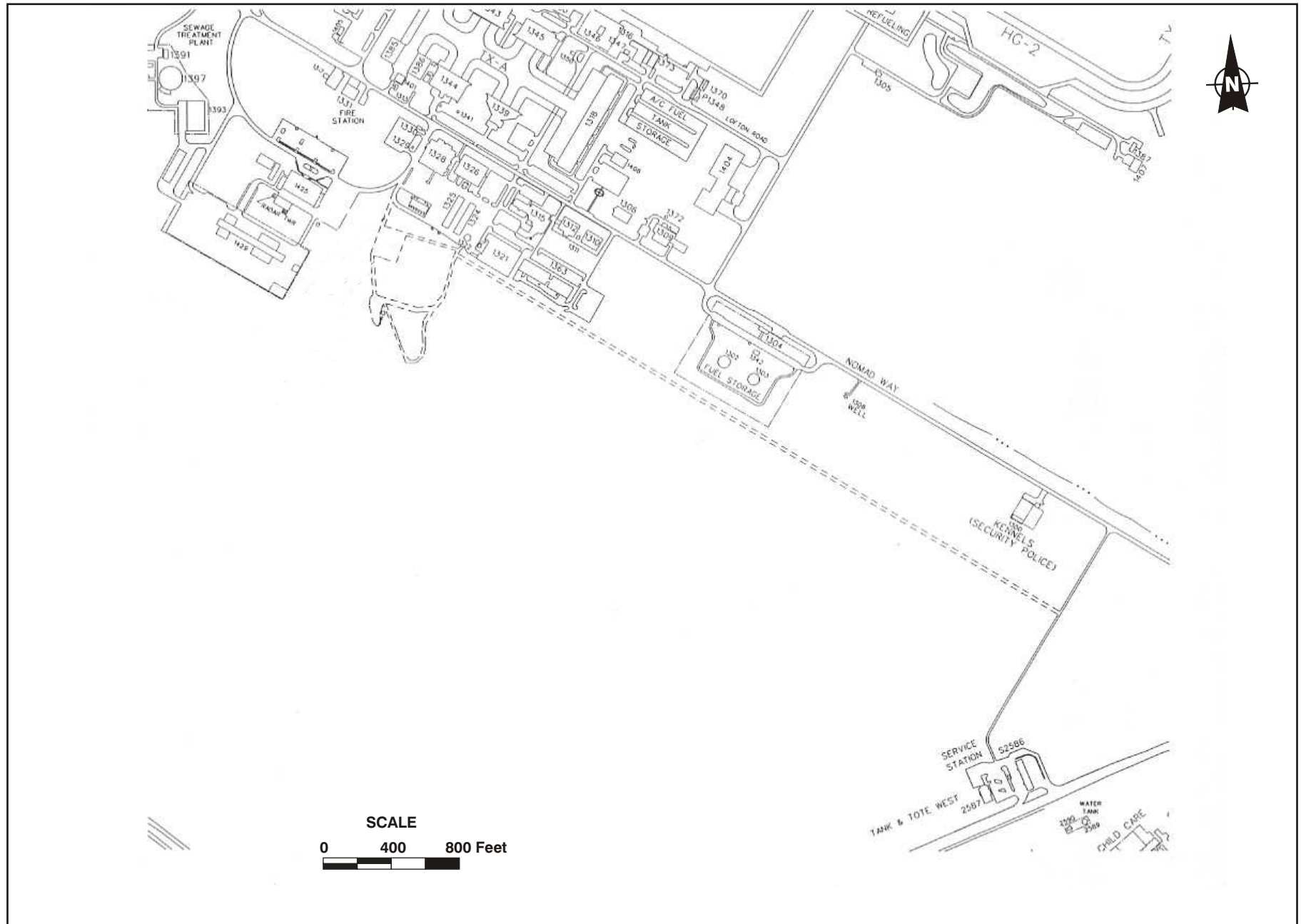
SOURCE: USAF 2000.

Figure 1-1 SITE LOCATION MAP
EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE



SOURCE: USAF 2002a.

Figure 1-2 GENERAL LOCATION OF ATSO TRAINING AREA AT EGLIN AFB



SOURCE: 96th CEG/CECPM.

Figure 1-3 PROPOSED ATSO TRAINING SITE

working areas. This area has been used for limited training in the past and a gas mask confidence chamber has already been approved for use and has been constructed on-site.

1.3 Description of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action has two components: (1) construction of facilities and infrastructure, and (2) training activities. In order to conduct training around construction, under the first component, there are three phases:

- Phase I: Construction of a 50-car paved parking lot (210 ft. by 80 ft.) with a service drive (500 ft. long by 22 ft. wide), and two concrete slabs to serve as hardstands for classroom tents;
- Phase II: Partial clearing of a 60,000-square foot (SF) wooded area to serve as a bivouac area (Figure 1-4), installing utilities for power, water, communication, and sewer to a central point in the bivouac area, and building an access road to the site, and wooden platform hardstands for sleeping tents; and
- Phase III: Erecting a 150 person classroom (3,000 SF), and a separate bathhouse/latrine.

Only the bivouac area would require the clearing of vegetation; the rest of the site is an open field (Figure 1-5). In addition, two improvements would be made to the confidence chamber already on-site: concrete would be added to the base of the confidence chamber, and potable water lines would be extended to the facility for the eyewash and safety shower. Under Phase I (prior to extension of utilities to the site), portalets, water supply trucks, and generators would be used on-site.

An access road to the site would be constructed for use during training exercises. This road would connect from the service drive behind the shoppette to the ATSO training area (see Figure 1-3). The road is proposed to be gravel, 15-ft. wide, and would run immediately parallel to the existing bicycle/pedestrian path. An alternative consideration for the road is to extend the existing bicycle/pedestrian path to accommodate vehicular traffic for the training exercises. The road (whether a new gravel road or an extension of the path) would be closed to all thru traffic, and would be used only during training exercises to/from the ATSO training area.

