

**FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE
EDGEMEADE READINESS CENTER FACILITY
AND
THE TACTICAL UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEM
STORAGE AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY
IDAHO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
ELMORE COUNTY, IDAHO**



Department of the Army
Idaho Army National Guard
3489 W. Harvard Street
Boise, Idaho 83705

July 2010

Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE JUL 2010		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2010 to 00-00-2010	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Final Environmental Assessment for Construction and Operation of the Edgemaede Readiness Center and Tactical Unmanned Aerial System Storage and Maintenance Facility Idaho Army National Guard Elmore County, Idaho				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) North Wind, Inc.,1425 Higham Street,Idaho Falls,ID,83402				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 99	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

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Prepared for:

Department of the Army
Idaho Army National Guard
3489 W. Harvard Street
Boise, Idaho 83705

Prepared by:

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Idaho Falls, Idaho
83402

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND SIGNATURE PAGE

LEAD AGENCY: Idaho Army National Guard, Boise, Idaho

COOPERATING AGENCIES: None

TITLE OF PROPOSED ACTION: Construction and Operation of the Edgemeade Readiness Center, Idaho Army National Guard

AFFECTED JURISDICTION: Elmore County, Idaho, U.S.A.

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DOCUMENT DESIGNATION: Environmental Assessment (EA)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG) proposes to construct a new modernized training facility to support the ongoing mission of the units assigned to the Edgemeade Readiness Center in Mountain Home, Idaho. Current facilities at the Edgemeade site have significant facility condition deficiencies and do not comply with current Army design standards and IDARNG requirements for meeting present and future operational challenges. Modernization of this training facility would create a facility that would meet standards and requirements described in Army National Guard Facilities Allowances (NG Pam 415-12; NGB 2007) and would support the ongoing mission of the units currently assigned to use the Edgemeade facility as a Readiness Center: Co C, 116 Brigade Special Troops Battalion (BSTB), Engineers (EN) by providing space to be used daily by two to three full-time staff and several days per month by approximately 108 IDARNG personnel. In addition, the Proposed Action also includes creation of a Tactical Unmanned Aerial System (TUAS) Storage and Maintenance Facility that would be used several days per month by approximately 29 IDARNG personnel from Co A, 116th BSTB. The new facility would provide the space required for the operation of the units listed above and permit all personnel to perform many necessary tasks to improve their readiness posture for completion of assigned readiness objectives.

The IDARNG originally proposed building a new Readiness Center at this site in 2007 and consultation with agencies was initiated at that time (see original correspondence in Appendix B). Due to a lack of funding, the project was put on hold until now. The new proposal is essentially the same as the proposal referenced in the 2007 correspondence (same location) with the addition of the TUAS Storage and Maintenance Facility. Construction of the TUAS facility is proposed for fiscal year 2011 while the second facility – the Readiness Center facility – would be constructed when IDARNG obtains necessary funding and program approval to construct and operate the facility. Although the timing of construction of the RC facility is not known, it is considered in this EA along with construction of the TUAS facility because they would be developed as one building (the

TUAS portion will be built first and then the Readiness Center portion will be built onto the TUAS building). If either part of the proposed action (the TUAS facility or the Readiness Center) is not constructed within three years of finalization of this document, IDARNG will determine the need to prepare an updated NEPA analysis in the form of a Supplemental EA or tiered Categorical Exclusion. ID ARNG will consult with NGB-ARE before determining whether additional NEPA analysis is necessary. This original EA would be utilized as the foundation for the updated analysis and supplemental analyses would focus on those issues that have changed.

This EA evaluates the individual and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the No Action alternative, and a second action alternative, with respect to a variety of criteria established by the Army National Guard. These include land use, air quality, noise, soils, water resources, biological resources including birds of prey, cultural resources, socioeconomics, environmental justice, transportation, visual resources, waste management, and safety. The evaluation performed as the work product of this EA concluded that there would be no significant impact, either initially or cumulatively, to the local environment or quality of life as a result of implementing the Proposed Action.

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ACRONYMS

$\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	micrograms per cubic meter
AAM	Annual Arithmetic Mean
ACM	Asbestos-containing material
AFB	Air Force Base
AMF	Army Modular Force
APE	Area of Potential Effect
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BLM Type 1	BLM species of concern that is a federally threatened, endangered, proposed or candidate species
BLM Type 2	BLM species of concern that is a rangewide/globally imperiled species experiencing significant declines throughout its range with a high likelihood of being listed in the foreseeable future due to its rarity and/or significant endangerment factors
BLM Type 3	BLM species of concern that is a regional/state imperiled species experiencing significant declines in its population or habitat and is in danger of regional or local extinctions in Idaho in the foreseeable future if factors contributing to its decline continues
BLM Type 5	BLM species that is on the Watch List; they are not considered Idaho BLM sensitive species but current population or habitat information suggests that species may warrant sensitive species status in the future.
BMP	Best Management Practice
BSTB	Brigade Special Troops Battalion
C	Federal Species of Concern or Candidate for Federal Listing on ESA
C3	Quantity at Level 3
CAA	Clean Air Act
CDC	Idaho Fish and Game Conservation Data Center
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	Carbon monoxide
CWA	Clean Water Act
Det	Detachment
DOD	Department of Defense
EA	Environmental Assessment
Eagle Act	Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EN	Engineer

EO	Executive Order
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPCRA	Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FNSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
HBCT	Heavy Brigade Combat Team
HVAC	Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
IDARNG	Idaho Army National Guard
IDEQ	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish and Game
IICEP	Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning
ISR	Installation Status Report
IWQ	Individual Weapons Qualification
LBP	Lead-based paint
LE	Federally Listed Endangered Species
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)
LT	Federally Listed Threatened Species
LTC	Lieutenant Colonel
MILCON	Military Construction
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Repatriation Act
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NCA	National Conservation Area
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NESHAP	National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants
NGB-ARE	National Guard Bureau Army Environmental Program Division
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NO ₂	Nitrogen dioxide
NOI	Notice of Intent
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O ₃	Ozone
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Association
Pb	Lead
PM ₁₀	Respirable particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter
PM _{2.5}	Respirable particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter
Ppb	parts per billion
ppm	parts per million

Q2	Quality at Level 2
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
RMP	Resource Management Plan
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SO ₂	Sulfur dioxide
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TSCA	Toxic Substances Control Act
TUAS	Tactical Unmanned Aerial System
UFC	Unified Facilities Criteria
U.S.	United States
USC	United States Code
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
XN	Experimental/Non-essential Population

1.0 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG) has prepared this environmental assessment (EA) to evaluate potential impacts associated with implementation of the Proposed Action and alternatives for the Edgemoade Readiness Center, including the No Action alternative (Figure 1). This EA complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [USC] 4321 *et seq.*), in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500), Army Regulation 200-1 (Environmental Protection and Enhancement), 32 CFR 651 (Environmental Effects of Army Actions [Army Regulation 200-2]), Army Regulation 200-3 (Natural Resources - Land, Forest and Wildlife Management), Army Regulation 200-1 (Cultural Resources Management), and other relevant federal, state, and military laws and regulations. The outline and content of the EA have been prepared in accordance with the guidelines provided in the *National Guard Bureau NEPA Handbook: Guidance on Preparing Environmental Documentation for Army National Guard Actions in Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NGB 2006).

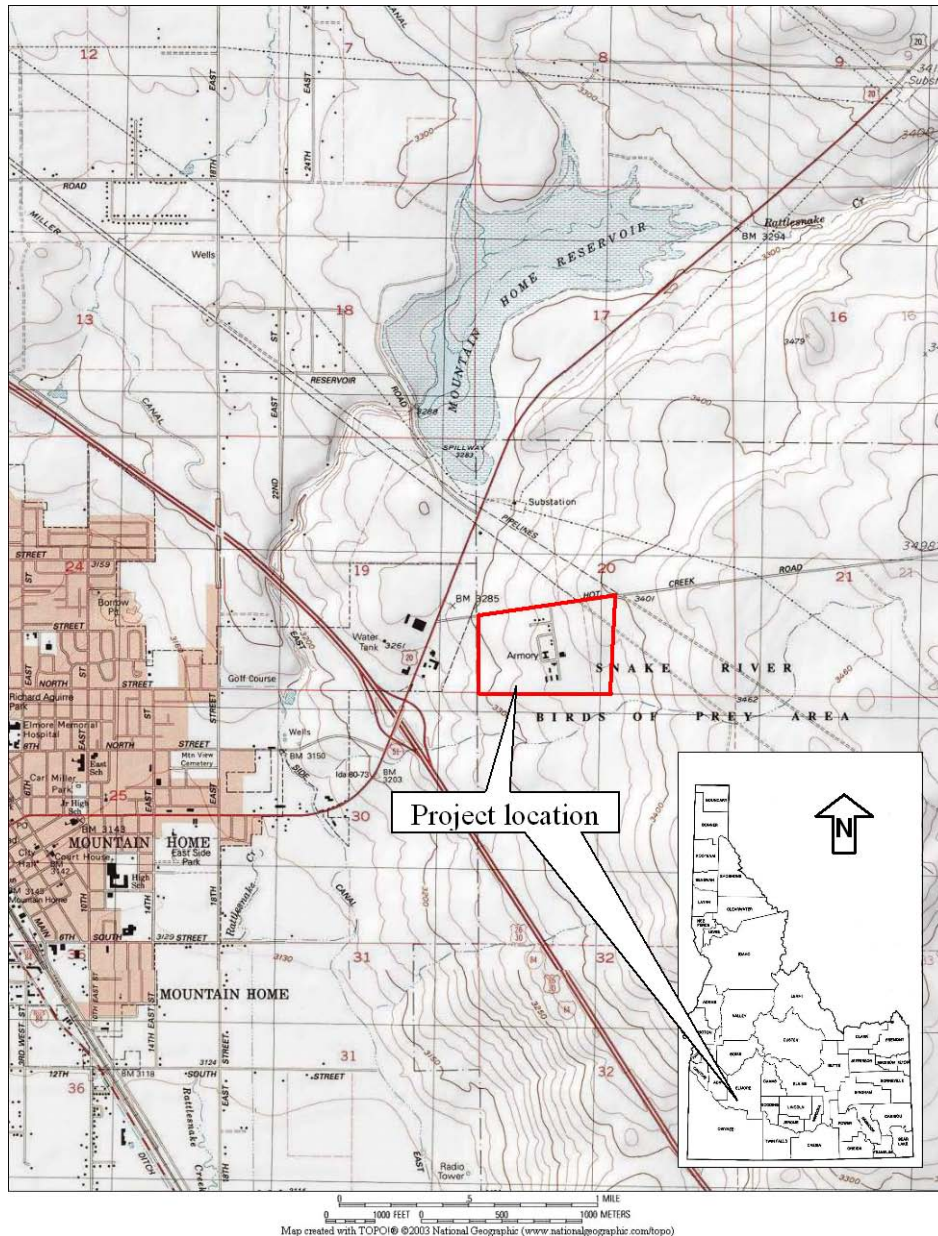
The IDARNG originally began preparation of this EA in 2007 and consultation with agencies was initiated at that time (see original correspondence in Appendix X). Due to a lack of funding, the project was put on hold until now. If either part of the proposed action (the TUAS facility or the Readiness Center) is not constructed within three years of finalization of this document, IDARNG will determine the need to prepare an updated NEPA analysis in the form of a Supplemental EA or tiered Categorical Exclusion. IDARNG will consult with National Guard Bureau Army Environmental Program Division (NGB-ARE) before determining whether additional NEPA analysis is necessary. This original EA would be utilized as the foundation for the updated analysis and supplemental analyses would focus on those issues that have changed.

For the Army National Guard, the applicable implementing regulation for NEPA is the Army directive, published at 32 CFR Part 651, Environmental Analysis of Army Actions. Specifically, 32 CFR Part 651 "...applies to actions of the Army and Army Reserve, to functions of the Army National Guard involving federal funding, and to functions for which the Army is the Department of Defense (DOD) executive agent" (32 CFR 651.1(e)).

The Army National Guard is one component of the Army (which consists of the Active Army, the Army National Guard, and the Army Reserves). The Guard is primarily composed of traditional Guardsmen – civilians who serve their country, state and community on a part-time basis (usually one weekend each month and two weeks during the summer). Each state, territory and the District of Columbia has its own National Guard, as provided for by the Constitution of the United States (U.S.). The Guard has a unique dual mission that consists of both federal and state roles. The Army National Guard, as a participant in the Total Army Force, has a federal mission to maintain properly trained and equipped units available for prompt mobilization for war, national emergency, or as otherwise needed. The IDARNG has a state mission to provide military units that are organized, equipped, and trained to function when necessary to protect life and property, and to preserve peace, order, and public safety, under competent orders from authorities of the State of Idaho.

The Army National Guard has more than 3,200 units located in more than 2,700 communities across the U.S. and its territories. Each state has a unique force structure and a varying number of units, personnel, readiness centers (i.e., armories) and training sites. Many cities and towns have their own readiness centers where the Guard conducts training and maintains equipment. The primary Guard training site in Idaho is at the Orchard Training Area 14 miles south of Boise, Idaho, which is used primarily for armored vehicle training such as firing of live ammunition, tank maneuvering, and small arms firing. Many of the management offices and full-time Guard staff in Idaho are stationed at Gowen Field in Boise.

Figure 1. General project location map.



1.1.1 Edgemeade

The current Edgemeade facility at Mountain Home provides the Guard with a presence in the community and additional training and equipment maintenance facilities. The distance between the Edgemeade site and Mountain Home Air Force Base (AFB) is approximately 14 miles and the distance to Orchard Training Area is approximately 20 miles (Figure 2). The distance from the Edgemeade site to Gowen Field is approximately 42 miles.

Figure 2. Location of Orchard Training Area and Mountain Home Air Force Base in relation to Mountain Home.



1.2 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The National Guard began leasing the Edgemeade site for use as an armory in 1990. The site was originally developed over 60 years ago and has had a number of different uses during that time. As a result, many of the facilities that are currently at the Edgemeade site are old, were designed for other purposes, and are not well-suited to the current mission of the IDARNG. The 116th Heavy Brigade Combat Team (HBCT) is in its 4th year of the Army Modular Force (AMF) implementation. Due to this realignment, a total of 108 soldiers from Co C, 116 Brigade Special Troops Battalion (BSTB) Engineers (EN) are assigned to the Edgemeade Readiness Center (Appendix A). The current Installation Status Report (ISR) ratings for the existing facilities at the Edgemeade Readiness Center, dated 03 May 2007, are Mission at C3 (poor) and Quality at Q2 (fair) which indicates significant facility condition deficiencies. The substandard nature of the facility poses several hardships to those assigned there.

Because the main facility is a converted gymnasium, it provides to the assigned units only a small administrative space and a drill hall, causing very cramped conditions and greatly reducing the effectiveness of classroom training. Also, with no kitchen, soldiers have to leave the site for lunch, thus reducing the time available for training. The current life cycle costs are high because the existing facilities are old and not well-insulated. Money saved on utilities could be spent toward training or equipment. Another subtle but significant mission readiness dimension that is influenced by the current condition is morale and unit perception. Throughout the state, all IDARNG armories are on a renovation cycle. Edgemoade is overdue for renovation. If this facility is not modernized, then the soldiers assigned to this unit may feel that their facility needs are not being met. An additional potential impact of this is on recruiting and retention in the area.

Further adding to the problem of insufficient space at the current site is a proposed change in the use of the facility. The IDARNG plans to assign the Tactical Unmanned Aerial Systems (TUAS) platoon from Co A, 116th BSTB to the Edgemoade Readiness Center. Although the TUAS platoon is not currently stationed at Edgemoade (they are currently stationed at 20690 Gravelly Lane, Wilder, ID), this is the only location in the State of Idaho where the TUAS platoon can be stationed at a site close enough to the Orchard Training Area that would allow them to launch and recover their small, unmanned aircraft in the Orchard Training Area and store and maintain the aircraft relatively close to the Orchard Training Area at the Edgemoade Facility. When constructed, this new facility would be within the Snake River Birds of Prey Air Space corridor which covers the nearby Orchard Training Area. The Orchard Training Area is the IDARNG's Individual Weapons Qualification (IWQ) and tank / maneuver range. Several military construction (MILCON) projects are underway to construct urban warfare training facilities in the Orchard Training Area (CH2M Hill 2008). By renovating the Readiness Center in Mountain Home, units training in the Orchard Training Area can achieve full spectrum operations exercise with interactions of TUAS.