Under the second component, the site would be used for training activities. Approximately 2 to 3 times per week, the area would be used for classroom/exercise training. This training would include approximately 150 students per class and would last 4 hours. The exercises would consist of a simulated attack using a propane cannon and smoke grenade; ATSO techniques; chemical warfare training using chemical agent simulators; and gas-mask confidence testing in the gas-mask confidence chamber. ATSO techniques include Self-Aid Buddy Care, unexploded ordnance (UXO) identification, and simulated damage assessment. The chemical warfare training generally includes testing chemical agent detection paper

(M8/M9) by spraying a few drops of a chemical agent simulator (e.g., Raid insect killer) on the paper and looking for a color change (to indicate the presence of a chemical agent).

In addition to this regular classroom/exercise training, bivouac training, Phase II training, and Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) training would occur at the proposed site. Bivouac training consists of setting up a tent city / cantonment area. Bivouac training would occur approximately one to two times per year, and lasts approximately three days at a time. Phase II training consists of approximately 300 people on 12-hour shifts (for four to five days), and would occur two times per year. ORI training consists of approximately 600 people on 12-hour shifts (for four to five days), and would occur once every two years. As described above, these training activities would include simulated attacks, ATSO techniques, chemical warfare training, and bivouac/tent city.



Figure 1-4 Photograph of bivouac area facing east



Figure 1-5 Photograph of the open field at site of the Proposed Action.

1.4 Scope of the Document and the Environmental Analysis

This Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], Parts 1500-1517), and 32 CFR 989 (Environmental Impact Analysis Process).

This EA is based on information obtained during a site visit conducted in April 2002, personal interviews and correspondence with USAF personnel, and review of documents listed in the reference section of this report. This EA describes the existing environmental conditions; identifies reasonable alternatives; evaluates the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts that may result from the Proposed Action; and identifies measures to minimize potential adverse effects. For the purposes of this EA, the training activities of the 96 Air Base Wing and the 33 FW are assumed to represent the typical scenario of impacts. Therefore only these activities are discussed throughout the document. The extent of analysis required for future training activities would have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. A section detailing management requirements is included as Appendix A.

This EA examines a variety of resources related to the Proposed Action. Resources relevant to the Proposed Action are considered in detail; those that are not relevant have been eliminated from further discussion.

1.4.1 Resources Eliminated from Detailed Discussion

No impacts would occur to the following resources as a result of the Proposed Action, and therefore, the resources are not addressed in this EA:

- **Socioeconomics.** There would be no impacts to socioeconomic conditions, as there are no changes in personnel, economy, or housing.
- **Topography and Geology.** There would be no impacts to the topography or geology in the subject area where the ATSO Training Area is to be constructed and its subsequent use.
- **Cultural Resources.** In consultation with Eglin Cultural Resources personnel (Air Armament Center/Environmental Management Directorate, Cultural Resources Division [AAC/EMH]), it was determined that no cultural resources occur within the vicinity of the proposed training area. There is a north-south running creek south of the Project Area that is archaeologically sensitive, however. If any of the activities take place within 660 feet of the creek, a consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will be required.
- **Wetlands.** No wetlands occur within the vicinity of the Proposed Action.

Therefore, these resources are not addressed further in this EA.

1.4.2 Resources Discussed in Detail

The following resources will be discussed in detail in the EA as explained:

- **Land Use and Infrastructure.** Proposed training activities have the potential to be incompatible with surrounding land uses. The Proposed Action also has potential impacts to infrastructure due to the addition of utility services to the site.
- **Coastal Zone.** Proposed Action would occur in the designated coastal zone of the State of Florida.
- **Air Quality.** Construction activities, and smokes, propane cannons, and various simulators used during training have the potential to temporarily impact air quality. In addition, boilers and generators used at the training area have the potential to impact the air quality.
- **Noise.** Construction and training activities have the potential to temporarily increase noise levels.
- **Soils.** Construction and training activities have the potential to impact soils due to possible soil erosion.

- **Biological Resources.** Clearing of the bivouac area would cause impacts to biological resources, such as vegetation.
- **Water Resources.** Construction has the potential to impact water resources, including stormwater.
- **Environmental Contamination.** Proposed Action has the potential to generate waste or require the use of hazardous materials in construction and training activities. Installation Restoration Program (IRP) sites in the vicinity of the Proposed Action have the potential to impact or be impacted by the Proposed Action.
- **Environmental Justice.** Construction and training activities have the potential to impact minority or low-income families or children.
- **Cumulative Impacts.** Proposed Action has the potential to cause cumulative impacts, in conjunction with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future activities to noise, air quality, and land use.

2 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

This section describes the alternatives considered, including the Preferred Alternative. Section 2.1 describes the alternatives, including the Preferred Action Alternative and the No-Action Alternative. Section 2.2 summarizes the environmental consequences of each alternative.

2.1 Alternatives Considered for the EA

Alternatives considered in this EA are the Preferred Alternative and the No-Action Alternative. Another alternative considered for the ATSO Training Area was use of the former Ft. Rucker Recreation Area. The use of the former Ft. Rucker Recreation Area as a training area is addressed in another EA in progress (Eglin AFB 2002). The former Ft. Rucker Recreation Area can support some of the ATSO training, but not all (e.g., confidence chamber), and therefore was eliminated as an alternative.

2.1.1 Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative consists of construction of an ATSO Training Area on an unused parcel of land south of the 33 FW area (south of Nomad Way and Buildings 1324 and 1325). The Proposed Action has two components: (1) construction of facilities and infrastructure; and (2) training activities. These components are described in detail in Section 1.3.

2.1.2 No-Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, the gas mask confidence chamber on-site (see Figure 2-1) would still be used (without the addition of potable water). No other construction would occur under the No-Action Alternative. Limited training activities could occur under separate NEPA actions.



Figure 2-1. Photograph of the confidence chamber

2.2 Summary of Comparison of Alternatives

Table 2-1 summarizes and compares the Preferred Alternative and the No-Action Alternative regarding the relevant issues discussed in detail in this EA (as outlined in Section 1.4.2).

Table 2-1 Summary of Alternatives

Resources	Preferred Alternative	No-Action Alternative
Land Use and Infrastructure	Minor impacts to land use, minor increase in use of potable water and wastewater.	No impact anticipated.
Coastal Zone	No impact anticipated to the coastal zone.	No impact anticipated.
Air Quality	Minor, temporary increase in air emissions from construction and training.	No impact anticipated.
Noise	Minor, temporary increase in noise from construction and training. Noise environment is dominated by the airfield.	No impact anticipated.
Soils	Minor impacts anticipated to soils from construction and extension of utilities.	No impact anticipated.
Biological Resources	Minor impacts to the sandhill ecological association are anticipated from the partial clearing of the bivouac site.	No impact anticipated.
Water Resources	Appropriate on-site stormwater facilities would be required for proposed construction.	No impact anticipated.

Resources	Preferred Alternative	No-Action Alternative
Environmental Contamination	No impacts from the generation of solid and hazardous wastes are expected from the Proposed Action. IRP sites in the general vicinity would not be impacted by the Proposed Action	No impact anticipated.

This section describes the existing environment within the vicinity of the Proposed Action.

3.1 Land Use and Infrastructure

Eglin AFB is located in Northwest Florida, along the Gulf of Mexico, between Pensacola and Panama City, Florida. The main contiguous parcel of Eglin AFB contains approximately 464,000 acres and is located in Walton, Okaloosa, and Santa Rosa counties. Major landholders in the rural area off-base include the State of Florida (Blackwater River State Forest), private timber and farming concerns, the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) (particularly along the Yellow River), and other small landholders.

Land uses north and west of the proposed ATSO Training Area include base support (e.g., administration and personnel services) and the airfield. The southern portion of the site is forested (the proposed bivouac site), and south of the forested area is an open field used for police training. East of the site is a vacant area. There is an existing bicycle/pedestrian path that runs parallel to Nomad Way on the south side of the 33FW area. The path is a former railroad bed and is now asphalted for use by bicycles and pedestrians. Occasionally, light trucks and utility carts traverse the path as well.

Potable Water

The Main Base of Eglin AFB has a Standard Water Use Permit from NFWFMD (permit number S850079), which expires December 1, 2004. This permit authorizes Eglin AFB to withdraw an annual average of 2.04 million gallons of water per day (MGD) with a maximum rate not to exceed 3.18 MGD during a single day (NFWFMD 1984). Eglin AFB ensures that its operations, activities, projects, and programs are, to the maximum extent practicable, consistent with their consumptive use permit. Potable water is obtained from a system of 14 wells on base under this consumptive use permit. Monthly consumptive use for the entire base varies between seasons, with an average of 2.39 MGD used in July 2001, and an average of 0.73 MGD used in February 2001 (Barber 2001). There are not specific estimates for use within the areas of the proposed site. All water on base is on a looped system and specific buildings are not metered for use.

Wastewater

Eglin AFB is permitted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to operate five wastewater treatment plants. The Plew Plant has a 1.5 MGD capacity, serves the Air Combat Command Area and Plew Housing area, and would serve the Project Area. The Main Base Plant has a capacity of 1.0 MGD and serves the remainder of the main base area. The Plew Plant and Main Base plants both discharge treated effluent to the same 209-acre spray irrigation field.

All water on base is on a looped system and specific buildings are not metered for use. Records show an average of 0.672 MGD for February 2001 and an average of 0.823 MGD for July 2001 at the Plew Plant, well below capacity (Brown 2002).

3.2 Coastal Zone Management

Eglin AFB is located within the State of Florida's designated coastal zone. The Florida Coastal Management Program (FCMP), the State of Florida's federally approved management program, was approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in 1981. The FCMP is a compilation of 23 Florida statutes that are administered by 11 state agencies and four of the five state water management districts. It is designed to ensure the wise use and protection of the state's water, cultural, historic, and biological resources; to minimize the state's vulnerability to coastal hazards; to ensure compliance with the state's growth management laws; to protect the state's transportation system; and to protect the state's proprietary interest as the owner of sovereign submerged lands. The USAF ensures that its operations, activities, projects, and programs with the potential to affect coastal uses or resources, are consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the FCMP. Consistency with the statutes constitutes consistency with the FCMP.

3.3 Air Quality

The Clean Air Act (CAA), the primary federal statute governing the control of air pollution, designates six criteria pollutants for which National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) have been established to protect public health and welfare. The criteria pollutants are respirable particulate matter (PM₁₀), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), lead (Pb), and ozone (O₃). The State of Florida has adopted the NAAQS into its air quality regulations. For SO₂, the ambient standards (Chapter 62-204.240, F.A.C.) are more strict in Florida for the 24-hour and annual concentrations (0.1 parts per million [ppm] and 0.02 ppm, respectively).

The CAA requires state or local air quality control agencies to adopt State Implementation Plans

(SIPs) that prescribe measures to both eliminate and reduce the severity and number of NAAQS violations and to achieve attainment of these standards. Areas that exceed the NAAQS for one or more criteria pollutants are designated as nonattainment for the pollutant(s) exceeding the NAAQS. Eglin AFB is located within the Mobile-Pensacola-Panama City-Southern Mississippi Air Quality Control Region (AQCR 005). The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) classifies this region as in attainment for all six NAAQS. After a judgement by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals (March 27, 2002), the primary and secondary standards for O₃ and PM₁₀ have been updated to the EPA's 1997 standards (O₃ standards were changed from the 1-hour standard of 0.12 ppm to the 8-hour standard of 0.08 ppm) (USEPA 2002). With these changes in thresholds for O₃ and PM₁₀, one or more counties in northwest Florida could be designated as non-attainment areas for these pollutants. This could potentially impact Eglin AFB, if any of the counties in which the base is located (Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, or Walton) become non-attainment areas.