The global war on terrorism has presented new challenges resulting in increased military requirements. Current facilities at the Edgemoade site do not comply with current Army design standards and IDARNG requirements for meeting these present and future operational challenges; specifically, the facilities do not meet the regulations and requirements implemented after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. In consideration of the existing conditions described above and new challenges presented by the global war on terrorism, modernized facilities at the Edgemoade site are needed to:

- Meet the evolving mission of the unit (i.e., preparing soldiers for the current and future threats of global operations).
- Comply with current design standards and requirements.
- Accommodate the larger number of soldiers to be trained there.

The proposed action to meet these needs would consist of constructing and operating facilities that would house offices as well as storage and maintenance rooms. The new building and parking lot would be a modernization and upgrade of existing facilities on an existing Idaho Army National Guard site. Modernization of this training facility would create a facility that would meet standards and requirements described in Army National Guard Facilities Allowances (NG Pam 415-12; NGB 2007). The new facility will provide the space required for the operation of the units listed above and will permit all personnel to perform many necessary tasks that will

improve their readiness posture for completion of combat objectives. By providing the necessary administration, indoor training, prep, and maintenance areas, and storage of equipment space, the units will be able to achieve the proficiency in required training and to accomplish the assigned readiness objectives.

Replacing the readiness center in Mountain Home would improve the quality of the training environment, the capabilities for full-spectrum operations, and allow for increased training support systems within the IDARNG. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to comply with requirements of the National Guard Bureau in order to better prepare for and ensure troop combat readiness and to maintain a high state of readiness for the unit stationed in the Mountain Home community, which includes having a properly trained and equipped Army National Guard force at this location.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE DOCUMENT

32 CFR 651 (Environmental Effects of Army Actions [formerly Army Regulation 200-2]) sets forth policy, responsibilities, and procedures for integrating environmental considerations into Army planning and decision making. The Army analyzes reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action and the No Action alternative in all EAs as fully as the Proposed Action alternative.

This EA discloses the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental, cultural, physical, and socioeconomic effects that would result from the Proposed Action of construction and operation of a new modernized training facility to support the ongoing mission of the units stationed at the Edgemoade Readiness Center in Mountain Home, Idaho. The location proposed for construction of the Edgemoade Readiness Center is part of a 150.09-acre parcel of Department of the Army land in southwest Elmore County, Idaho, that is currently functioning as an readiness center (Figure 1). The new facilities would be constructed within a currently unoccupied portion of a developed area at the site. Potential impacts associated with modernization and upgrade of existing facilities at an existing Idaho Army National Guard site and operation of the proposed facilities are evaluated against impacts associated with the No Action alternative of maintaining existing conditions (i.e., not modernizing and upgrading existing facilities) and a second action alternative, Alternative C – Demolition alternative. Under Alternative C, an existing unused building would be demolished and the new facilities would be built in its place rather than in an unoccupied location as proposed under the Proposed Action alternative.

The purpose of this EA is to facilitate a decision and to ensure that policies defined by NEPA and contained in Army regulations, the National Guard Bureau NEPA Handbook, and other guiding documents are adhered to. Every EA must lead to either a finding of no significant impact (FNSI), a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS), or no action on the proposal. If the decision maker determines that this project has significant impacts, as defined by 40 CFR 1508.27, then an EIS would be prepared for the project. If no significant impacts are identified, a FNSI would be signed approving the alternative selected.

Procedures specified in 32 CFR 651 and other Army regulations are essential to achieve and maintain compliance with NEPA and the CEQ Regulations. This EA has been prepared to comply with NEPA and to address the Proposed Action's compliance with other applicable environmental laws and regulations. The IDARNG or construction contractor for the project

would acquire any permits and licenses required for modernization of the Edgemeade Readiness Center. Environmental laws and regulations that have consultation/permitting requirements that would be followed include, but are not limited to: Historic Site Act of 1935; Clean Air Act of 1970 (CAA); Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA); National Historic Preservation Act of 1979 (NHPA), Native American Graves Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA), the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (Eagle Act); and Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1980.

The outline and content of the EA have been prepared in accordance with the guidelines provided in the National Guard Bureau NEPA Handbook; the EA is organized into the following nine sections:

- *Section 1 – Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action:* This section describes the purpose of and need for the project.
- *Section 2 – Description of the Proposed Action:* This section provides details about the Proposed Action alternative.
- *Section 3 – Alternatives Considered:* This section includes a description of alternatives that were considered for achieving the stated purpose, including alternatives that were eliminated from detailed study.
- *Section 4 – Affected Environment:* This section provides a description of the existing resources with the potential to be affected by the Proposed Action and alternatives.
- *Section 5 – Environmental Consequences:* This section describes the environmental effects of implementing the Proposed Action and alternatives. The analysis is organized by resource and considers direct and indirect effects. The effects of the No Action alternative provide a baseline for evaluation and comparison. Mitigations and actions that may be taken to reduce impacts to resources are discussed. This section also provides an analysis of other recent, ongoing, or reasonably foreseeable projects in the affected area with the potential to contribute to cumulative impacts to resources in the area or to result in an irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources.
- *Section 6 – Comparison of Alternatives and Conclusions:* The purpose of this section is to compare and contrast the environmental effects of the alternatives.
- *Section 7 – References:* This section provides bibliographical information for sources cited in the text of the EA.
- *Section 8 – List of Preparers:* This section lists those directly involved in the preparation of this EA.
- *Section 9 – Agencies and Individuals Consulted:* This section describes how the EA was made available to the public and lists agencies, interested groups, and members of the public that were consulted or whom provided comments during the EA development.

1.4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Consultation with agencies and Tribes originally occurred in 2007 during the preparation of the original draft EA. This consultation was re-initiated in 2010 after the project was revised to include the TUAS Facility as well. Both the original and new correspondence are described in Section 9.1 and included in Appendices B and C. As part of the consultation requirements, the

final EA analyzing the proposed modernization of the IDARNG Edgемеade Training Site will be made available for agency, tribal, and public review. Public comment on the EA will occur over a 30-day period with the dates listed in the public notices. The EA will be made available for viewing electronically on the IDARNG website at <http://emomil.state.id.us>. Printed copies of the EA will be made available for public review at the Boise Public Library, 715 S. Capital Blvd., Boise, ID; and the Mountain Home Public Library, 790 North, 10th East, Mountain Home, ID. Comments received during the public review period will be reviewed and addressed in the EA as applicable.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

Actions analyzed in detail in this EA are the Proposed Action alternative, the No Action alternative and Alternative C – Demolition alternative. Section 2 describes the Proposed Action alternative; the latter two alternatives are described in Section 3. The IDARNG originally proposed building a new Readiness Center at the Edgemade site in 2007. At that time, IDARNG personnel from various departments (e.g., mission, engineering, construction, environmental, etc.) worked together in an interdisciplinary nature to establish a plan for construction of the Edgemade Readiness Center. Field surveys and resource information of the proposed project area along with experience of IDARNG personnel were used to develop a list of resource concerns to be considered in the analysis. The planning effort considered existing facilities, distances from adjacent public and private land, and the presence of natural and cultural resources in selecting the most suitable design for new facilities at the site. Using information gained from that effort, the Proposed Action was designed to have a minimal impact on the environment. Due to a lack of funding, the project was put on hold until now. The new proposal presented below is essentially the same as the proposal considered in 2007 (see correspondence in Appendix B) with the addition of the TUAS Storage and Maintenance Facility.

2.1 ALTERNATIVE A: PROPOSED ACTION

The Proposed Action would consist of construction and operation of a Readiness Center training and maintenance facility and construction and use of a TUAS Storage and Maintenance Facility at the Edgemade Training Site. This action would represent a modernization and upgrade of existing facilities at an existing Idaho Army National Guard site. The location proposed for construction of the Edgemade Readiness Center and TUAS Storage and Maintenance Facility is part of a 150.09-acre parcel of Department of the Army land that was licensed (License No. DADCA67-3-90-56) to the State of Idaho on 13 February 1990 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for use by the Army National Guard. The Area of Potential Effects (APE) examined for this EA consists of a fenced 110-acre parcel of land east of U.S. Highway 20 and south of Hot Creek Road in southwest Elmore County, Idaho, near the east edge of Mountain Home (Figures 1, 3, and 4). The current Edgemade Readiness Center is on this parcel of land and has functioned as a National Guard readiness center since coming into use by the IDARNG.

Replacing the readiness center in Mountain Home would improve the quality of the training environment, the capabilities for full-spectrum operations, and allow for increased training support systems within the IDARNG. Construction of a new modernized training facility would create a facility that would support the ongoing mission of the unit currently assigned to use the Edgemade facility as a Readiness Center: Co C, 116 BSTB (EN) by providing space to be used daily by two to three full-time staff and several days per month by approximately 108 IDARNG personnel.

In addition the Proposed Action also includes creation of a TUAS Storage and Maintenance Facility that would house a newly assigned unit from Co A, 116 BSTB. This facility would be used several days per month by approximately 29 IDARNG personnel.

Figure 3. Overview of existing facilities at the Edgемеade Readiness Center.



Figure 4. Photograph of existing facilities at the Edgемеade Readiness Center (facing west).



Actual construction of the proposed facilities would be phased. Construction of the TUAS facility is proposed for fiscal year 2011 while the second facility would be constructed when IDARNG obtains necessary funding and program approval for the Readiness Center facility. Although the timing of construction of the RC facility is not known, it is considered in this EA along with construction of the TUAS facility because they would be developed as one building (the TUAS portion will be built first and then the Readiness Center portion will be built onto the TUAS building). If either part of the proposed action (the TUAS facility or the Readiness Center) is not constructed within three years of finalization of this document, IDARNG will determine the need to prepare an updated NEPA analysis in the form of a Supplemental EA or tiered Categorical Exclusion. ID ARNG will consult with NGB-ARE before determining whether additional NEPA analysis is necessary. This original EA would be utilized as the foundation for the updated analysis and supplemental analyses would focus on those issues that have changed.

The exact design specifications have not yet been finalized, but in addition to classroom, office, maintenance, and storage areas, the facilities would include vehicle parking areas, utilities (electric, water, sewer, natural gas), a flammable materials storage facility, and a trash collection site (dumpsters). Construction of the new facilities would comply with DOD Regulations for Buildings (Unified Facilities Criteria [UFC] 4-010-01; DOD 2007), and DOD Antiterrorism Standards (DOD Instruction Number 2000.16), which requires DOD components to adopt and adhere to common criteria and minimum construction standards to mitigate antiterrorism vulnerabilities and terrorist threats. Design would also meet the allowable space criteria and other general construction standards and requirements described in Army National Guard Facilities Allowances (NG Pam 415-12; NGB 2007).

What is now the Edgemeade Readiness Center began as a Job Corps Camp sometime between 1959 and 1964 and functioned as such through the 1960s. From 1970 to 1978, the Edgemeade Corporation operated the site as a corrections/educational facility. In 1983 the U.S. Army's White Sands Missile Facility in New Mexico operated a radar tracking station at this location. In 1990 the Army Corps of Engineers leased the site to the National Guard for an armory (Hartmans 2004). Many of the facilities that are currently at the Edgemeade site are old, were designed for other purposes, and are not well-suited to the current mission of the IDARNG. Seven buildings currently occupy the site; more detail on each of these buildings is provided below and in the cultural resources report prepared as part of this project (North Wind 2006). All of these structures were built around 1959 (Hartmans 2004).

- Three Quonset huts (identified with numbers affixed to their exterior walls as Buildings 15, 16, and 17), seen at the bottom of Figure 3 and on the left in Figure 4. These buildings are currently used as storage and maintenance facilities (Figure 5).
- A warehouse/gymnasium (Building 19), remodeled in 1996 for use as the armory. This large, multi-storied facility is the white square building in Figures 2 and 3 and is also shown in Figure 6.
- An I-shaped dormitory (Building 11), directly west of the warehouse/gymnasium. This facility (Figures 7 and 8) is currently not in use.
- A T-shaped classroom building (Building 13), used for training and maintenance (Figure 9).
- A rectangular building (Building 14), used for storage (Figure 10).

Figure 5. Quonset huts.**Figure 6.** Gymnasium/warehouse.

A number of temporary modular buildings and trailers once occupied the site north of the dormitory. However these have all been moved or destroyed and only their concrete pads and a few isolated landscaping trees remain. The remaining portions of the facility are largely undeveloped at this time, although there is extensive evidence of past military and civilian use including dirt roads and trails, dump sites, and a baseball diamond (Figures 3 and 4). An underground natural gas pipeline and utility access road pass through the northeast corner of the property (see Figure 3). No activities are planned in this area as part of the Proposed Action alternative or Alternative C; thus there would be no impacts to these utilities and the presence of the pipeline would not impact the Proposed Action or Alternative C.

Figure 7. Dormitory (front view).**Figure 8.** Dormitory (side view).

The Proposed Action has two main components: 1) construction of two new facilities, and 2) operation and use of the facilities. A description of each of these components is provided below. Most of the environmental impacts, described in Section 5, would occur during construction of the facility and be localized in extent.

Figure 9. Classroom building.



Figure 10. Storage building.



2.1.1 Construction Activity

The initial phase of construction involves construction of a new facility in a previously disturbed area in the southeast corner of the site (Figure 11); this facility would be used by the TUAS platoon Co A, 116th BSTB. Construction of the second facility to be used by CO A, 116 BSTB (EN) would be located adjacent to the first new facility in the same area of the site. Construction of the TUAS facility is proposed for fiscal year 2011 while the second facility (Readiness Center) would be constructed when IDARNG obtains necessary funding and program approval to construct and operate the Readiness Center facility.

Figure 11. Figure showing location of proposed new facilities.



Designs for the facilities discussed in this EA have not yet been completed; proposed drawings, site plans, and floor plans are contained in the Project Planning Document Charrette Edgemaede TUAS Facility (Project No. 160122, Final Report 8 February 2010) and the Project Planning Document Charrette for the Edgemaede Readiness Center (Project No. 160117, Final Report 1 April 2010). The anticipated combined footprint of the final building is 47,100 square feet (~8,100 square feet for the TUAS facility and ~39,000 square feet for the Readiness Center facility). The final layout of the facilities would be tailored to the specific needs of IDARNG at the time of actual construction. All facilities would be constructed in accordance with standard Army design criteria, security requirements, sustainable design requirements, and applicable accessibility guidelines. Design would meet the allowable space criteria for facilities supported by Federal contributions to the State, and other general construction standards, materials, space allowances, building circulation, and other requirements described in NG Pam 415-12, Army National Guard Facilities Allowances (NGB 2007).

Construction activities would disturb approximately 4 acres of land, all of which has already been disturbed by activity related to the site's history. Standard construction methods and best management practices (BMPs) would be employed. The materials and necessary equipment to construct the proposed buildings and associated structures would be transported to the site by tractor-trailer. Equipment and materials staging would occur within previously disturbed areas of the site. Necessary utilities (gas, electric, and water) would be routed from the existing infrastructure and a new septic system would be installed. Paved roadways and parking areas would be developed to and around the buildings as necessary to support the planned use.

This project has been coordinated with the installation physical security plan. All required physical security measures and all anti-terrorism/force protection measures are included. Physical security measures would be incorporated into the design, including maximum feasible standoff distances from roads, parking areas, and vehicle unloading areas, per U.S. DOD Minimum Anti-terrorism Standards for Buildings (UFC 4-010-01, DOD 2007). The support infrastructure for the facilities could also include outside lighting, exterior fire protection, and emergency power. Facilities constructed under this plan would be designed to achieve Silver Certification in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program by the United States Green Building Council, consistent with President Obama's initiative to increase the energy efficiency of federal buildings. Energy conserving features would be incorporated into the design, including energy management control systems and high efficiency motors; lighting; and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

Several methods would be employed to minimize the potential for new impacts from construction. All construction or soil disturbance activity associated with construction of the new facilities would occur within the Edgemaede property, and specifically within previously disturbed areas (see Figure 11). Specifications regarding temporary controls for dust, erosion, sediment and water pollution, as applicable, would be included in the construction documents. Any plans, standards, or practices required by local, state, or federal law or IDARNG regulation would be observed. Typical measures that would be taken, as applicable, during construction include the following:

- A storm water permit may be required and a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared by the construction contractor in accordance with any local, state, Federal, or Army requirements. The SWPPP would describe all methods used to

control storm water runoff and soil erosion during and following construction (EPA 2001). Temporary erosion and sedimentation control measures would be implemented as necessary.

- Heavy equipment and other construction vehicles would not be allowed in areas beyond the narrow limit of disturbance.
- Any property or structures, including those of adjacent landowners, removed or damaged during construction would be repaired or replaced, as specified in the construction contract.

Construction of the new Edgемеade Readiness Center would present common construction hazards and impacts. All construction work on the site would follow established guidelines and procedures to ensure that appropriate safety precautions are followed to prevent accidents and injuries.

2.1.2 Operations

Once constructed, the new facilities would provide training and maintenance facilities better suited to the changing needs of the IDARNG. Once operational, the site would serve as both a staging/training facility and as a maintenance and storage facility for the IDARNG. Levels of use of the facilities would be slightly greater than the current facilities experience. Minimal operational activities would occur at the site for most of the time; on a daily basis only a few (<10) IDARNG personnel would use the facility. These full-time staff currently perform various administrative and maintenance activities throughout the year but do not heavily impact the site. On several days out of each month, an IDARNG unit (approximately 108 personnel and an additional 29 personnel after construction of the TUAS facility) would utilize the site for various training activities. This use would not only include classroom instruction, but also could include transport of a number of vehicles to the site as well as training exercises on the grounds surrounding the facilities. The TUAS facility would be similar to a field maintenance shop and would only be used for storage of up to four drones and maintenance activities; no air launch or other TUAS operational activities would take place at the Edgемеade site.

Wastes typical of those generated by ordinary administrative offices and by a small mechanic shop would result and be managed in accordance with all applicable state, federal, local, and Army regulations. The proposed facility would be designed to maximize environmental protection and operated to avoid impacts to the surrounding environment.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

This section includes a description of the alternatives, in addition to the Proposed Action, considered in this analysis. NEPA and 32 CFR Part 651 require consideration of reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action. Other alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for analysis are also discussed. Only alternatives that would reasonably meet the defined need for the Proposed Action require detailed analysis. For this EA, these include the No Action alternative and Alternative C – Demolition alternative. As discussed in Section 1.2, *Purpose and Need*, the purpose of the Proposed Action is to comply with requirements of the IDARNG in order to meet current Department of the Army standards and to prepare for and ensure troop readiness. To fulfill this purpose, suitable and readily accessible facilities must be available for soldiers to be trained in current military techniques.

3.1 ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Field surveys and resource information for the proposed project area along with experience of IDARNG personnel were used to develop a list of resource concerns to be considered in the analysis. These include the following:

- Transportation
- Visual Resources
- Land Use
- Socioeconomics
- Environmental Justice
- Cultural Resources
- Biological Resources including Birds of Prey
- Noise
- Soils
- Water Resources
- Air Quality
- Waste Management
- Safety.

3.1.1 Screening Criteria

During the alternatives development phase, properties used by IDARNG in southwestern Idaho were evaluated as potential construction sites for the proposed facilities. The planning effort considered existing facilities, set back distance from adjacent public and private land, and the presence of natural and cultural resources in selecting the most suitable design and location for new facilities at the site. The general site evaluation process occurred prior to beginning preparation of this EA. IDARNG applied specific criteria, described below, to consider and choose potential sites for detailed analysis. Sites not meeting these criteria were eliminated from detailed analysis.

Site selection for the facility was based on meeting the following screening criteria.

- Proximity to Mountain Home to maintain a presence within the community and address recruiting/retention due to demographic shifts in the state
- Proximity to the Orchard entrance to Orchard Training Area
- Large enough to provide an adequate setback distance from adjacent properties in order to meet Anti-terrorism/Force Protection standards

- Sufficient size for expansion if training needs expand in the future
- Use would accommodate current military operations
- Convenient access to utility connections for operation of the proposed facility
- Direct access from existing roads to the proposed facility
- Use would not impact sensitive environmental concerns such as wetlands, surface waters, protected species or habitat because none exist in or near the project area
- Use would not impact historical, cultural, or sacred sites
- Economic feasibility.

Constructing the upgraded facilities at the existing site would fulfill all necessary siting criteria. Natural resource surveys were conducted in 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009, and no impacts to sensitive environmental concerns were identified. No slickspot peppergrass (*Lepidium papilliferum*), a federally listed threatened plant species (USFWS 2009), were observed during the surveys. IDARNG Natural Resources staff would continue to perform surveys annually for this species to determine the presence/absence of the species at this site with confidence. However, soil “slick spots” are necessary for *Lepidium papilliferum* to occupy a site, and no such slick spots occur in the area where the Proposed Action would take place (Dana Quinney, personal communication, 2010). A cultural resources survey of the site was completed in 2006 and it was determined that locating the facility at the existing site would not affect any culturally significant resources.

3.1.2 Alternatives Considered but not Carried Forward

In addition to the alternatives carried forward for analysis, two other alternatives were considered during the project planning process. These alternatives are briefly summarized below along with the rationale for why they were eliminated from further consideration.

3.1.2.1 Purchasing Land

Purchasing new land for construction of the Edgemeade Readiness Center was examined. To meet the requirement of maintaining a presence in Mountain Home, only locations proximate to that community were examined. Nearly all of the land surrounding Orchard Training Area as well as around the Mountain Home community is public land (i.e., land managed by the Bureau of Land Management [BLM] and/or within the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area [NCA]). The existing private land is either too expensive or otherwise not suitable for the planned activities (i.e., too small, too close to adjacent properties, potential negative resource impacts, etc.). The difficulty of obtaining funding for additional land purchases for military purposes in addition to not meeting all of the selection criteria, precluded selection of this alternative. Therefore this alternative was not carried forward for analysis.

3.1.2.2 Alternate Sites on Military Land

Constructing the Edgemeade Readiness Center on military lands at Mountain Home AFB or at the Orchard Training Area were examined. This alternative was dismissed because it did not meet all of the selection criteria. Mountain Home AFB is approximately 14 miles from the Edgemeade site and the Orchard Training Area is approximately 20 miles; relocating the readiness center to either of these locations would not main the National Guard presence within the community. Also, the air base is much farther than Edgemeade to the Orchard

access of Orchard Training Area and Range 3, from which the Shadow will be flown. Furthermore, the evolving mission of the current IDARNG unit does not correspond with the primary mission and directive for the land owned by the Air Force at Mountain Home AFB and therefore would not be compatible with the air base plans.

3.1.3 Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As discussed above, no practicable alternatives to using the existing site for the new readiness center were developed during planning. Therefore, in addition to examination of the No Action alternative, the other action alternative examined in this EA also proposes construction within the existing Edgemoade site.

3.1.3.1 Alternative B: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative the existing facilities would continue to be used without any of the proposed construction activities. Repairs and renovations would occur to the existing structures to keep them sound and in usable condition for daily operations, but no facilities would be constructed to meet the specific mission needs of the IDARNG.

This alternative provides a baseline condition against which the potential consequences of undertaking the action alternatives are evaluated in Section 5, *Environmental Consequences*, of the EA. The environmental consequences of implementing the No Action alternative would be identified as the consequences of maintaining the status quo – no change from existing conditions.

3.1.3.2 Alternative C: Demolition Alternative

Under Alternative C, the dormitory (Building 11), which is not being used, would be demolished and the new facilities would be built in its place. The new facilities would be built, as described in the Proposed Action alternative, but they would be constructed in the area currently occupied by the dormitory. All BMPs and other considerations described in the Proposed Action alternative would also apply to construction activities occurring under this alternative. Demolition of the building would likely involve some onsite crushing, loading debris onto trucks, and hauling material to the county landfill. As part of any demolition activities, a survey would need to be completed for any potential contaminated media (including asbestos-containing materials [ACM] and lead-based paint [LBP]). Any special handling and disposal would be in accordance with applicable laws and regulations including the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) and the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP). Other existing buildings would continue to be used for storage and as vehicle maintenance facilities.

3.1.4 Regulatory Compliance and Permit Requirements

Table 1 summarizes the requirements of major environmental laws and reviews other key federal environmental regulatory requirements applicable to the proposed project. These were taken into consideration in developing the alternatives for this proposal. The responsible agency with whom coordination may be required is provided in the table. No permits would be required for the No Action alternative.

Table 1. Potential Regulatory Requirements for the Action Alternatives.

Regulation	Requirement	Agency
National Environmental Policy Act	Requires federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision-making processes by considering the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions.	Council on Environmental Quality; Department of the Army
Clean Air Act	Requires federal agencies to determine whether their undertakings are in conformance with the applicable State Implementation Plan and demonstrate that their actions would not cause or contribute to a violation of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Clean Water Act	Prohibits “discharge of toxic pollutants in toxic amounts” to navigable waters of the United States. Section 313 requires all branches of the federal government with jurisdiction over properties or facilities engaged in any activity that might result in a discharge or runoff of pollutants to surface waters, to comply with federal, state, interstate, and local requirements. Provides guidelines and limitations for effluent discharges from point sources and gives authority for the EPA to implement the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permitting Program. Establishes regulations for issuing permits for stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity.	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Safe Drinking Water Act	Establishes the maximum contaminant levels, including maximum levels of radioactivity, that are allowed in public drinking water systems.	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Endangered Species Act	Requires consultation on impacts of project implementation on federally listed or proposed threatened and endangered species.	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act	Prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior, from "taking" bald eagles, including their parts, nests, or eggs.	Secretary of the Interior
National Historic Preservation Act	Requires federal agencies to consider potential impacts to cultural resources that are listed, nominated to, or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places; designated as a National Historic Landmark; or have traditional cultural properties.	Idaho State Historic Preservation Office
Resource Conservation and Recovery Act	Regulates treatment, storage, and/or disposal of hazardous and nonhazardous waste. The EPA regulations implementing RCRA define hazardous wastes and specify the transportation, handling, and waste management requirements of these wastes.	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act	Provides a statutory framework for the remediation of waste sites containing hazardous substances and, as amended by the <i>Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986</i> , an emergency response program in the event of a release (or threat of a release) of a hazardous substance to the environment. The act requires federal facilities with contaminated sites to	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

	undertake investigations, remediation, and natural resource restoration, as necessary.	
Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments	Requires consultation with tribal entities on federal projects.	U.S. Department of Defense
Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act	Requires federal agencies and institutions that receive federal funding to return Native American cultural items and human remains to their respective peoples.	Secretary of the Interior
Department of Defense American Indian and Alaskan Native Policy	Establishes the DOD's American Indian and Alaska Native Policy for interacting and working with federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native governments	U.S. Department of Defense
Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species	Requires consideration of actions to prevent the introduction and provide for the control of invasive species.	National Invasive Species Council (multiple agencies)
Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs	Requires federal agencies to cooperate with and consider state and local views.	Department of the Army
Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice	Requires federal agencies to consider potential disproportionate effects on minority and low-income populations.	Department of the Army
Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health and Safety Risks	Requires federal agencies to consider potential disproportionate health and safety risks to children.	Department of the Army
Public Law 103-64, Establishing the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area	Requires all land uses to be compatible with birds of prey, their prey, and the habitat needed for the birds and their prey.	Secretary of the Interior

4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This section describes the existing environmental and socioeconomic conditions of the potential area of impact for the Edgemeade Readiness Center project. This section provides information that should serve as a baseline from which to identify and evaluate any environmental and socioeconomic changes likely to result from implementation of the Proposed Action or alternatives. In compliance with NEPA, CEQ guidelines, 32 CFR 651, and Public Law 103-64, the description of the affected environment focuses on those resources and conditions potentially subject to any impacts. These include: transportation, visual resources, land use, socioeconomics, environmental justice, cultural resources, biological resources including birds of prey, noise, soils, water resources, air quality, waste management, and safety.

4.1 LOCATION DESCRIPTION

The Edgemeade Readiness Center is located in southwest Elmore County in southwestern Idaho, approximately 40 miles southeast of Boise and on the eastern edge of the City of Mountain Home (Figure 1). Mountain Home is a medium-sized town (population in U.S. 2000 census was 11,143 individuals) and is the county seat of Elmore County. The site is located at the gently sloping base of the foothills of the Bennett Hills area near the northern edge of the Snake River Plain. The project area has very moderate relief with a gentle slope to the west. Elevations range from 3,385 on the northeast corner to 3,300 on the western border. The Snake River, flowing east to west about 13 miles south of the project site, and Mountain Home Reservoir, about 0.8 mile north of the project area and formed by the impoundment of Rattlesnake Creek, are the nearest water features. The Owyhee Mountains lie approximately 45 miles to the southwest and the Danskin Mountains are 8 miles northeast of the project site.

The location of the proposed readiness center lies just within the northeast boundary of the Snake River Birds of Prey NCA. The NCA encompasses over 600,000 acres, including about 485,000 acres of public land, generally south of Interstate 84 in Elmore, Ada, and Owyhee Counties (see map at <http://www.birdsofprey.blm.gov/pdf/NCA-map.pdf>). The NCA stretches along 81 miles of the Snake River and provides 65,000 acres of critical nesting habitat and 420,000 acres of prey habitat to 16 species of nesting raptors and 8 other species of migrating or wintering raptors. The NCA was established in 1993 and, according to the NCA website, contains one of the densest concentrations of nesting birds of prey in North America with over 700 pairs of nesting raptors. More information about wildlife in the NCA and coordination/ consultation requirements is provided in Section 4.8. This NCA is managed by BLM under Public Law 103-64.

The project site is part of a 150.09-acre parcel of land that has been used by IDARNG since early 1990. The terrain in the area is rolling, open uplands dissected by seasonal drainage channels. Typical Snake River plain plant communities dominate the area, including sagebrush shrublands, seeded rangelands, and irrigated croplands. The site itself is primarily composed of disturbed ground surface and vegetation is dominated by weedy species, with scattered bunchgrasses, forbs, and dispersed shrub patches (see biological section below).

Average annual rainfall at Mountain Home is 9.98 inches, with over half of this falling as rain or snow during the non-growing season months of November to March (data from

Western Regional Climate Center at <http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/summary/climsmid.html>). Annual summer precipitation only averages around 1.26 inches. Average annual temperature is about 50.8°F, with summer highs around 89°F and winter lows around 22°F.

4.2 TRANSPORTATION

4.2.1 Definition of Resource

Existing roads and highways within the area provide links between Mountain Home and the surrounding region, including the project area.

4.2.2 Existing Conditions

The Edgemaede site is located northeast of Interstate 84 (Exit 95), east of U.S. Highway 20 (Sun Valley Highway), and south of Hot Creek Road in southwestern Elmore County, Idaho. Mountain Home is the nearest major population center in the region (population of 11,143 individuals) and Interstate 84 provides regional access to Boise, Idaho, 40 miles to the northwest and to Twin Falls, Idaho, 85 miles to the southeast. Mountain Home AFB, 14 miles southwest of the Edgemaede site, is home to approximately 8,900 individuals.

4.3 VISUAL RESOURCES

4.3.1 Definition of Resource

Visual resources are generally defined as the natural and man-made features that give a particular area its aesthetic quality. These features form the overall impression that an observer receives of an area or its landscape character. The significance of a change in visual character is influenced by social considerations, including public value placed on the resource, public awareness of the area, and general community concern for the viewscape associated with an area.