O₃ is the criteria pollutant with which this region has had the most problems (primarily due to nitrogen oxides [NO_x]) (Allen 2001). NO_x are strong oxidizing agents and play a major role in the atmospheric reactions with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that produce O₃. Under the 1990 CAA Amendments (42 U.S.C. 7476[c]), federal actions are required to conform to applicable SIPs. The Florida SIP meets the criteria and procedures for approval presented in 40 CFR, Part 52 (Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans), Section 520, Subpart K – Florida (State of Florida Air Implementation Plan). The criteria and procedures used to demonstrate conformity are explained in the General Conformity Rule, which includes 40 CFR Part 51 (Requirements for Preparation, Adoption, and Submittal of Implementation Plans) and Part 93 (Determining Conformity of Federal Actions to State or Federal Implementation Plans). Currently, regulations for implementing this rule have only been promulgated for nonattainment areas and maintenance areas (maintenance areas are those areas once designated as non-attainment, reclassified as attainment, and under a maintenance plan to maintain the current attainment status). Therefore, federal actions in the Mobile-Pensacola-Panama City-Southern Mississippi air quality control region are currently exempt from the General Conformity rule.

Major sources of air emissions, such as Eglin AFB, are required to have a Title V operating permit. Air pollutant emissions at Eglin AFB are primarily generated from external combustion, fire training, internal combustion, jet engine testing, and open burn/open detonation of munitions. These emissions had the largest impact on criteria pollutant emissions, with the exception of PM₁₀. The largest source of particulate matter emissions was Eglin AFB's power plant cooling tower source category. Primary contributors to VOCs and hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) were fuel dispensing and general chemical use. Emissions sources having the greatest impact on ozone depleting substances (ODSs) were degreasing, general chemical use, and refrigeration (USAF 2002b). Because Eglin AFB exceeded the 32,000-gallon fuel limit in 2001 for generators,

Florida Department of Environmental Policy (FDEP) made generator usage (as a whole) a regulated source in a revised Title V permit. Therefore, the amount of criteria pollutant emissions from all generators at Eglin AFB must be reported to FDEP. The air emissions inventory for stationary sources of PM₁₀, CO, sulfur oxides (SO_x), NO_x, Pb, VOCs, HAPs, and ODSs for 2000 is summarized in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1. Stationary Source Air Emissions Inventory Summary, Eglin AFB, 2000

Pollutant	Emissions (Tons)
PM ₁₀	114.6
CO	95.4
SO _x	17.0
NO _x	111.7
Pb	0.03
VOCs	105.7
HAPs	12.6
ODSs	4.0
Total	461.03