In undeveloped areas, landforms, water surfaces, and vegetation are the primary components that characterize a landscape. Manmade elements may also be visible. These may dominate the landscape or be relatively unnoticeable. Both manmade and natural features form the overall impression that an observer receives of an area or its landscape character. Attributes used to describe the visual resource value of an area include landscape character, perceived aesthetic value, and uniqueness.

4.3.2 Existing Conditions

The 110 acres that comprise the Edgemaede Readiness Center south of Hot Creek Road is largely undeveloped except for the seven extant buildings and some surrounding infrastructure (e.g., parking areas, fences, utility poles, etc.). Most of the development is concentrated in a 10-acre section near the center of the site, which is surrounded by seeded crested wheatgrass (*Agropyron cristatum*) and weedy vegetation typical of the area (Figure 3). The site is visible from Interstate 84, being within one-half mile of the highway at its closest point, and some 100 feet higher in elevation. There are numerous other commercial and industrial buildings both north and south of the interstate at Exit 95, and Interstate 84 passes just north of the City of Mountain Home.

Most of the lands surrounding the Edgemaede Readiness Center are public lands managed by the BLM. These areas are primarily composed of undeveloped basalt plains dominated by

annual grasses, forbs, and shrublands typical of the Snake River Plain. Common vegetation includes crested wheatgrass, rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus/Ericameria* species), sagebrush (*Artemisia* spp.), cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and other weeds. The Danskin Mountains, 8 miles northeast of the project site, dominate the view to the north. South of the interstate grasslands and shrublands are also prevalent, and irrigated croplands become increasingly abundant as proximity to the Snake River increases.

4.4 LAND USE

4.4.1 Definition of Resource

Land use is comprised of natural conditions or human-modified activities occurring at a particular location. Human-modified land-use categories include residential, commercial, industrial, transportation, communications and utilities, agricultural, institutional, recreational, and other developed use areas. Management plans and zoning subdivision regulations determine the type and extent of land use allowable in specific areas and are often intended to promote the land for the benefit of the public health, welfare, and safety.

4.4.2 Existing Conditions

The Edgemeade Readiness Center is currently used by the IDARNG as a training and maintenance facility. Lands to the west are mostly private and are used predominantly for commercial and residential purposes associated with the City of Mountain Home. Agricultural lands lie to the south of town and are increasingly common towards the Snake River. These croplands are primarily irrigated and used to grow wheat, alfalfa, and sugar beets. The majority of the land surrounding the Edgemeade site, and comprising Elmore County, is public land managed by the BLM for wildlife, grazing of domestic livestock, and assorted recreational uses.

4.5 SOCIOECONOMICS

4.5.1 Definition of Resource

The socioeconomic setting describes the basic attributes and resources associated with the activities of humans, such as population characteristics, economic assets, and economic activity. The region of influence for this project includes the county in which the proposed project would be located, Elmore County, Idaho, the City of Mountain Home, and Mountain Home AFB, which is approximately 14 miles southwest of the Edgemeade site.

4.5.2 Existing Conditions

Elmore County includes the cities of Mountain Home and Glenns Ferry, along with Mountain Home AFB. The population of Elmore County was estimated at 28,997 in 2008 (<http://www.census.gov>), a 37% increase from the 1990 population of 21,205. At that time, the majority (74.6%) of the people in Elmore County resided in the City of Mountain Home, Mountain Home AFB, or Glenns Ferry, a small town (1,611 individuals) southeast of Mountain Home. The population of the City of Mountain Home was estimated at 11,143 in 2000, representing a 40.8% increase in population since 1990. The 2000 population estimate for Mountain Home AFB was 8,894 and had increased by 49.8% since 1990.

The 1999 per capita income for Elmore County, the City of Mountain Home, and Mountain Home AFB was \$16,773, \$17,029, and \$17,671, respectively. At that time, the median household income for Elmore County, the City of Mountain Home, and Mountain Home AFB was \$35,256, \$37,307, and \$31,634, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau at <http://www.census.gov/>). In 2007, the median household income for Elmore County had increased to \$50,920; updated statistics were not available for the other areas.

Approximately 61% of the county's population 16 years and over were in the labor force in 2000. Of these, approximately 23.7% were members of the Armed Forces while the rest were civilian employees. The largest employers in Elmore County at that time were the U.S. Armed Forces (3,155 jobs) and the federal government (2,464 jobs). In the City of Mountain Home there were approximately 5,973 jobs with 1,124 jobs provided by the Armed Forces, 1,279 jobs provided by the federal government, and the remainder self-employed or in jobs provided by the private sector. At Mountain Home AFB, about 2,757 jobs existed with 1,839 provided by the Armed Forces, 336 provided by the federal government, and the remainder self-employed or in the private sector.

4.6 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

4.6.1 Definition of Resource

Executive Order (EO) 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, mandates federal agencies to address disproportionately high and adverse human health and/or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. The CEQ provides suggestions and guidance for addressing Environmental Justice issues under NEPA (CEQ 1997a). Accompanying EO 12898 was a Presidential Transmittal Memorandum that referenced existing federal statutes and regulations, including NEPA, to be used in conjunction with the EO. Communities sensitive to unjustly high health and environmental impacts are primarily areas in which over 50 percent of the population are minorities and low-income populations.

Minority populations include all persons identified by the U.S. Census of Population and Housing to be of Hispanic origin, regardless of race, and all persons not of Hispanic origin other than White (i.e., non-Hispanic persons who are Black, American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut, Asian or Pacific Islander, or other race). Low-income populations include persons living below the poverty level as reported in the 2000 Census of Population and Housing.

EO 13045, *Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks*, requires each federal agency to identify and assess environmental health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children. Agencies must ensure that their policies, programs, and activities address disproportionate environmental, health, or safety risks to children.

4.6.2 Existing Conditions

Of the total estimated population of Elmore County in 2008, 89.6% were reported as White. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, representing the largest minority group, comprised 13.6% of the population; the next largest minority groups were Black (4.2%), Asian (2.1%), and American Indian (1.3%). In 2000, the population of the City of Mountain Home was

87.9% White, 8.3% Hispanic, 2.6% Black, 1.7% Asian, and 0.9% American Indian. The population of Mountain Home AFB in 2000 was 83.2% White, 6.9% Black, 6.5% Hispanic, 2.5% Asian, and 0.8% American Indian.

In 1999, 8.8% of the population of Elmore County was below the poverty level and in 2007, 12% of the county's population was in that category. Elmore County's population in 2000 included 8,152 persons under the age of 18 (28.0%). The percent of the population below poverty level for the City of Mountain Home was 8.6% in 1999 and the number of individuals under the age of 18 was 3,298 or 29.6% of the population in 2000. The percent of the population below poverty level for Mountain Home AFB was 6.5% in 1999 and the number of individuals under the age of 18 was 2,134 or 24.0% of the population.

4.7 CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.7.1 Definition of Resource

For the purpose of this report, cultural resources are defined as historic properties as defined by the NHPA, cultural items as defined by the NAGPRA, archeological resources as defined by Archaeological Resources Protection Act, sacred sites as defined in EO 13007 to which access is afforded under American Indian Religious Freedom Act and collections and associated records as defined in 36 CFR 79. They include archeological resources (both prehistoric and historic), historic architectural resources, and traditional cultural properties. Only significant cultural resources (as defined in 36 CFR 60.4) are considered for potential adverse impacts from an action. Significant archeological and architectural resources are either eligible for listing or are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Significant traditional cultural properties are typically identified to federal agencies by Native American tribes or other groups, and may be eligible for the NRHP. The IDARNG consults with the State Historic Preservation Officer and all federally recognized Tribal Historic Preservation Officers with expressed interest in IDARNG proposed project areas.

On 21 November 1999, the DOD promulgated its American Indian and Alaska Native Policy (within DOD 14710.02), which emphasizes the importance of respecting and consulting with tribal governments on a government-to-government basis. This policy established guidance for interacting and working with federally-recognized American Indian and Alaska Native governments. These principles are based on tribal input, federal policy, treaties, and federal statutes. The DOD policy supports tribal self-governance and government-to-government relations between the federal government and tribes. The Policy requires an assessment, through consultation, of the effect of proposed DOD actions that may have the potential to significantly affect protected tribal resources, tribal rights, and Indian lands before decisions are made by the services. IDARNG conducts Native American consultation regarding each project to identify any tribal concerns.

4.7.2 Existing Conditions

Several comprehensive overviews of prehistoric life in southwestern Idaho (e.g., Gehr et al. 1982) provide the important context with which to evaluate cultural properties that may be present on the site. On the nearby Snake River Birds of Prey NCA, over 1,180 cultural properties have been recorded, representing a variety of prehistoric sites, historic sites, and multi-component historic/prehistoric sites. The Great Basin, Plains, and Columbia Plateau cultures influenced the Native American inhabitants who lived within the southwestern Idaho

region. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation and the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation continue to maintain an active interest in the activities that occur in the region.

The IDARNG consults with Tribes in compliance with DOD Instruction 4710.02, *Interactions with Federally Recognized Tribes*. To maintain an open communication and solicit information from tribal representatives the, IDARNG developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes. This MOU established regular coordination meetings called the Wings and Roots Native American Campfire program. IDARNG personnel and tribal representatives participate in these meetings to discuss issues as they emerge. Correspondence received during the process is included in Appendix C.

The most common prehistoric sites in the region are lithic scatters, which may contain stone tools such as knives, arrows, spear points, and scrapers. More often, however, a lithic scatter may simply contain flakes of stone debris left during the process of making or sharpening stone tools. The most common types of historic cultural resources in the region, from the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century, include cattle and sheep camps, homesteads and cabins, mining camp remnants and mine tailings, town sites, ditches, transportation road networks, trails, and historic trash dumps or scatters. Historical overviews and summaries may be found in several cultural resource reports and books (e.g., Plew 2003).

A search of the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) files in Boise, Idaho, in August 2006 revealed nine projects with reports that have been conducted within one-half mile of the Edgemeade Readiness Center (North Wind 2006). Only one site, a historic refuse scatter, was recorded in the area as a result of these projects. The seven standing buildings at the Edgemeade site were surveyed in 2003. Three of the structures, identified as Buildings 15, 16, and 17, were recommended by the IDARNG and the SHPO as eligible for listing on the NRHP (Hartmans 2004).

On 25 August 2006, archaeologists from North Wind, Inc. conducted a Class III inventory of the APE. Within the 100-acre APE located in the fenced Readiness Center compound south of Hot Creek Road, archaeologists recorded four historic refuse scatters and one prehistoric isolated artifact (a projectile point fragment). As a result of this survey, all documents regarding the cultural resource inventory were submitted to Idaho SHPO including documentation agreeing with the earlier determination of NRHP eligibility for the three Quonset huts, Buildings 15, 16, and 17. Appendix B of this EA contains a copy of the consultation letter sent to the SHPO in 2007 as well as the updated letter sent in 2010, and Appendix C contains copies of their responses to both of those letters stating agreement with the eligibility recommendation and concurrence with the no effect determination for historic properties. As a result, no actions are proposed that would impact these sites.

4.8 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4.8.1 Definition of Resource

Biological resources include native or naturalized plants and animals, and the habitats in which they occur. This section describes plant and animal species or vegetation types that typify the biological resources that occur in or near the vicinity of the Edgemeade Readiness Center and focuses on species protected under federal or state law. For purposes of this

assessment, sensitive species are plants and animals listed as threatened, endangered, or of concern to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), which provides the Idaho Fish and Game Conservation Data Center (CDC) as the central repository for information related to the state's rare plant and animal populations. Because the site is adjacent to a significant amount of BLM land and is within the Snake River Birds of Prey NCA, BLM special status species were also examined (see footnote to Table 2). Migratory birds, protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, are also addressed. IDARNG sent notices to these agencies notifying them about the proposed project and requesting input about their concerns, if any, in the area. Copies of these letters are provided in Appendix B of this EA. Any responses that have been received from these agencies during scoping or from the EA are included in Appendix C.

In regard to the ESA, the possible presence of listed and proposed, threatened or endangered plant or terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species, or their habitats that may be present in or near the vicinity of the Edgemoade Readiness Center was assessed. The ESA provides protection to fish, wildlife, or plant species listed as federally listed threatened (LT) or listed endangered (LE). Endangered species are those species that are in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their range. Threatened species are those likely to become endangered species in the foreseeable future. Species that the USFWS is considering for listing as federally threatened or endangered but for which a proposed rule has not yet been developed are called federal species of concern or candidate species (C). The IDFG maintains a list of state sensitive species (<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/tech/CDC/>). The Edgemoade area south of Hot Creek Road was also assessed for possible impacts to any of these state listed species.

4.8.2 Existing Conditions for Vegetation

A general survey for sensitive plant species, invasive weeds, and other biological features was conducted throughout the 110-acre site in August 2006 in support of this EA. Observations from this survey as well as information compiled from the CDC, IDARNG, and other sources are included below. Most of the project area is comprised of weedy species commonly found in disturbed areas throughout southern Idaho reflecting historic and ongoing disturbance at the Edgemoade site (Figures 12-15). Characteristic vegetation includes Russian thistle (*Salsola iberica*), kochia (*Kochia scoparia*), clasping pepperweed (*Lepidium perfoliatum*), cheatgrass, crested wheatgrass, Sandberg bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), basin big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), and rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*). A few planted elm trees (*Ulmus* sp.), hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), and Russian olive trees (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) can also be found on the site. Cheatgrass, kochia, Russian thistle, and clasping pepperweed are species that exhibit invasive characteristics and have the ability to invade a plant community after a disturbance.

A 2006 survey by IDARNG natural resources staff recorded three species of noxious weeds present on the site—rush skeletonweed (*Chondrilla juncea*), puncture vine (*Tribulus terrestris*), and Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*). Rush skeletonweed and puncture vine were found only within the footprint of the new construction and proposed post-construction activity, an area where native vegetation and native wildlife are not present.

Figure 12. Weedy vegetation typical of the eastern portion of the facility.



Figure 13. Old crested wheatgrass seeding and trees near the entrance road.



Figure 14. Areas around buildings are dominated by annual weeds and are mowed to reduce risk of fire.



Figure 15. Characteristic vegetation of the western portion of the facility, dominated by cheatgrass.



Canada thistle was found in both the developed compound and the undeveloped portion of the property. This infestation is sparse but too extensive to hand-pull. In the past, thistle and other weedy vegetation within the developed compound have been mowed periodically, and this practice would continue. In spring of 2007, IDARNG had the areas occupied by these weeds sprayed with appropriate herbicide by licensed professionals. There are a few slick spots in the undeveloped portions of the property. Areas within 30 meters of slick spots were not sprayed with herbicide. Noxious weeds within 30 meters of slick spots were hand-pulled by IDARNG natural resources staff to prevent possible future adverse effects and to protect slick spots from being invaded by weeds. IDARNG will survey the Edgemoade property annually for noxious weeds; spraying with herbicide would be contracted, slick spots would continue to be avoided, and hand-pulling of noxious species would be performed by IDARNG natural resources staff, as needed.

No sensitive plant species were identified within the Edgемеade site. Slickspot peppergrass, a federally listed threatened plant species (USFWS 2009), has not been found on Edgемеade after several surveys by IDARNG natural resources staff (2006, 2007, 2008, 2009; Dana Quinney, personal communication, 2010). However, Edgемеade is within the general habitat footprint of the species and does contain several slick spots. The closest known slick spot containing *Lepidium papilliferum* is 2.5 km to the northeast of Edgемеade.

Slickspot peppergrass is an ephemeral species that occupies “slick spot” microhabitats within sagebrush steppe vegetation on the Snake River plains in southwestern Idaho (Meyer et al. 2005). Slick spots are small-scale sites of water accumulation in the landscape, representing an environment where spring water availability may extend into the summer. Slickspot peppergrass probably once occurred throughout the Snake River plain in those areas dominated by sagebrush. Now the species exists as several dozen populations, ranging in area from fewer than five slick spots, to hundreds of slick spots in tens of thousands of acres, in the western Snake River Plain (Colket 2008, Meyer et al. 2005, 2006).

The species has a dual life history strategy. Seeds germinate in spring, and a fraction of the plants that establish function as summer annuals; these flower and fruit within a few months of emergence. The remainder of the cohort remains vegetative and has the potential to function as biennial. Those that survive over the summer and following winter flower and fruit along with the annual cohort of the following year. Biennials may have a much larger reproductive output than the annuals that fruit with them, but their survival to fruiting is greatly reduced, primarily because of summer drought related mortality (Meyer et al. 2006).

The presence or absence of slickspot peppergrass on a site cannot be determined from a single-year study, since the plant does not necessarily appear at a given site in all years even when live seeds are present in the soil. Seeds in one location remained viable in the soil for at least 11 years (Meyer et al. 2005). However, the absence of the species can be inferred if no slick spots occur. The portion of the Edgемеade site south of Hot Creek Road (fenced compound area, including the proposed new facility site) has been surveyed for slickspot peppergrass several times – in 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 (Dana Quinney, personal communication, 2010). IDARNG is reasonably certain that the species, including live seeds in the soil, does not occur on Edgемеade. No slick spots occur in the area that would be affected by the Proposed Action (Dana Quinney, personal communication, 2010).

The species was federally listed as threatened for a number of reasons, including restricted geographic range, very specific habitat requirements, small fragmented populations, and absence of the species from most superficially suitable habitat. Threats to its continued survival include wildfire, weed invasion, livestock disturbance, and development, among other issues (USFWS 2009). A small amount of potential slick spot habitat does occur on the Edgемеade property. However, this project would not affect the species, as the areas to be disturbed by the project are on areas that have already been seriously disturbed, where no slick spots occur. The slick spots on the Edgемеade site occur along the southern fence line and are at least 150 meters from any edge of the proposed construction activity and facilities use. IDARNG natural resources staff will continue to survey the Edgемеade slick spots annually for at least ten more years.

4.8.3 Existing Conditions for Wildlife including Birds of Prey

Wildlife in and around the site consist of species that have adapted to live primarily in sagebrush steppe habitats. These species primarily include small rodents such as mice and voles, jackrabbits, and a number of bird species. An intensive survey was performed on the project area in August 2006 to identify potential habitat for any species of concern that may be present within the project area. The only habitat types present within or adjacent to the project area are sagebrush steppe, exotic perennial grassland (crested wheatgrass seeding), and annual grassland habitats. The native habitat is in a degraded state due to the large infestation of cheatgrass and other weedy species with invasive tendencies. During the survey several black-tailed jackrabbits (*Lepus californicus*) and other small mammal species were observed, including Piute ground squirrels (*Spermophilus mollis*). Avian species observed within the project area included a pair of American kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) hunting from the elm trees on the property (no nests were observed), red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) soaring above the property, a covey of California quail (*Callipepla californica*) foraging near the buildings, a barn owl (*Tyto alba*) occupying one of the Quonset huts, and several unidentified small songbird species. A survey of the site by IDARNG staff in 2006 recorded these additional species: coyote (*Canis latrans*), badger (*Taxidea taxus*), Ord's kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ordii*), Nuttall's cottontail (*Sylvilagus nuttallii*), horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris*), sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), and raven (*Corvus corax*).

A list of federally protected species and those designated as species of concern by the BLM that have potential habitat present within or near the project area is shown in Table 2. A brief description of habitat requirements for the species listed in Table 2 is presented below. Appendix D contains an additional table of special status species that were considered but dismissed from further discussion in the EA due to lack of suitable habitat.

Table 2. Wildlife Species of Concern with the Potential to Occur in the Project Area.

Name	Status*	Habitat	Status at Edgemoade
Bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	BLM Type 1	Wintering/nesting areas along the Snake River	Possible rare winter transient
Prairie falcon (<i>Falco mexicanus</i>)	BLM Type 3	Open grasslands, sagebrush steppe, shrubland	Transient while foraging
Sage sparrow (<i>Amphispiza belli</i>)	BLM Type 3	Sagebrush steppe, juniper woodlands	Possible transient while foraging; rare possibility of breeding on-site, but not within action footprint
Brewer's sparrow (<i>Spizella breweri</i>)	BLM Type 3	Sagebrush steppe	Possible transient while foraging; rare possibility of breeding on-site, but not within action footprint
Long-billed curlew (<i>Numenius americanus</i>)	BLM Type 5	Sagebrush steppe	Possible transient while foraging; rare possibility of breeding on-site, but not within action footprint
Loggerhead shrike (<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>)	BLM Type 3	Sagebrush steppe, juniper woodlands, riparian corridors, annual grasslands	Possible transient while foraging; rare possibility of breeding on-site, but not within action footprint

BLM Type 1 Threatened, endangered, proposed or candidate species

BLM Type 3 Regional/State imperiled species that are experiencing significant declines in population or habitat and are in danger of regional or local extinctions in Idaho in the foreseeable future if factors contributing to their decline continues.

BLM Type 5 Watch List species that are not considered Idaho BLM sensitive species but current population or habitat information suggests that species may warrant sensitive species status in the future.

Bald eagle populations in Idaho are found along streams and lakes where they feed. Throughout their range, they select large, super-canopy roost trees that are open and accessible. They winter primarily in river systems. Within the Edgemoade site they would be a possible rare winter transient and would not be affected by the proposed project.

Prairie falcons inhabit shortgrass prairie and shrubsteppe in Idaho. Prairie falcons nest primarily on cliffs including buttes, canyon walls, rock outcrops, and ridges. Rarely, prairie falcons also may nest in trees or on transmission line towers in the abandoned nests of other large birds, including common raven and black-billed magpie (USGS 2006). They may occur in the project area on a transient basis while foraging but would not nest within or near the site and would not be affected by the proposed project.

There is a slight possibility that the following species might forage and/or breed on the Edgemoade property: loggerhead shrike, Brewer's sparrow, sage sparrow, long-billed curlew, and sage thrasher. However, the habitat where they might occur would not be disturbed by this project. Activity, both during and after construction, would affect only those areas of Edgemoade that are already disturbed and offer low quality habitat.

The sage sparrow is considered sagebrush obligate and inhabits prairie and foothills shrubland habitat where sagebrush is present. Sage sparrows prefer shrublands with tall shrubs and low grass cover, where sagebrush is clumped in a patchy landscape. This bird species requires a large block of unfragmented habitat to successfully breed and survive and is less likely to occur in fragmented shrubsteppe habitats (Knick and Rotenberry 1995).

The sage thrasher is also considered sagebrush obligate and inhabits prairie and foothills shrubland habitat where sagebrush is present. This bird species prefers shrublands with tall shrubs and low grass cover, where sagebrush is clumped in a patchy landscape. The sage thrasher is impacted by fragmentation and removal of sagebrush habitat (WGF 2006).

Long-billed curlews breed mainly in the native grasslands of arid western North America, and are often found in farm fields and grasslands during migration and on their wintering grounds. The major threat to long-billed curlews is the degradation of their native grassland breeding habitat (Audubon 2006).

Loggerhead shrike is found in shrub-steppe, shrubland, and woodland habitats. They breed in basin-prairie shrublands, sagebrush grasslands, mountain-foothills shrublands, pine-juniper woodlands, and woodland-chaparral. Population declines are due to habitat loss and conversion to cultivation and urbanization, loss of insect prey due to pesticide use, and pesticide contamination (especially on wintering grounds) (BLM 2006).

The Brewer's sparrow is considered sagebrush obligate and is closely associated with sagebrush shrublands that have abundant, scattered shrubs and short grass. It can also be found in mountain mahogany, rabbitbrush, pinyon-juniper, or bunchgrass grasslands. This species is positively correlated with shrub cover, above-average vegetation height, bare ground, and horizontal habitat heterogeneity (patchiness). The Brewer's sparrow is impacted by fragmentation and removal of sagebrush habitat (CPF 2006).

As mentioned above, the Snake River Birds of Prey NCA provides critical nesting and prey habitat to 16 species of nesting raptors and eight other species of migrating or wintering raptors and contains the densest concentration of nesting birds of prey in North America. Additional information about the NCA is provided here because of its proximity to the

Edgemeade site. The Snake River Birds of Prey NCA was established by Congress in 1993 to recognize and perpetuate the area's wildlife values. BLM's mission within the NCA is to preserve the remarkable wildlife habitat while providing for other compatible uses of the land. Management of the NCA aims to protect the unique environment that supports one of the world's densest concentrations of nesting birds of prey, including falcons, eagles, hawks, and owls for the enjoyment of future generations.

The NCA is characterized by the deep canyon of the Snake River and a broad plateau rich in small wildlife that provide habitat for a rich concentration of nesting birds of prey. Sixteen raptor species nest in the NCA and an additional eight species either winter or use the area during migration (<http://www.birdsofprey.blm.gov/nat-res/bop-species.htm>). The Edgemeade site lies just within the northeast boundary of the NCA and may provide roosting sites and a prey base for raptors making their homes within the NCA. Although the site is within the NCA, there are no additional consultation requirements triggered by the site's location; BLM concurrence is not required for actions occurring at the site.

Many of the birds identified as BLM sensitive species are migratory birds that spend the winter in southern latitudes and fly north to nest and fledge their young in the summer. Migratory bird species are protected by legislation and it is important to maintain habitat for these species so migratory patterns are not disrupted. All migratory birds are protected under the 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 703), as well as the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 USC Chapter 80) passed in 2000. Executive Order 13186, *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, issued in 2001, requires federal agencies to work with the USFWS to improve protection for migratory birds. Top priority habitats for migratory birds include riparian, non-riverine wetlands, sagebrush shrublands, and Douglas-fir forest.

4.9 NOISE

4.9.1 Definition of Resource

Noise is considered to be unwanted sound that interferes with normal activities or otherwise diminishes the quality of the environment. It may be intermittent or continuous, steady or impulsive, stationary or transient. Different land uses and human activities have different sensitivity to noise. There is a wide diversity in responses to noise that not only vary according to the type of noise and the characteristics of the sound source, but also according to the sensitivity and expectations of the receptor, time of day, and distance between the noise source and receptor (e.g., person or animal).

4.9.2 Existing Conditions

Noise levels in the proposed project vicinity are primarily traffic originated and are typically low except along Interstate 84 and within the primary residential and commercial districts of the City of Mountain Home. There are a small number of commercial buildings west of the Edgemeade site, representing the primary noise receptors in the area, but no residences. Noise generated at the Edgemeade site is minimal most of the time as only a few individuals access the site for office space on a daily basis. Less frequently (i.e., a few days each month) an IDARNG unit (of approximately 108 personnel) utilize the site for various training activities. These activities temporarily increase noise levels at the site.

4.10 SOILS

4.10.1 Definition of Resource

This section discusses soils within the region of influence because some surface disturbance would result from implementation of the action alternatives. Soils are comprised of unconsolidated weathered minerals and organic material at the ground surface in which plants grow. The area of influence for soils includes the areas currently occupied by existing buildings that would be demolished and adjacent areas where new buildings would be constructed.

4.10.2 Existing Conditions

Basaltic formations in the general vicinity are in abundance. The Snake River has cut down through many of these formations leaving basalt plains and terraces several hundred feet above the valley floor. Subsequently, these areas have been covered by loess and silty alluvium. The project site is composed of the Colthorp-Kunaton soil complex. These silty loams are primarily used for rangeland or irrigated cropland. They are moderately susceptible to wind and water erosion. Low available water capacity, shallow depth to hardpan or bedrock, and low precipitation in the region contribute to the general droughtiness of these soils. Typical vegetation on these soils consists of sagebrush and various native grasses and forbs. Most of the soils at the Edgemeade site have been disturbed through past activities (e.g., building construction, road building and use, underground utility installation, training exercises).

4.11 WATER RESOURCES

4.11.1 Definition of Resource

Water resources consist of both surface water and that beneath the ground surface. The quality and quantity of downstream water bodies that could be affected are of concern. Of additional concern are hazards associated with 100-year floodplains delineated in accordance with EO 11988, *Floodplain Management*. No designated 100-year floodplains are located in the project area. Any potential modifications to wetlands would be addressed in accordance with EO 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*, which regulates development activities in or near wetlands. Wetlands are defined as “those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions” (33 CFR Section 328.3). Waters of the U.S. are also defined in that section as “All other waters such as lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds...” There are no wetlands in or near the project area.

4.11.2 Existing Conditions

There is no surface water present within the boundaries of the Edgemeade Readiness Center. The soils survey for the area identifies a tributary to the East Side Canal being located within one-quarter mile of the south boundary of the site. The Snake River flows about 13 miles south of the project site. The Mountain Home Reservoir is located about 0.8 miles north of the project area and is formed by the impoundment of Rattlesnake Creek. The facility is not directly or indirectly connected to any of these surface water features.

Ground water near the City of Mountain Home occurs primarily in two aquifers. The first aquifer is a shallow, perched system. Ground water in the perched aquifer is found mainly in the clay, silt, sand, and gravel of the Quaternary Alluvium. Snake River Group basalts and fan deposits and basalts of the Bruneau Formation beneath the alluvium also contain water from the perched system. Depth to water in this system varies considerably but is found as shallow as 10 feet below land surface (IDEQ 1996). The perched aquifer is recharged through leakage from Mountain Home Reservoir, Rattlesnake Creek, Canyon Creek, and various canals and laterals used to convey irrigation water in the region.

The second aquifer is a deeper regional system, which provides water for municipal and irrigation wells near the City of Mountain Home. Depth to water in the regional system varies from 200 to 400 feet below land surface. Recharge to the regional aquifer system occurs through precipitation on exposed silicic volcanic mountains north of Mountain Home (Idavada Volcanics), through percolation from ephemeral streams on the plateau, and through percolation from the perched aquifer. Ground water flow direction in both the perched and regional aquifer system is generally to the south or southwest (IDEQ 1996). No ground water wells are located at the site and no wells are proposed.

4.12 AIR QUALITY

4.12.1 Definition of Resource

Air quality in a given location is determined by the concentration of various pollutants in the atmosphere. The significance of a pollutant concentration in a region or geographical area is determined by comparing it to federal and/or state ambient air quality standards. Under the authority of the CAA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established nationwide air quality standards to protect public health and welfare, with an adequate margin of safety. These federal standards, known as the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), represent maximum allowable atmospheric concentrations and were developed for seven “criteria” pollutants (Table 3): respirable particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM₁₀); respirable particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM_{2.5}); carbon monoxide (CO); nitrogen dioxide (NO₂); sulfur dioxide (SO₂); ozone (O₃); and lead (Pb).

The NAAQS are defined in terms of concentration (e.g., parts per billion [ppb], parts per million [ppm] or micrograms per cubic meter [$\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$]) determined over various periods of time called averaging periods. Short-term standards (1-hour, 8-hour, or 24-hour periods) were established for pollutants with acute health effects and may not be exceeded more than once per year. Long-term standards (annual periods) were established for pollutants with chronic health effects and may never be exceeded. Primary standards set limits to protect public health, including the health of “sensitive” populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. Secondary standards set limits to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility, damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings.

Table 3. Air Pollutant Concentration Standards.