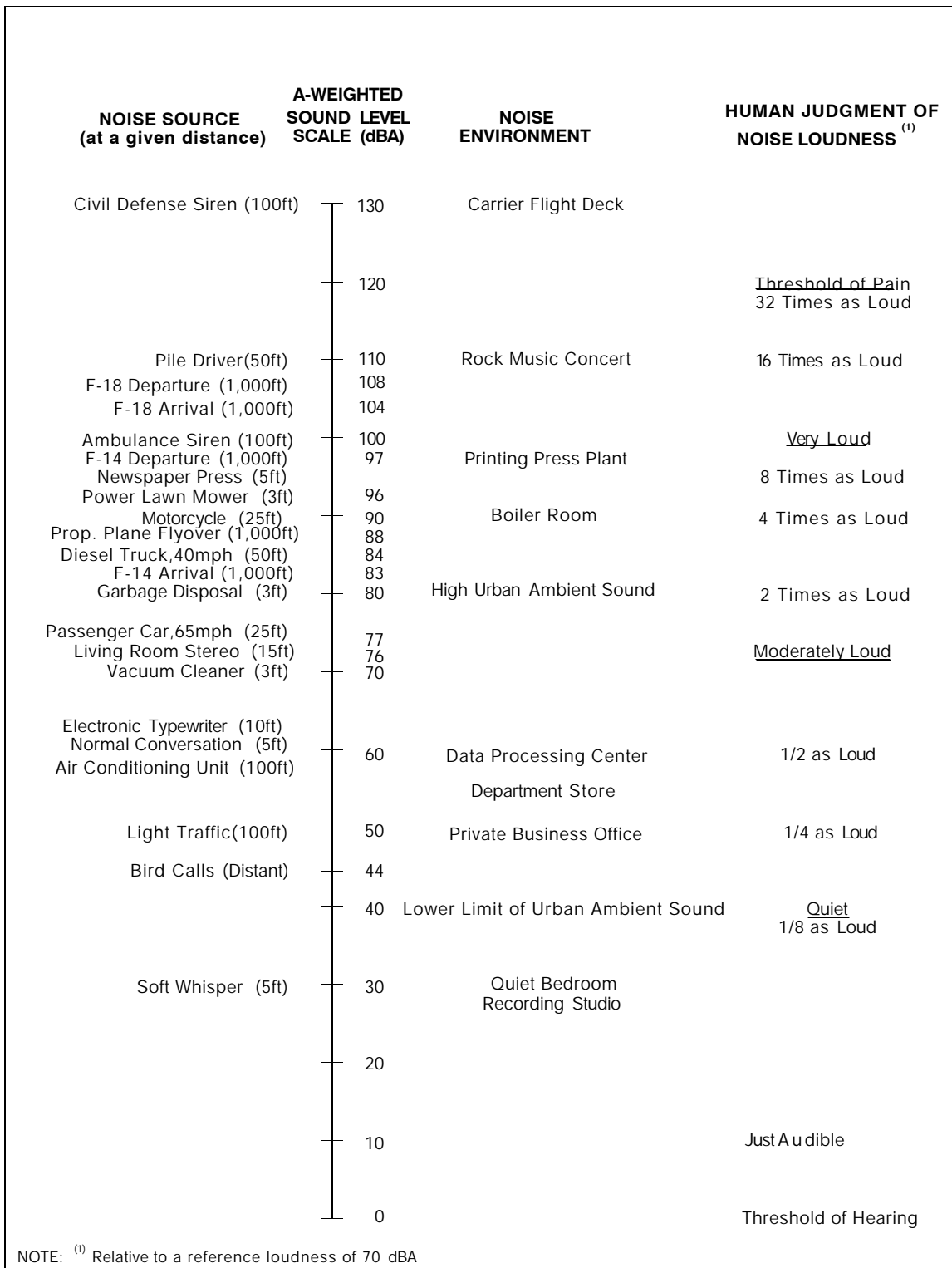
Source: USAF 2002b

3.4 Noise

Sound is the result of a sound source inducing vibration in the air. The measurement of sound involves three basic physical characteristics: intensity, frequency, and duration. Intensity is a measure of the acoustic energy of the sound vibrations and is expressed in terms of sound pressure. Sound frequency is the number of times per second the air vibrates or oscillates. Low-frequency sounds are characterized by rumbles or roars; high-frequency sounds are characterized by sirens or screeches. Duration addresses the temporal nature of the sound pattern. Continuous sounds are those produced for relatively long periods, such as engine maintenance (run-ups). Intermittent sounds are those which are produced for short periods such as aircraft takeoffs and landings, or single gunshot events. Examples of several different noise sources and environments can be found in Figure 3-1.

Noise at Eglin AFB comes from a wide variety of sources, including general traffic from military and civilian aircraft, military aircraft on low-level or supersonic missions, rocket and missile launches, and explosions from munitions, weapons testing, or training.

In the vicinity of the proposed ATSO Training Area, noise sources are primarily aircraft operations due to its proximity to the airfield.



SOURCE: O gden1992;WyleLabs1997.

Figure 3-1 SOUND LEVELS OF TYPICAL NOISE SOURCES AND NOISE ENVIRONMENTS

3.5 Soils

The Eglin main base area is between 5 and 15 feet above sea level, located close to Choctawhatchee Bay and Boggy Bayou. The majority of Northwest Florida, including Eglin AFB, is located in the Southern Pine Hills District physiographic region. This district is part of the Gulf Coastal Plain Section of the Coastal Plain Province and is characterized by thick clastic sediments. Northern, high elevations contain sand, gravel, silt, and clay from stream-formed alluvial plains, intermediate elevations have ridges with coastal sediments, and low elevations near the coast have historical barrier island and lagoon characteristics.

Soil orders found in the Eglin AFB area are mostly Entisols and Spodosols. Entisols are located in well-drained thick sands and are characterized by sandhill and sand pine scrub ecosystems. Spodosols are poorly drained sandy soils with dark subsoil layers and are characterized by flatwoods and wet to dry prairies with some cypress domes and ponds (Brown *et al.* 1990).

The soil in the area of the Proposed Action is Lakeland sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes. This soil is excessively well drained and normally found on the ridge tops of uplands. Sand is the primary soil texture throughout the profile and the water table tends to be below 72 inches. Organic matter and natural fertility is low, while permeability is high. Vegetation in Lakeland sand areas consists of longleaf and slash pine, turkey oak, and blackjack oak. Bahia and bermuda grasses also thrive in these areas well. This soil has a high potential for roads and streets, dwellings without basements, and low commercial buildings (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] 1995).

3.6 Biological Resources

Land areas at Eglin AFB are home to diverse biological resources, including several sensitive species, habitats, and wetlands. Eglin AFB uses a classification system that recognizes ecological associations developed from floral, faunal, and geophysical characteristics. These ecological associations are described in the *Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP), Eglin AFB* (USAF 2002c) and the *Environmental Baseline Study Resource Appendices* (USAF 1995). Five ecological associations are present on Eglin AFB: sandhill, flatwoods, grassland/scrubland, wetlands/riparian, and barrier island.

The proposed training area is in the sandhill ecological association. This is the largest ecological association on Eglin AFB, covering 78 percent of the reservation. The sandhill ecological association consists of rolling sandhills from 20 to 295 feet above mean sea level. Soils are normally excessively well drained, strongly acidic, and low in natural fertility and organic matter. Ecosystems included in the sandhill ecological association are sandhill ecosystems, sand pine ecosystems, and the pine/mixed hardwood ecosystems. The

proposed training area consists of a pine/mixed hardwood ecosystem. Vegetation species within sandhills and on-site include long-leaf pine, slash pine, live oak, turkey oak, bluejack, panic grasses, gopher apple, and bluestems. There are no threatened or endangered species known to exist on or around the project site.

3.7 Water Resources

3.7.1 Surface Water

Within the entire Eglin AFB reservation, there are many areas of open surface water, including rivers, streams, ponds, estuaries, and the Gulf of Mexico. Water bodies located in the vicinity of the main base area of Eglin AFB include Weekly Pond, Weekly Bayou, Boggy Bayou, and Post'l Lake. Choctawhatchee Bay is located south of the main base area. Garnier Creek and Toms Creek are also located to the north and west of the main base area. There are no water bodies in the vicinity of the proposed ATSO Training Area, but there is a north-south running creek to the south of the Project Area.

3.7.2 Storm Water

Eglin currently operates under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Modified Multi-Sector Generic stormwater permit issued by the FDEP. Construction activities on Eglin AFB are subject to Chapter 62-25, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) and NPDES General Construction permitting requirements. A Notice of Intent would need to be filed for the NPDES permit, and if construction occurs after March 2003, a Stormwater Construction Permit would also be required (disturbed area threshold limit under NPDES regulations changing from 5 acres to 1 acre). Introduction of new impervious surfaces may require FDEP permit(s) or design/construction of a swale in accordance with exemption criteria.

3.8 Environmental Contamination

The Air Armament Center (AAC)/Environmental Management Compliance (EMC) Division is responsible for waste management at Eglin AFB. Eglin AFB has developed and implemented: (1) comprehensive hazardous materials and hazardous waste management programs; (2) pollution prevention and waste minimization strategies; and (3) facility investigation and remediation programs.

There are two IRP sites identified within 1,000 feet of the proposed ATSO Training Area. AOC-32, located 850 feet from the training area, was an old oil-water separator that was removed, and the contaminated soil was also removed. The groundwater is being monitored because of contaminants that are above the FDEP maximum contaminant levels (MCLs). ST-101, located 250 feet from the training area, is a water tower that had lead-based paint in the soil underneath it; this soil has been removed.