Air Pollutant	Averaging Time	Federal NAAQS (maximum levels)	
		Primary	Secondary
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	24-hr	150 µg/m ³	Same as primary
Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	24-hr AAM*	35 µg/m ³ 15 µg/m ³	Same as primary
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	8-hr 1-hr	9 ppm 35 ppm	None None
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	AAM 1-hr	53 ppb 1 ppb	Same as primary None
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	24-hr	0.14 ppm	None
	AAM	0.03 ppm	
	1-hr	75 ppb	0.5 ppm
	3-hr	None	
Ozone (O ₃)	1-hr	0.12 ppm	Same as primary
	8-hr	0.075 ppm**	Same as primary
	8 hr	0.08 ppm***	
Lead (Pb)	Quarterly	1.5 µg/m ³	Same as primary
	Rolling 3 month	0.15 µg/m ³	

*AAM = Annual Arithmetic Mean

**2008 standard

***1997 standard

The EPA designates areas of the U.S. as having air quality equal to or better than the NAAQS (attainment) or worse than the NAAQS (nonattainment). Areas are designated as unclassifiable for a pollutant when there is insufficient ambient air quality data for the EPA to form a basis of attainment status. The CAA Amendments of 1990 established new federal nonattainment classifications, new emission control requirements, and new compliance dates for nonattainment areas. Specific compliance dates and requirements are based on the severity of the nonattainment classification.

CAA Section 176(c), General Conformity, established certain statutory requirements for federal agencies with proposed federal activities to demonstrate conformity of the proposed activities with each state's implementation plan (SIP) for attainment of the NAAQS. In 1993, the EPA issued the final rules for determining air quality conformity. General conformity applies only to nonattainment and maintenance areas and therefore is not applicable to the project area.

4.12.2 Existing Conditions

Elmore County, and therefore the project area, is currently designated as an attainment area for all federal criteria pollutants. The nearest non-attainment area is northern Ada County to the west which is classified as a limited maintenance area for carbon monoxide. The project area is located in a region characterized by a semiarid climate. The prevailing wind direction is east-southeast during the non-growing season (November to March) and north-west during the growing season (April to October). Although winds in the region can be strong and gusty, typically they are relatively low, averaging less than 10 mph. Dust is sometimes entrained into the atmosphere in this region of the country because of gusty winds and

semiarid climate. Baseline emissions in the area are predominantly from vehicular traffic and other human activities (e.g., agriculture).

4.13 WASTE MANAGEMENT

4.13.1 Definition of Resource

Hazardous materials are identified and regulated under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). Hazardous materials are defined to include any substance with special characteristics that could harm people, plants, or animals. Hazardous waste is defined in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) as any solid, liquid, contained gaseous or semisolid waste, or any combination of wastes that could or do pose a substantial hazard to human health or the environment.

In the context of this analysis, the concern with hazardous materials or waste is the potential for an encounter with previously dumped or stored hazardous waste within the project area that would need to be addressed as a result of the proposed project. There are no contaminated Installation Restoration Program (IRP) sites at this location and therefore construction would not impact any IRP Sites. A thorough review of the site is covered in the Environmental Condition of Property report. As mentioned in Section 2.1 above, demolition of any buildings would likely involve some onsite crushing, loading debris onto trucks, and hauling material to the county landfill. As part of any demolition activities, a survey would need to be completed for any potential contaminated media (including ACM and LBP). Any special handling and disposal would be in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

4.13.2 Existing Conditions

Some buildings and associated facilities at the Edgemaede site may be demolished as part of Alternative C. The Bennett Road Landfill, which opened in 1988, is approximately 5.5 miles southeast of the project area, and is the designated landfill for waste originating from the Mountain Home region. If any hazardous materials or wastes are encountered during demolition activities, the appropriate IDARNG personnel would be contacted to ensure proper handling and disposal.

4.14 SAFETY

4.14.1 Definition of Resource

Health and safety risks are inherent to IDARNG mission activities. Safety standards and procedures for day-to-day operations at IDARNG facilities are found in National Guard and Army regulations; additional guidance concerning safety issues can be found in the DOD Directive 1000.3, Safety and Occupational Health Policy for the DOD, March 29, 1979.

4.14.2 Existing Conditions

Construction activities could create opportunities for common construction-related accidents involving IDARNG or contractor personnel. Potential risks to personnel and the public would be mitigated by following standard operating procedures for these types of activities.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section presents the results of the impact analyses for the alternatives described in Sections 2 and 3. For each alternative, the environmental effects are analyzed for each resource topic presented in Section 4. An environmental consequence or impact is defined as a modification in the existing environment brought about by implementation of an action alternative.

Impacts can be beneficial or adverse, direct or indirect, or cumulative. Beneficial impacts are those that involve a positive change in the condition or appearance of a resource or a change that moves the resource toward a desired condition. Adverse impacts involve a change that moves the resource away from a desired condition or detracts from its appearance or condition. Direct impacts are caused by an action and occur at the same time and place as the action. Indirect impacts are caused by an action and occur later or farther away from the resource but are still reasonably foreseeable. Cumulative impacts are the impacts on the environment that result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions (cumulative impacts are discussed at the end of this section).

Impacts can also be permanent or long-lasting (long-term) or temporary and of short duration (short-term). Short-term impacts would occur during and immediately following construction of the proposed project. For this project, short-term impacts are defined as those tied to the construction phase of the project, whereas long-term impacts are those following completion of the construction phase. Contract specifications would limit construction equipment maneuvering within the confines of the Edgemeade Readiness Center site, and more specifically, to roughly a 4-acre area of the site adjacent to the extant buildings. Most of the area of impact at the Edgemeade site is comprised of previously disturbed or developed land.

Significant impact criteria for each affected resource are based on existing regulatory standards, scientific and environmental knowledge, and/or best professional judgment. Potential impacts for this project were classified at one of three levels: significant, insignificant (or negligible), and no impact. Significant impacts (as defined in CEQ guidelines 40 CFR 1500-1508) are effects that are most substantial, and therefore, should receive the greatest attention in the decision-making process. Insignificant impacts would be those impacts that result in changes to the existing environment that could not be easily detected. No-impact actions would not alter the existing environment.

Because the second phase of implementation of this project (construction of the new Readiness Center facility) would occur at after completion of the NEPA process and when IDARNG obtains necessary funding and program approval, IDARNG would review this EA with NGB-ARE staff prior to project implementation to determine whether or not the impacts analysis and regulators' comments are still current. If either part of the proposed action (the TUAS facility or the Readiness Center) is not constructed within three years of finalization of this document, IDARNG will determine the need to prepare an updated NEPA analysis in the form of a Supplemental EA or tiered Categorical Exclusion. ID ARNG will consult with NGB-ARE before determining whether additional NEPA analysis is necessary. This original EA would be utilized as the foundation for the updated analysis and supplemental analyses would focus on those issues that have changed.

5.1 TRANSPORTATION

5.1.1 Methodology

Transportation is evaluated for the potential disruption or improvement of current transportation patterns and systems, and increases or decreases from existing levels of traffic.

5.1.2 Potential Impacts

5.1.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: Construction activity related to installation of the proposed Edgемеade Readiness Center may have a slight effect on traffic levels and vehicle mix on U.S. Highway 20 and Hot Creek Road during the two phases of construction. Construction truck traffic and construction workers commuting to the project area would generate minor increases in vehicle trips per day on both roads. However, the site is readily accessed off Interstate 84 and U.S. Highway 20 and there are no businesses or residences on Hot Creek Road, other than the Edgемеade site. The only traffic likely to use Hot Creek Road are those accessing recreational opportunities on BLM land or servicing isolated facilities, such as communication towers, underground utilities, and overhead transmission lines east of the project site.

Impacts from Operation/Use: Operation of the Edgемеade Readiness Center would result in an inconsequential change in day to day traffic or transportation from current levels. The Shadow would be driven to and from Edgемеade on a humvee with a trailer for storage approximately twice a month. Once construction is complete there would be a slight increase in the number of personnel using the site; however, the increase of approximately 29 personnel at the site for one weekend per month would result in an insubstantial increase in the amount of traffic.

5.1.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, conditions would continue as they currently are and there would be no appreciable impact on traffic or transportation. The site is currently accessed daily by several IDARNG staff who have administrative functions at the site, infrequently by county personnel who store some of their equipment in one of the Quonset huts, and by an IDARNG unit who access the site for training purposes once a month. There would be no effect to transportation related to construction traffic since no construction would take place under this alternative. However, some modifications to the existing buildings could occur under this alternative to make them more useable to the Guard. This could result in a temporary but insubstantial increase in traffic to the site.

5.1.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

Activities related to construction of the Edgемеade Readiness Center under this alternative would be similar to that generated by the Proposed Action alternative. Under this alternative, the Edgемеade Readiness Center would still be constructed but in a location that would require demolition of the existing dormitory building. This would result in slightly more construction related traffic than the Proposed Action, because demolition debris would need to be transported away from the site. Demolition of existing facilities, and transport of debris to the landfill, would result in a slight increase in construction traffic for the duration of the construction period. The landfill is approximately 5.5 miles southeast of the project area and

is accessed directly off Interstate 84 on Bennett Road, or could be accessed indirectly via Hot Creek Road to Hot Springs Road to Bennett Road. Either way, demolition would result in an inconsequential increase in traffic and would not disrupt transportation patterns.

All construction activity would still take place within the fenced portion of the site in areas adjacent to existing buildings. Once construction activities were complete, day to day traffic and transportation patterns would be the same as described for the Proposed Action alternative.

5.2 VISUAL RESOURCES

5.2.1 Methodology

Federal and state land custodians and local governments are given the power to adopt regulations and procedures to protect visual resource values within their jurisdiction. Local agencies or land developers may enforce standards of high visual value, low tolerance for visible modification, or other designated visual resources classifications. The degree to which an action would modify the existing surroundings is used to assess the level of impact.

5.2.2 Potential Impacts

5.2.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: Construction equipment would be visible in the area during construction of the TUAS facility and again when the Readiness Center is constructed. The presence of equipment would not obstruct views of the Danskin Mountains nor substantially change the overall landscape and views in the area. After construction, the only long-term impact to visual resources would be the addition of two new buildings and supporting facilities at the site. The new facilities would increase the number of buildings visible at the site but because they would be adjacent to existing building they would be noticeable, but visibly unobtrusive, from Interstate 84 and surrounding roads.

Impacts from Operation/Use: The existing facilities at the Edgemeade site are slightly higher (~100 feet) in elevation than the other commercial buildings and Interstate 84 that are near the site and are thus a noticeable, but unobtrusive, impact on the visual landscape. Because the area west of the site is comprised of commercial properties related to the City of Mountain Home, the existing facilities are not conspicuous. While the new proposed buildings would add buildings in a currently undeveloped although previously disturbed area adjacent to existing buildings, it would not significantly impact visual resources in the project area or the region. After construction, the new buildings would be visible from Interstate 84 and surrounding roads; however, there are existing buildings at the site and the surrounding areas to the west contain numerous commercial buildings. Therefore, operation and use of the facility is not expected to significantly alter visual resources in the area. The only long-term impacts to visual resources would be those resulting from replacing existing facilities with new ones.

5.2.2.2 No Action Alternative

There would be no change in visual resources from current conditions under the No Action alternative.

5.2.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

Effects to visual resources from Alternative C would be similar to those described above for the Proposed Action, but slightly less extensive since the additional facilities would be in place of a building that already occupies the site. While the new proposed buildings would be larger than the building that would be replaced, it would not significantly impact visual resources in the project area or the region. Construction equipment would be visible in the area during project implementation, but would not obstruct views nor substantially change the overall landscape and views in the area. After construction, the only long-term impact to visual resources would be the addition of new buildings and supporting facilities at the site. These would be noticeable, but visibly unobtrusive, from Interstate 84 and surrounding roads.

5.3 LAND USE

5.3.1 Methodology

Land use impacts can result if an action displaces an existing use or reduces the suitability of an area for its current, designated, or formally planned use. In addition, a proposed activity may be incompatible with local plans and regulations that provide for orderly development to protect the general welfare of the public, or conflict with a federal or state agency's management objectives for an affected area. Land use development would need to comply with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.

5.3.2 Potential Impacts

5.3.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: Under the proposed project, two new training and administrative buildings would be constructed within a complex dedicated to the IDARNG mission. The new facilities would be adjacent to the existing facility, and there would be no change in existing land use at the site. No additional easements or land acquisitions would be required for installation of the proposed Edgemade Readiness Center. The construction contractor would contact appropriate parties to assure that effects to any utility services, underground pipes, etc., are avoided. No impacts to surrounding land activities would be anticipated and no changes to land use would result from implementation of the Proposed Action alternative.

Impacts from Operation/Use: Once construction is complete no changes to land use from operation of Edgemade Readiness Center would result. Therefore, no long-term impacts are anticipated.

5.3.2.2 No Action Alternative

No impacts or changes to current land use in the area would result from the No Action alternative. The facility is currently accessed on a daily basis by several IDARNG personnel for administrative purposes, less frequently by county personnel who store some equipment on the site, and once a month by an IDARNG unit who use the facility for various training purposes. Land to the east of the facility is public land and is accessed for various

recreational purposes. These uses would not be affected by continued use of the facility under the No Action alternative.

5.3.2.3 Alternative C –Demolition Alternative

Effects to land use under Alternative C would be the same as those described above for the Proposed Action; while the two new facilities would replace an existing building, there would be no change in land use at the site.

5.4 SOCIOECONOMICS

5.4.1 Methodology

Baseline conditions for population, employment, and earnings were presented for the City of Mountain Home, Mountain Home AFB, and Elmore County. Data presented were compiled primarily from U.S. Census Bureau datasets. Economic activities related to the action alternatives would be of relatively short duration.

5.4.2 Potential Impacts

5.4.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: The proposed project would not be expected to create a change in population because jobs associated with constructing the Edgemeade Readiness Center are expected to be similar to current levels. In addition, construction workers would likely reside in the local area and therefore would not have an impact on housing.

During construction, a temporary increase in economic activity would result from purchases of supplies and services from local vendors. Most of the work would be sourced to local contractors through a competitive bid process. This is not expected to increase the workforce and no new positions would be created during the construction phase of the project.

The proposed construction activity would generate a number of direct construction-related jobs for the duration of the project. The regional construction industry could accommodate the proposed project, since the proposed construction is typical of that being generated by the economic activity in the region by the City of Mountain Home and its proximity to Boise and Mountain Home AFB. No significant short or long term impacts are expected to socioeconomic resources from implementation of the Proposed Action.

Impacts from Operation/Use: Operation of the new Edgemeade Readiness Center is not expected to have a significant impact on socioeconomic conditions in the area.

5.4.2.2 No Action Alternative

No changes would be made to baseline conditions. Minor modifications to existing buildings may occur, but would not impact population or earnings of the area.

5.4.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

Effects from Alternative C would be similar to those described above for the Proposed Action. However, expenditures would be slightly more overall because this alternative would include demolition. No significant short- or long-term impacts are expected.

5.5 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

5.5.1 Methodology

Data on minority and low-income populations for Elmore County were extracted from data compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau. Total, minority, and low-income populations were described for the county, Mountain Home AFB, and the City of Mountain Home in order to address the potential for disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects on these communities.

5.5.2 Potential Impacts

5.5.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: The percentage of individuals in the minority or low-income categories in Elmore County, Mountain Home AFB, and the City of Mountain Home is less than the 50 percent threshold. Minority and low-income populations in the vicinity of the project area are consistent with regional and state levels of these populations. Based on available information, no disproportionately high and/or adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and/or low-income communities are projected from construction activities related to the Proposed Action. As a result, no impacts with regard to environmental justice are anticipated. Implementation of this alternative would not result in any increased environmental health risks or safety risks to children.

Impacts from Operation/Use: Operation of the Edgemeade Readiness Center would have no effect on environmental justice issues. Activities at commercial and private interests in surrounding properties would continue undisrupted by this project. No long-term substantial impacts would be expected to occur.

5.5.2.2 No Action Alternative

No changes would be made under the No Action alternative and no impacts with regard to environmental justice are anticipated.

5.5.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

For the reasons described above for the Proposed Action, no impacts with regard to environmental justice are anticipated from this alternative. Implementation of this alternative would not result in any increased environmental health risks or safety risks to children.