Environmental Consequences and Mitigative Action

This section discusses potential environmental impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative and the No-Action Alternative, and, where appropriate, mitigative actions. Under the No-Action Alternative, limited use of the gas mask confidence chamber on-site would occur, but no other improvements or training activities would occur.

4.1 Land Use and Infrastructure

Preferred Alternative

Minor impacts to land use are anticipated from the Preferred Alternative. The ATSO area conforms with the Eglin General Plan, but would be a variance to the surrounding Administrative Land Use. Future Land Use Map (FLUM) amendments would need to be processed accordingly (Sanchez 2002).

Construction of the on-site facilities would create impervious surface from the classroom building (approximately 3,000 SF), bathhouse (SF to be determined), 50-car paved parking lot (210 feet by 80 feet) and service drive (500 feet by 22 feet). The proposed road would be a gravel, 15-ft. road, constructed parallel to the existing bicycle/pedestrian path behind the 33 FW area. An alternative to construction of a new road would be to extend the bicycle/pedestrian path to accommodate vehicular traffic. Either way, the road would be closed to thru traffic, and would only be used during training exercises. The proposed road is compatible with the Eglin General Plan. These facilities would require an approved stormwater drainage plan and compliance with all necessary stormwater permits (as discussed in Section 4.7).

Training activities include the use of a propane cannon and smoke grenades. Noise and smoke impacts from training activities would have minor impacts to the adjacent buildings (used by 728 ACS, 33 FW, and Civil Engineering). It is anticipated that the noise from the propane cannon would not have significant impacts. Although the propane cannon would have loud, single event bursts, the noise environment of the area would be dominated by the airfield. It is also anticipated that smoke from the smoke grenades would dissipate quickly, and therefore would not cause significant impacts. These issues are discussed more in Section 4.3 and Section 4.4, respectively. Also, occupants of these buildings would have higher tolerance levels for disturbances, as they are the proponents for the training area.

As discussed in Section 3.1, both potable water and wastewater systems are currently operating below capacity. The proposed extension and use of these utilities for the ATSO Training Area would not adversely impact the operating capacities of either potable water or wastewater. Potable water would be used at the classroom and bathhouse facilities, as well as at the confidence chamber already on-site. Wastewater facilities would be connected to the classroom and bathhouse. Since the personnel proposed to use this site and these utilities are currently on base and use potable water/generate wastewater daily, the only additional usage would be from the eyewash and shower facilities. This usage would be minor in comparison to the available capacity. The proposed utilities would be extended from existing lines via underground lines to the bivouac area as a central point and then distributed. According to F.A.C. 62-604.700, a “Notice of Intent to Use General Permit for Wastewater Collection/Transmission System” must be submitted to FDEP at least 30 days prior to initiating construction. Until utilities are connected (Phase II), portalets, water supply trucks, and generators would be used on-site.

No-Action Alternative

No significant, adverse, short-term or long-term impacts to land use are anticipated from the No-Action Alternative. Use of the confidence chamber on-site would not impact land use; no utilities would be extended to the site.

4.2 Coastal Zone Management

Preferred Alternative

Eglin AFB lies within the State of Florida’s designated coastal zone. The Preferred Alternative includes development of an ATSO Training Area on-base. The USAF, in accordance with Section 307 (c) (1) of the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972 as amended, as the responsible party for the implementation of the Proposed Action, has determined that this action is consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of the FCMP.

No-Action Alternative

No significant, adverse, short-term or long-term impacts to the coastal zone are anticipated from the No-Action Alternative. Development of the ATSO Training Area and its subsequent use would not occur.

4.3 Air Quality

Preferred Alternative

Minor impacts to air quality would result from the Preferred Alternative. The CAA of 1970, 42 U.S.C. 7401 *et seq.* (amended 1977 and 1990), requires that EPA promulgate rules to ensure that federal actions conform to appropriate State Implementation Plans [Section 176(c)]. These rules for CAA general conformity determination are set forth in 40 CFR Parts 6, 51, and 93. These rules are applicable to nonattainment and maintenance areas. Because Eglin AFB is located in an attainment area, a conformity determination is not required for the proposed project.

Air emissions would be generated during construction and training. As a result of air pollutants emitted during construction and use of the proposed facilities and infrastructure, the proposed project would affect localized air quality in two ways: short-term impacts would occur with emissions from construction and use of generators for electrical supply (Phase I); and long term impacts would occur primarily associated with emissions from mobile sources, such as backup power generators. Increased levels of air pollutants emitted during training activities would be localized and temporary in nature.

Four types of short-term emissions would be anticipated: exhaust and crankcase emissions from the construction machinery/equipment; fugitive dust emitted from the disturbed ground during site clearing and construction; emissions from generators (Phase I); and emissions from training activities. Both gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles and machinery are expected to be used for construction activities. Pollutants emitted from gasoline-powered equipment (e.g., light trucks) are VOCs, CO, and NO_x. Pollutants emitted from diesel-powered vehicles or machinery are NO_x, SO_x, and particulates. Fugitive dust would be generated from the disturbed ground as it is cleared and traversed by trucks and machinery. Construction is minor, but Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be used to control fugitive dust during construction activities in accordance with Chapter 62-296 F.A.C. (Rule 62-296). Not all construction would occur at the same time, as this is a phased project. Emissions from generators must be reported to FDEP according to the revised Title V permit, and reporting would be coordinated with the Eglin AFB AAC/EMCE Air Quality Manager.

Devices proposed for use during training activities include a propane cannon, smoke grenades, and various other simulators for chemical warfare training. Propane cannons are currently used on the airfield to scare birds off the runways (to minimize bird strikes). These cannons use LP gas cylinders, also used for residential gas grills. Smoke grenades are small canisters containing two ounces of photoflash powder, that emit colored smoke for approximately 15 to 20 seconds. Because the smoke dissipates quickly, it is not anticipated to drift off-site. Proposed chemical warfare simulators, such as commercial insect killer, would be used in such a small quantity that air quality impacts would be negligible. These devices are currently used

for training and safety on Eglin AFB. The addition of the proposed use would not have significant, adverse impacts to the overall airshed. Air quality impacts would be localized, temporary, and minor.

Minor long-term impacts would be limited to (1) the intermittent usage of emergency generators that would be associated with the new classroom/bathroom facilities, and (2) use of the proposed gravel access road. These generators would operate only for short periods of time (during maintenance and loss of normal power) and, therefore, would have minimal impacts to air quality. The gravel road would only be used during training exercises. This limited use and the minor amount of dust stirred up from use would result in minimal impacts to air quality.

No-Action Alternative

No significant, adverse, short-term or long-term impacts to air quality would result from the No-Action Alternative. Tear gas would be used in the confidence chamber, but it would not be released outside the chamber.

4.4 Noise

Preferred Alternative

Minor impacts related to increased noise levels would occur as a result of the Preferred Alternative. During construction, an increase in noise levels associated with the operation of equipment and construction activities would occur. However, the increase in noise levels would be localized and temporary, lasting for the duration of construction.

The use of the propane cannon would have noise impacts. Occupied buildings are approximately 600 feet from the ATSO Training Area. The decibel (dB) level of commercial propane cannons ranges from 115 dB to 130 dB (at the source). The following analysis is based on the upper extent of 130 dB. This dB level would be the maximum emitted in the direction of the muzzle. Noise levels away from the muzzle would be less than 130 dB. According to noise attenuation calculations for point-source propagation, sound levels typically decrease by about six dB for every doubling of distance away from the noise. In addition, noise levels at different distances can also be affected by a number of factors other than just the distance from the noise source. Topographic features and structural barriers that absorb, reflect, or scatter sound waves can result in increased or decreased noise levels. Atmospheric conditions such as wind speed and direction, humidity levels, and temperatures can also affect the degree to which sound is attenuated over distance. However, by considering solely the linear distance from the source to the closest buildings (approximately 600 ft.), the noise levels at the buildings would be approximately 74 dB. Normally nighttime activities carry a 10 dB weighting, but it is not anticipated the buildings would be occupied from 2200 to 0700; therefore nighttime

activities would not be perceived as more intrusive than daytime activities in this case. Outdoor noise attenuation measures from the buildings themselves would decrease the dB level by 25 dB if the windows are closed. Therefore, the perceived noise level to anyone in the building would be 49 dB. Noise from the propane cannon would be 'impulse noise' (single, discrete events), and would occur infrequently (one to two times per training activity).

Another factor to be considered in the determination of noise impacts is the population to be disturbed. Certain variables, such as the perceived importance and value of the activity producing the noise, affect the response to/annoyance from noise. Because the closest buildings to be impacted are occupied by the proponents of the training area, their tolerance for this noise would generally be higher than a non-affiliated party.

Noise impacts to the nearby buildings could be attenuated by aiming the direction of the muzzle away from the buildings. Although the propane cannon would have loud, single event sound bursts, the site is in close proximity to the airfield, therefore existing aircraft activities play a significant part in the noise environment surrounding the site.

No-Action Alternative

No significant, adverse, short-term or long-term impacts related to increased noise levels would occur as a result of the No-Action Alternative. Use of the confidence chamber would not increase existing noise levels.

4.5 Soils

Preferred Alternative

Minor impacts to soils are anticipated from the construction of facilities and extension of utilities underground under the Preferred Alternative. Proper measures would be taken to minimize erosion in construction areas. To minimize impacts associated with this disturbance, appropriate measures would be taken to limit off-site sedimentation from wind and stormwater erosion. Such measures would include installation of silt fences and hay bale filters around the project perimeter during construction. Other BMPs would be utilized to minimize soil erosion as appropriate. This construction site is an open field, so minimal disturbance to soils would be expected.

No-Action Alternative

No significant, adverse, short-term or long-term impacts to soils are anticipated from the No-Action Alternative. Construction of facilities and utilities at the ATSO Training Area would not occur.

4.6 Biological Resources

Preferred Alternative

No significant, adverse, short-term or long-term impacts to biological resources are anticipated from the Preferred Alternative. The biological resources around the proposed construction site are limited. The Proposed Action would take place near the flight line and urbanized areas so the biological resources are already disturbed and low in abundance. Also, the access road is proposed in an already cleared and disturbed area. The sandhill ecological association would be disturbed by limited clearing for the bivouac area. The bivouac site is proposed to be approximately 60,000 SF, but the site would not be totally cleared. Native vegetation and habitat would be maintained at the bivouac site due to the nature of the facility and the need for training in a natural setting. Vegetation on-site consists of vegetation typical of the sandhill ecological association. This habitat is not rare within northwest Florida and impacts from habitat loss are expected to be minimal.

No federally or state listed species have been reported in the vicinity of the Proposed Action. This area contains potential habitat for the eastern indigo snake (federally and state listed threatened) and the gopher tortoise (state listed species of special concern) (Miller 2002). If any gopher tortoise burrows, gopher tortoise, or eastern indigo snakes are encountered during construction or training activities, activities will cease and Air Armament Center/Environmental Management Directorate, Stewardship Division, Natural Resources Branch (AAC/EMSN) will be notified immediately. Impacts to biological resources due to the Proposed Action are expected to be minor.

No-Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, construction of the ATSO Training Area and its subsequent usage would not occur. Therefore, there would be no impacts to biological resources.

4.7 Water Resources

Preferred Alternative

Surface Water

There are no water bodies on the construction site under the Preferred Alternative. However, there is a north-south running creek to the south of the Project Area. No impacts to surface water from the proposed construction would occur. Any potential impacts to surface water from the proposed construction would be prevented or minimized by use of BMPs and compliance with all required permits.