5.6 CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.6.1 Methodology

Impacts to cultural resources from the proposed project and alternatives can result from construction effects related to installation of the new facilities at the Edgemeade Readiness Center and training activities that are ongoing at the site. Impacts to cultural resources were assessed by accessing the Idaho SHPO database to identify any previously recorded archaeological sites within one-half mile of the project area and completing an intensive pedestrian survey of the 110-acre parcel located within the fenced Readiness Center compound south of Hot Bed Creek Road. A cultural resources report was prepared for this project (North Wind, Inc. 2006, *Archaeological and Historical Survey Report prepared for the Environmental Assessment for the Edgemeade Readiness Center*), and in consultation with SHPO and the IDARNG Cultural Resources Manager, a determination was made that

avoidance of the three National Register eligible Quonset huts, would result in a finding of no adverse effects to cultural resources (see correspondence from 2007 and 2010 in Appendices B and C).

Also, in following Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) outlined in the IDARNG Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan particularly SOP # 5 Inadvertent Discovery, the IDARNG shall ensure that in the event of the inadvertent discovery of archaeological and/or culturally sensitive resources, measures are taken promptly within 48 hours of discovery to protect them from further disturbance, assess the significance of the discovery, and implement appropriate protection and mitigation measures. In the event of discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony, the IDARNG shall ensure that all appropriate measures are implemented to protect the remains and/or items, all appropriate Tribes and agencies are promptly notified of the discovery, and that all applicable federal, tribal, and state procedures are followed (Plew 2003).

In addition to consultation with the SHPO, the IDARNG considered the Annotated DOD Policy on American Indian and Alaska Natives (DOD 1999), EO 13175, and AR 200-1, which emphasize the importance of respecting and consulting with tribal governments on a government-to-government basis. The Policy requires an assessment, through consultation, of the effect of proposed DOD actions that may have the potential to significantly affect protected tribal resources, tribal rights, and Indian lands before decisions are made. Consultation with Tribes was conducted in compliance with DOD Instruction 4710.02, *Interactions with Federally Recognized Tribes*. IDARNG conducted consultation through the Wings and Roots process described in Section 4.7 to identify any tribal concerns related to this project. Through that process, the Shoshone-Paiute Tribal Cultural Resources Director stated that due to previous and much earlier ground disturbance of the area, there was little or nothing left of concern to the Tribes at this location (see Appendix C). IDARNG will continue the consultation process by providing the Tribes with a copy of the EA for review.

5.6.2 Potential Impacts

5.6.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: No archeological sites or historic structures that are on or potentially eligible for the NRHP would be affected by the Proposed Action alternative. The Proposed Action does not have the potential to significantly affect protected tribal resources, tribal rights, or Indian lands due to past disturbance of the area. These determinations of effect were made in consultation with IDARNG cultural resources manager and SHPO.

The one isolated occurrence (projectile point fragment) that was recorded in the APE is not eligible for nomination to the NRHP and so the Proposed Action would not result in an adverse effect to this resource. The Proposed Action would have no effect on the one previously recorded site (historic refuse scatter) that is within one-half mile of the proposed project area, but outside the Edgemeade site.

Four of the seven standing buildings at the Edgemeade site, Buildings 11, 13, 14, and 19, are future eligible for nomination to the NRHP in the year 2040. These buildings have maintained their historic integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. They will be eligible for the NRHP within the National Guard

context in 2040 and historically significant under Criteria A of eligibility for inclusion on the NRHP as stated in 36 CFR 60.4 (Criterion A – resources associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history).

The three Quonset huts (Buildings 15, 16, and 17) are recommended by IDRNG and SHPO as eligible to the NRHP under Criterion C – resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. These sites would be avoided to prevent any adverse effects to them.

Four historic refuse scatters were recorded at the Edgemeade site as part of the cultural resource report prepared for this project. Most of the material at these sites is from the 1940s and 1950s and consists of various cans, bottle fragments, and glass shards. These sites are not considered eligible for the NRHP and recordation exhausts their potential to yield additional information. There would be no construction effects related to the Proposed Action on these sites.

Impacts from Operation/Use: Once construction is complete no effects to cultural resources would result from activity at the site other than that which it currently experiences.

5.6.2.2 No Action Alternative

There would be no effect to cultural resources under the No Action alternative. Any modifications proposed to the extant buildings may need approval of the SHPO pending their determination of the eligibility of the buildings for nomination to the NRHP.

5.6.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

There would be no effect to cultural resources under Alternative C since the existing dormitory buildings that would be demolished is not currently eligible for nomination to the NRHP and proposed construction activity would be away from known cultural sites. The three Quonset huts (Buildings 15, 16, and 17) are recommended by IDRNG and SHPO as eligible to the NRHP under Criterion C – resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. These sites would be avoided to prevent any adverse effects to them. The construction footprint would still be in the fenced area adjacent to the existing structures.

5.7 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

5.7.1 Methodology

Impacts to biological resources would occur primarily from activities related to construction of the TUAS and Edgemeade Readiness Center facilities. Potential impacts to biological resources, defined more fully in Section 4.8 above, were assessed, including both short-term effects of construction activity and long-term effects of site use on vegetation, wildlife, and sensitive species. Issues addressed in this section also discuss potential impacts to raptors or habitat within the Birds of Prey NCA and migratory birds. The IDFG, BLM, and the USFWS have been contacted for concurrence on the determination that the Proposed Action is not reasonably expected to cause a significant short- or long-term impact to any sensitive

plant or animal species. This consultation is included in Appendix B. No responses from these agencies had been received at the time of this EA.

5.7.2 Potential Impacts

5.7.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Vegetation

Impacts from Construction: The proposed buildings and facilities that would be built as part of the Proposed Action alternative would be adjacent to the existing buildings in a currently undeveloped although previously disturbed area. Vegetation immediately adjacent to the developed area is relatively sparse compared to other areas of the site and consists of weedy species and species common of the region (see Figures 4 through 13). There are no sensitive plant species known on the site, and any vegetation that would be removed would be comprised of common weeds and herbaceous vegetation typical of the region. No trees would be removed under this alternative and there are no wetlands on the site.

Freshly disturbed areas may encourage the further spread of exotic weed species present on the site (see Section 4.8.2.1 above). In spring of 2007, IDARNG sprayed areas within the central portion of the site that are occupied by exotic weeds with appropriate herbicides by licensed professionals. Areas within 30 meters of slick spots would not be sprayed but would instead be hand-pulled by IDARNG natural resources staff to prevent adverse effects to slickspot peppergrass, if present, and to protect slick spots from being invaded by weeds. Annual surveys for noxious weeds would be performed and appropriate weed control efforts would be undertaken as deemed necessary by IDARNG staff. In addition, slickspot peppergrass surveys would be conducted annually by IDARNG natural resources staff at the site so that the presence or absence of this species could be determined with confidence. If found at the site, a slickspot peppergrass population would be protected as described in Table 4.7-4, IDARNG Management Policies for Slickspot Peppergrass (*Lepidium papilliferum*). IDARNG would continue to survey Edgemade annually for ten years to determine conclusively whether or not the species could occur there. However, there are no slick spots in or near the footprint of the Proposed Action.

Impacts from Operation/Use: Ongoing disturbance at the Edgemade Readiness Center as a result of use of the site would continue to result in disturbed soils that promote the establishment and persistence of weedy plant species at the site. Monitoring for and control of noxious weeds on the property would take place annually. No sensitive plant species would be affected by activities at the Edgemade site. Areas disturbed that remained as bare soil (i.e., not covered by buildings or parking lot) would be seeded the following winter to native grasses. Therefore, no long-term impacts are anticipated.

Wildlife including Birds of Prey

Impacts from Construction: An insignificant proportion of vegetation would be impacted as a result of the proposed project, as the area within the proposed construction zone has previously been disturbed. Therefore no critical nesting or prey habitat would be affected by the Proposed Action. Individual animals, such as rodents, songbirds, or quail, may be temporarily displaced by the noise and other activity related to installation of the new facilities, but these effects would be short term and localized and most animals could

reoccupy habitat once work is complete. A barn owl is known to use one of the Quonset huts for roosting and perhaps nesting. Because none of the Quonset huts would be demolished under the Proposed Action, no effects to this individual (or possibly pair) are expected. None of the trees at the Edgemaede site would be removed; therefore potential tree nesting birds or raptors that use the trees for hunting or resting perches would not be affected. The activities proposed as part of this alternative would not impact raptors occupying the Snake River Birds of Prey NCA. Sagebrush at the site is sparse and would not provide good habitat for the sagebrush obligate bird species identified in Section 4.8.2.2 or migratory bird species.

Impacts from Operation/Use: No substantial long-term effects on wildlife species are anticipated from operations at the Edgemaede site once construction is complete. Because the TUAS facility would only be used for storage and maintenance and no flights would take place there would be no new activities that would affect bird species, including migratory birds. Existing use at the site is not impacting raptor species within the NCA; no change is expected from the Proposed Action alternative.

5.7.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, no vegetation would be removed. No sensitive nesting or prey habitat would be affected and no animals would be displaced by activities at the site. Existing use at the site is not impacting raptor species within the NCA; no change is expected from the No Action alternative. The No Action alternative would not have any short- or long-term effects on any sensitive plant or animal species. Weed control would proceed as described in Section 4.8.2.1 above.

5.7.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

Effects to biological resources, including birds of prey and migratory birds, under Alternative C would be similar to those described above for the Proposed Action alternative. The proposed building and facilities that would be built as part of this alternative would take the place of existing buildings at the site; therefore little additional vegetation would be removed and the existing clear zone around the facilities would not be substantially expanded. The grounds within this central portion of the site are currently mowed to reduce fire danger from some of the weedy species that are prevalent throughout the site and this practice would continue around the periphery of new facilities. Individual animals may be temporarily displaced by noise and other construction activities, but these effects would be short term and localized. The disturbance duration would be increased compared to the Proposed Action alternative by the amount of time necessary for demolition.

5.8 NOISE

5.8.1 Methodology

Noise impacts are considered qualitatively. The type of noise, noise sources, and duration are described generally. The degree of impact from noise is characterized generally based on the sensitivity of affected areas to noise, and relative changes to the ambient noise environment.

5.8.2 Potential Impacts

5.8.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: Noise would be generated by construction activities, although typical equipment to be used would not produce greater noise volumes than the commercial and residential construction activities typical for the area. Noise would be generated intermittently from the work site during normal working hours until completion and would be greater than normal at times. Construction work would occur during daylight hours when loud noises are more tolerable. However, only insignificant impacts are anticipated during the construction phase since the nearest noise receptors are commercial facilities located some distance (>0.5 miles) west of the site.

Impacts from Operation/Use: After completion, noise levels would consist of background noise from the adjacent commercial and residential areas, normal vehicle traffic on Interstate 84 and adjacent roads, and from intermittent use of the facility by the IDARNG units. There would be a slight increase in noise at Edgemeade under the Proposed Action alternative because more soldiers would participate in training at Edgemeade.

5.8.2.2 No Action Alternative

Noise levels would not be affected by implementation of the No Action alternative.

5.8.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

Effects of construction activities and use of the facilities on noise levels from implementation of Alternative C would be similar to those described above for the Proposed Action. However, overall noise levels would be slightly higher and for a longer duration because this alternative would involve demolition or crushing of building materials.

5.9 SOIL RESOURCES

5.9.1 Methodology

Published soil surveys for Elmore County (http://soils.usda.gov/survey/online_surveys/) were used to describe the affected soil environment. The impact analysis is qualitative and is based on the assumption that most of the impacts would occur during construction of the facilities, that soil disturbed by any excavation is susceptible to wind erosion at any time during the year, and that soil disturbed by construction is susceptible to water erosion during precipitation events. Temporary and permanent stabilization of disturbed soils would minimize offsite impacts on air and water resources.

5.9.2 Potential Impacts

5.9.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: The exact design of the new facilities at the Edgemeade Readiness Center have yet to be finalized, so impacts to soils are only analyzed qualitatively because the exact size of the disturbance footprint is not known. Under the Proposed Action alternative, the new facilities would be built in areas not currently occupied by buildings at the site, but the soils that would be disturbed are in areas that have already been disturbed by activities related to previous construction of the extant buildings and roads at the site and by ongoing use of the facilities by the IDARNG. Excavation activities would be fairly limited since only a foundation would need to be poured for the new facility (i.e., no basement is

proposed) and the site's moderate relief would reduce the need for leveling. Therefore, no undisturbed soils would be disturbed under this alternative and there would be no long term impacts to soils.

The proposed staging area for construction would be on current parking areas around extant buildings or on the concrete pads just north of the dormitory. Applicable construction BMPs, such as a SWPPP and silt fencing, described in Section 2.1.1 above, would reduce the potential for impacts to soils and air and water quality and ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act (CWA). Areas disturbed would be seeded the following winter to native grasses. Therefore, disturbance to soils would be short-term and localized since construction activity would be confined to the currently disturbed areas.

Impacts from Operation/Use: Once construction is complete effects to soils would be minimal and similar to that of the No Action alternative. Ongoing training and use of the site under all of the alternatives results in some disturbance to soils at the site. However, these impacts are localized and no long-term impacts to soils are anticipated.

5.9.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, soils would continue to be minimally disturbed by ongoing training and use of the site. No new soil disturbance would occur because no new facilities would be constructed under this alternative.

5.9.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

Effects to soils under Alternative C would be similar to those described above for the Proposed Action alternative. Under this alternative, the new facilities would be built in place of existing facilities. Therefore impacts to soil would only occur in previously disturbed areas. Excavation activities would be fairly limited since only a foundation would need to be poured for the new facility (i.e., no basement is proposed) and the site's moderate relief would reduce the need for leveling. Like the Proposed Action alternative, applicable construction BMPs would be included in the construction contract to reduce the potential for impacts to soils and air and water quality and ensure compliance with the CWA.

5.10 WATER RESOURCES

5.10.1 Methodology

The potential for impacts to water resources would result from surface disturbance during construction. Surface water quality could be impacted if soils susceptible to water erosion contribute sediment to surface water. All of the natural drainages within the project area are ephemeral and outside of the central 10-acre portion of the site. Vegetation in these drainages is similar to that of surrounding uplands, as moisture is retained here for extremely short periods of time and only during precipitation events. No live streams occur in the area. The nearest flowing water sources are the East Side Canal, located within one-quarter mile of the site, and Mountain Home Reservoir and Rattlesnake Creek, located 0.8 miles north of the site. The Snake River is about 13 miles south of the project site. Ground water beneath the project area is recharged by surface percolation and subterranean flow and is unlikely to be affected by this project. There are no wetlands affected by this project.

5.10.2 Potential Impacts

5.10.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: Excavation and heavy equipment impaction would have localized effects and would not result in significant secondary impacts to water resources. The potential for spills exists from fuel, lubricants, or other fluids from small portable fuel containers, generators, heavy equipment, and light-duty vehicles. In compliance with Army, state, and federal regulations, any spills that occur during construction would be cleaned up and disposed of properly.

A site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention and Erosion and Sediment Control Plan would be developed as necessary for the project. The plan would identify BMPs appropriate for the site and steps to minimize wind erosion, to reduce offsite sedimentation due to water erosion, and to keep increases in surface water runoff to a minimum.

BMPs would minimize soil erosion, and the disturbed areas would be regraded and stabilized soon after construction. Practices to minimize soil loss and downstream sedimentation would result in no expected impacts to surface or ground water quality.

Impacts from Operation/Use: After construction is complete, all disturbed areas would be stabilized by recontouring and revegetating to minimize erosion and improve infiltration of precipitation. Native grasses would be planted in such areas. No impacts to water resources are expected once construction is complete.

5.10.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative there would be no change in water quality from existing conditions. Activities at the site are not deteriorating surface or ground water quality and there would be no long term effects on water quality.

5.10.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

The amount of disturbance proposed under Alternative C, and therefore the effects on water quality, would be similar to those described above for the Proposed Action alternative. BMPs would minimize soil loss and no long term impacts to surface or ground water are expected. Standard construction practices and laws would apply to any spills that occurred during construction.

5.11 AIR QUALITY

5.11.1 Methodology

Air emissions resulting from the proposed alternatives were evaluated in accordance with federal, state, and local air pollution standards and regulations. The analysis included assessing potential impacts from ground disturbance activities resulting from construction and/or demolition at the Edgemeade site, and emissions from construction equipment and vehicles at the site.