Storm Water

Eglin currently operates under an NPDES Modified Multi-Sector Generic stormwater permit issued by FDEP, which covers stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff from the proposed construction of new facilities would have to be maintained on-site in accordance with Chapter 62-25, F.A.C. either through a stormwater retention facility or swale (under the swale exemption). A permanent retention area must be constructed to treat the stormwater generated from increased impervious surface. Construction of the proposed gravel road or extension of the existing paved bicycle/pedestrian path would slightly increase the amounts of semi-pervious and impervious surfaces. Stormwater compliance would be incorporated into design of the road. The permit application and the final permit must be coordinated through Air Armament Center/Environmental Management Directorate, Compliance Division, Engineering Branch (AAC/EMCE). If the facilities would be under construction during, or constructed after, March 2003, a stormwater construction permit would be required (since the site is larger than one acre).

No-Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, construction of the ATSO Training Area and its subsequent usage would not occur. Therefore, there would be no impacts to water resources.

4.8 Environmental Contamination

Preferred Alternative

No significant, adverse, short-term or long-term impacts from the generation of solid waste, hazardous materials, or hazardous waste are anticipated from Preferred Alternative. Eglin AFB would track and report the amount of construction debris that is disposed from the proposed activities to Air Armament Center, Environmental Management Directorate, Compliance Division, Pollution Prevention Branch (AAC/EMCP). Solid waste from training activities would be handled by contractor-maintained dumpsters. Construction activities would involve the use of hazardous materials (paints, solvents, etc.), and these materials would be authorized in accordance with the Eglin AFB AAC/EMCP Hazardous Materials Management Program requirements. The hazardous waste that is generated by construction activities would be kept on-site and disposed of by AAC/EMC personnel.

Hazardous materials associated with the training activities would include use of commercial insect killer, photoflash powder from the smoke grenades, and propane for the propane cannon. These would be used in such small quantities that impacts are anticipated to be negligible.

There are two IRP sites within 1,000 feet of the proposed training area, as described in Section 3.8. These sites would not be impacted by construction or use of the proposed training area (Hickman 2002).

No-Action Alternative

No significant, adverse, short-term or long-term impacts from the generation of solid waste, hazardous materials, or hazardous waste are anticipated from the No-Action Alternative. No hazardous or solid waste would be generated from the use of the confidence chamber on-site; no other activities would occur.

4.9 Environmental Justice/Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks

In accordance with Executive Order 12898, dated February 11, 1994, the potential for disproportionately high adverse human health or environmental effects on minority or low-income populations has been assessed for the Proposed Action. Neither construction nor training activities would cause adverse human health or environmental effects on minority or low-income populations. All activities would occur on-base, with no potential impacts off-base.

Additionally, Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks, mandates that federal agencies identify and assess environmental health and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children as a result of the implementation of Federal policies, programs, activities and standards (63 Federal Register 19883-19888). The Proposed Action would not impact schools, housing areas, or gathering places of children. Neither construction nor training activities would cause adverse environmental health and safety impacts. Therefore, there would be no short- or long-term impacts on the health and safety of children.

4.10 Mitigation Measures

No significant, adverse, short-term or long-term impacts to environmental or socioeconomic resources are anticipated from the Proposed Action. Therefore, no mitigation measures are proposed.

4.11 Cumulative Impacts

CEQ regulations for implementing NEPA define cumulative impacts as the impact on the environment from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what other agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such actions. Two new facilities are proposed for construction near the flight line, a test and evaluation operations facility, and a command and control test operations center. It is not anticipated that the development of this new training area would have a significant, adverse cumulative impact in conjunction with the construction of these two facilities. In addition to the proposed ATSO Training Area, another similar training area is proposed at the former Ft. Rucker Recreation Area. This training would involve use of blank ammunition, ground burst simulators, and smoke grenades. This training would also have minor impacts to land use, noise, and air quality. The Proposed Action would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact on these resources. These two training areas are not in close proximity to each other, nor would they necessarily be used for training at the same time.

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David Crawley	Biologist	1	Proposed Action; Alternatives; Affected Environment; Environmental Consequences
Raelynn Harlach	Graphics	8	Graphics
Christina Vaggi	Technical Editor	2	Technical Editing

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Management Requirements

Management Requirements

Land Use and Infrastructure

- ❑ Eglin AFB ensures that its operations, activities, projects, and programs are, to the maximum extent practicable, consistent with their consumptive use permit.
- ❑ According to F.A.C. 62-604.700, a “Notice of Intent to Use General Permit for Wastewater Collection/Transmission System” must be submitted to FDEP at least 30 days prior to initiating construction.
- ❑ Vehicular traffic would only be allowed on the proposed access road south of 33 FW during training exercises.

Air Quality

- ❑ Emissions from generators must be reported to FDEP according to the revised Title V permit, and reporting must be coordinated with the Eglin AFB AAC/EMCE Air Quality Manager.
- ❑ Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used to control fugitive dust during construction activities in accordance with Chapter 62-296 F.A.C. (Rule 62-296).

Soils

- ❑ During construction activities BMPs must be implemented to minimize soil erosion as appropriate.

Biological Resources

- ❑ If any gopher tortoise burrows, gopher tortoise, or eastern indigo snakes are encountered during construction or training activities, activities must cease and AAC/EMSN notified immediately.

Water Resources

Surface Water

- ❑ During construction, BMPs must be implemented in compliance with all permits.

Storm Water

- ❑ A stormwater retention area must be designed and constructed on-site in compliance with Chapter 62-25, F.A.C. unless the project falls under the swale exemption.
- ❑ If the facility would be under construction during, or constructed after, March 2003, a FDEP NPDES Stormwater Construction permit would be required.

Environmental Contamination

- ❑ All entities on Eglin AFB must follow the AAC 32-5 Hazardous Waste Management Plan and AAC Plan 32-6 Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning and Response.
- ❑ Solid waste from training activities must be disposed of in contractor-maintained dumpsters.
- ❑ Use of hazardous materials (paints, solvents, etc.), during construction need to be authorized in accordance with the Eglin AFB AAC/EMCP Hazardous Materials Management Program requirements.

- All disposal of solid and hazardous wastes must be coordinated with AAC/EMCP.

Miscellaneous

- Any recyclables such as cardboard munitions storage containers, scrap metal, etc. would be recycled on base.