Air quality impacts from an action would be significant if they:

- Increase ambient air pollution concentrations above any NAAQS
- Contribute to an existing violation of any NAAQS
- Interfere with or delay timely attainment of NAAQS

- Impair visibility within any federally mandated Prevention of Significant Deterioration Class I areas (i.e., National Parks or Wilderness areas).

Air quality impacts during construction activities would occur from particulate emissions (i.e., fugitive dust) during ground clearing and grading activities and activities and vehicular emissions from construction equipment and workers' vehicles. Emissions from construction activities include contributions from engine exhaust emissions (i.e., construction equipment, material handling, and worker's travel) and fugitive dust emission (e.g., from grading and excavation activities). Demolition emissions would include fugitive dust and transport of demolition debris offsite. Grading or excavating would result in fugitive dust from ground disturbance, plus combustion emissions from heavy equipment during the construction period.

Emissions would occur over the duration of the construction period and would be spread over several months. Emissions generated by construction are temporary in nature and would end when construction is complete. Implementation of control measures in accordance with standard construction practices would reduce emissions from fugitive dust. Application of water during demolition and to exposed soil, proper soil stockpiling methods, and prompt ground cover replacement would all be used to minimize dust generation during construction.

5.11.2 Potential Impacts

5.11.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: Air emissions from construction activities under the Proposed Action alternative would be similar to those produced during typical building construction activities. Light-duty and heavy-duty trucks would be used to deliver materials to specific construction areas within the project area. During construction, short-term adverse effects on air quality may result from dust and exhaust emissions. Any emissions discharged during construction of the proposed project are not expected to cause an increase in local air pollutant concentrations beyond state and federal standards at any time. Only insignificant short-term impacts are expected from the construction phase of the proposed project. No long-term impacts to air resources would be anticipated. Topography and meteorology of the area in which the project is located would not seriously restrict dispersion of the air pollutants.

Impacts from Operation/Use: Operation and use of the upgraded facilities at the Edgemoade Readiness Center would not result in any effects to air quality beyond those currently occurring from normal activities occurring at the site. The small increase in personnel expected once the project is completed would result in an insignificant increase in emissions or fugitive dust.

5.11.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, air emissions would be identical to those under baseline conditions and there would be no impacts on air quality.

5.11.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

Effects under Alternative C would be similar to those described for the Proposed Action, except that demolition of the dormitory would occur before construction activities could commence. Light-duty and heavy-duty trucks would be used to deliver materials to specific

construction areas and remove demolition debris within the project area. Emissions would be typical of building construction activities and would be localized, temporary, and short term and would not result in long-term impacts on air quality.

5.12 WASTE MANAGEMENT

5.12.1 Methodology

Impacts on solid waste facilities and surrounding areas caused by waste generation and hazardous waste movement are assessed by examining current conditions and anticipating the effect of the proposed project. Reduction in life span of solid waste facilities that would require near-term expansion of capacity (within 5 years) would potentially be considered a significant impact. Any generation of hazardous waste from the proposed project, or the handling of existing hazardous waste in the project area, would be examined by type of waste, amount of waste, and available options for disposal.

5.12.2 Potential Impacts

5.12.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: The Proposed Action alternative includes construction of the proposed facilities but does not require any demolition. Therefore, this alternative would only result in construction waste generated from assembly of the new facilities and typical household waste generated during operation of the site. The construction debris would be hauled to the local landfill 5.5 miles southeast of the project site. The landfill is sufficiently large and is designed to accommodate construction debris, and this alternative is not anticipated to affect the lifespan of the landfill which was opened in 1988. There are no IRP sites at this location and therefore construction would not impact any IRP sites. No short- or long-term impacts are expected from the Proposed Action.

Impacts from Operation/Use: Operation and use of the Edgemeade site would involve standard waste management services (primarily office waste and garbage). Vehicle maintenance would also occur and would result in some waste. Maintenance already occurs as a part of existing use and current protocols would be followed for any waste generation.

5.12.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under this alternative, no new facilities would be constructed and only standard waste management services would be required. Waste would be generated from office and maintenance activities that currently occur at the site and during the once a month training the facility would receive by the IDARNG unit. The amount of waste generated by this alternative would not affect the lifespan or capacity of the landfill.

5.12.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

Under Alternative C, the dormitory (Building 19) would be demolished and likely hauled to the local landfill 5.5 miles southeast of the project site. The dormitory is finished with standing seam metal roofing, metal siding on the exterior walls, and vinyl and glass windows (Figures 6 and 7). The interior of the building is open to the roof metal framing with sheet rocked walls and partitions. Electrical and plumbing service runs to the building. The debris generated from demolition of this building would be typical construction debris and no significant hazardous wastes (e.g., ACM or LBP) would be expected to be generated from

the site. Effects from construction and operation of the facilities would be the same as those described above for the Proposed Action alternative.

5.13 SAFETY

5.13.1 Methodology

Issues addressed in this section relate to potential impacts to public and occupational health and safety. Impacts are considered significant if the health or safety of the public or IDARNG or contractor personnel is adversely affected.

5.13.2 Potential Impacts

5.13.2.1 Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts from Construction: Construction to implement the Proposed Action would present common construction hazards and impacts. All construction work on the site would occur within the guidelines of relevant procedures and controls to ensure that appropriate industrial safety precautions are followed to prevent accidents and injuries. All activity would occur within the Edgemeade Readiness Center so there would be no impacts to the general public. Potential impacts to IDARNG, city, or county personnel accessing the site during construction would be short term and temporary, occurring only for the duration of the construction period. Appropriate safety precautions developed by the construction contractor and/or IDARNG regulation would define any special procedures to address safety and construction site access during the construction phase of the project.

Impacts from Operation/Use: No effects to public or personnel safety would result from operation of the new facilities. Some training exercises that occur at the site may be inherently risky, as is expected of any military activity. However implementation of the Proposed Action alternative would not result in any change to these common training hazards and risks.

5.13.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative there would be no effect to personnel or public safety except that which would result to IDARNG personnel from any routine training exercises that may occur at the site.

5.13.2.3 Alternative C – Demolition Alternative

Alternative C would involve construction of the new facilities as described in the Proposed Action alternative, in addition to demolition activities. These actions would present the same common construction hazards and impacts described for the Proposed Action alternative, except that safety hazards may be slightly increased since demolition would occur. All activities would be designed to comply with safety criteria and guidelines and standard construction BMPs would be followed by contractors. Impacts would be short term and temporary, occurring only for the duration of the construction period; no long-term effects would result. Safety hazards during use of the site following construction would only be those inherent to the IDARNG mission training activities.

5.14 MITIGATION MEASURES

Based on the findings of this EA, the Proposed Action to construct and operate Edgemaede Readiness Center would not significantly impact any cultural, physical, or socioeconomic resource. For this reason, no mitigation measures would be necessary for any of these resources. The BMPs related to the Proposed Action that have been described in Section 5, *Environmental Consequences*, would be sufficient to minimize impacts.

Construction would require disturbance of approximately 4 acres, consisting of areas of previously disturbed vegetation adjacent to existing buildings. Contract specifications would limit construction equipment maneuvering within the confines of the Edgemaede Readiness Center site, and more specifically, to this area near the center of the site adjacent to the extant buildings. The area that would be cleared is dominated by non-native, invasive vegetation and provides relatively low quality wildlife habitat. Construction of the proposed readiness center would result in short-term, temporary impacts to air quality, noise, and wildlife, and there would be some clearing of soil and vegetation within a previously disturbed area. BMPs for these resources are listed below by resource area (Table 4).

Table 4. Best Management Practices Related to the Proposed Action

Resource	BMPs
Land Use	The construction contractor would contact appropriate parties to assure that effects to any utility services, underground pipes, etc., are avoided.
Cultural Resources	The three Quonset huts (Buildings 15, 16, and 17) are recommended by IDARNG and SHPO as eligible to the NRHP. These sites would be avoided to prevent any adverse effects to them. Other cultural resources at the site would also be avoided during construction.
Biological Resources	Slickspot peppergrass is not known to occur on the proposed construction site, and there are no slick spots on the proposed construction site. To confirm this, and to be consistent with the IDARNG conservation measures for slickspot peppergrass, the site would be resurveyed prior to implementation of the Proposed Action. In addition, surveys would be conducted annually by IDARNG natural resources staff at the site so that the presence or absence of this species can be determined with confidence. If found, the slickspot peppergrass population would be protected as described in Table 4.7-4, IDARNG Management Policies for Slickspot Peppergrass (<i>Lepidium papilliferum</i>). Monitoring for and control of noxious weeds on the property would take place annually. Spraying for noxious weeds and invasive species would not occur in areas within 30 meters of slick spots but instead weeds would be hand-pulled by IDARNG natural resources staff to prevent adverse effects to slickspot peppergrass, if present, and to protect slick spots from being invaded by weeds.
Noise	Construction-related noise is expected during normal working hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday) for the duration of the project. Noise levels during construction are expected to be well below the acceptable range in the nearest residential community.
Soils	Excavation activities would be fairly limited and impacts to soil would only occur in previously disturbed areas. BMPs would be implemented during construction to reduce dust on roads and minimize the potential for erosion from stormwater runoff. BMPs would minimize soil erosion, and the disturbed areas would be regraded and

	stabilized soon after construction. Temporary and permanent stabilization of disturbed soils would minimize offsite impacts on air and water resources. Native grasses would be planted in areas disturbed by construction.
Water Quality	<p>Applicable construction BMPs, such as a SWPPP and silt fencing, would reduce the potential for impacts to water quality and ensure compliance with the CWA. A site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention and Erosion and Sediment Control Plan would be developed as necessary for the project. The plan would identify BMPs appropriate for the site and steps to minimize wind erosion, reduce offsite sedimentation due to water erosion, and keep increases in surface water runoff to a minimum. After construction, all disturbed areas would be stabilized by recontouring if necessary and revegetating to minimize erosion and improve infiltration of precipitation.</p> <p>The potential for spills exists from fuel, lubricants, or other fluids from small portable fuel containers, generators, heavy equipment, and light-duty vehicles. In compliance with Army, state, and federal regulations, any spills that occur during construction would be cleaned up and disposed of properly.</p>
Air Quality	Implementation of control measures (e.g., fugitive dust and vehicle emission controls) in accordance with standard construction practices would ensure compliance with local and regional state and federal air quality regulations. Application of water during demolition and to exposed soil, proper soil stockpiling methods, and prompt ground cover replacement could all be used to minimize dust generation during construction.
Safety	All construction work on the site would occur within the guidelines of relevant procedures and controls to ensure that appropriate industrial safety precautions are followed to prevent accidents and injuries. Appropriate safety precautions developed by the construction contractor and/or IDARNG regulation would define any special procedures to address safety and construction site access during the construction phase of the project.

5.15 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

5.15.1 Definition of Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects on environmental resources result from incremental impacts of an action, when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area. Cumulative effects may arise from single or multiple actions and may result in additive or interactive effects (CEQ 1997b). Cumulative effects can result from minor, but collectively substantial actions, undertaken over a period of time by various agencies (federal, state, and local) or individuals (40 CFR §1508.7).

In accordance with NEPA (CEQ 1987), a discussion of cumulative effects resulting from projects that are proposed, under construction, recently completed, or anticipated to be implemented in the near future is presented here. Past and present actions and reasonably foreseeable future actions with the potential to contribute to cumulative effects are discussed below followed by an analysis of cumulative effects. Future actions proposed in the area may require site-specific NEPA analysis prior to implementation.

5.15.2 Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions

The concept of a baseline against which to compare predictions of the effects of the proposed action and reasonable alternatives is critical to the NEPA process (CEQ 1997b). The effects of past and present actions on the site are reflected in the descriptions of resource baseline conditions presented in Section 4, *Affected Environment*. Discussions in Section 5, *Environmental Consequences*, reflect potential cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, past actions, and current actions on resources. These conditions represent the overall cumulative effects of all past and present relevant actions and activities on resources at the proposed project location.

Analysis of cumulative effects requires expansion of the geographic boundaries and extension of the time frame considered to encompass additional effects on the resources. Project impact zones for a proposed action can vary for different resources and environmental media. In addition, the timeframe of effects can vary by resource; the effects of an action may decrease slowly through time but the time frame for the project-specific analysis usually does not extend beyond the time when project-specific effects drop below a level determined to be significant.

In general, resources within Elmore County, and specifically around the communities of Mountain Home and Mountain Home AFB, are being affected by increased urban growth, recreation and agriculture use, and periodic drought. Based on current population trends, it is reasonable to expect increased use of transportation and recreational resources in the area in the future and the need for increased utility infrastructure. Construction activity for both residential and commercial purposes continues to increase around Mountain Home as the population continues to grow. The eastern edge of the city is currently about one-half mile from the western border of the project site and a number of hotels, gas stations, and other commercial properties have been constructed around Exit 95 off of Interstate 84 just west of the site. If this trend continues, it is likely that private property in the general vicinity would be sold for additional development. At the current time there are no known plans to develop any of the private land in the vicinity of the Edgemaede site (Bonnie Harper and Casey Hultenius, personal communication, 2010).

Most of the land surrounding the Edgemaede site is comprised of public lands managed by the BLM. Most of this land is leased for livestock grazing and is used for various recreational activities. Future development in this area is highly unlikely as these lands are managed for public use and are not available for private, commercial, or residential purposes. Nevertheless, a number of projects have occurred on these lands, including communication towers, underground fiber optic cables, underground gas and utility lines, and overhead power transmission lines. Individual NEPA documents were prepared for each of these projects on public land. No significant cumulative effects were anticipated. However, as the population in Mountain Home and Elmore County continues to increase, it is reasonable to expect that additional infrastructure would need to be built to support them and that there would be an increased use of recreational opportunities in the region.

The BLM Four Rivers Field Office has prepared a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Snake River Birds of Prey NCA (http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/four_rivers). The draft document was released to the public for comment in April 2006. The public comment period ended August 31, 2006, and a Record of Decision for the final RMP was signed September 2008. A number of vegetation treatments and other management activities are proposed for

the NCA. None would contribute to regional habitat loss and successful restoration efforts would meet the needs of raptors and their prey and help off-set the regional loss of habitat that is occurring on private land. A number of cumulative impacts are discussed in that document, although the region of influence for that document includes a much larger area than the Edgemaede project site since the NCA covers 483,700 acres in Ada, Canyon, Elmore, and Owyhee Counties.

It is unlikely at this time that use of the Edgemaede site would increase in the future beyond that analyzed herein. The current mission of the IDARNG will result in a long term presence of a National Guard unit in the Mountain Home community. However, the majority of their training occurs at the Orchard Training Area 14 miles south of Boise, Idaho. The Orchard Training site is primarily used for heavy training activities, such as armored vehicle training, firing of live ammunition, tank maneuvering, and small arms firing. Additional construction projects could be considered in the future at the Edgemaede site, but there is no effective means of predicting when, or if, they would occur. NEPA compliance for any additional projects would be completed prior to implementation.

Although growth and development can be expected to continue outside the project area, its environmental effects would not be expected to result in cumulative adverse effects in the analysis area when added to the effects of the Proposed Action. Impacts of most of the projects discussed above are similar to those of the proposed construction project at Edgemaede. The construction activities in and around the City of Mountain Home, and the utilities construction projects, recreational use, and livestock grazing on public land, all cause temporary ground and vegetation disturbance of a localized area. Construction of the proposed facilities would have short-term beneficial cumulative effects on the local economy resulting from increased expenditures during the construction period. None of the effects from these projects are considered significant individually and, due to spatial and temporal separation and the fact that most of the effects are temporary (lasting mainly for the duration of construction), cumulative effects are not expected to be significant.

5.16 ADDITIONAL ISSUES

This section addresses additional issue areas that must be considered as part of a NEPA analysis. The analysis in this document used the best available information to estimate environmental impacts; conservative assumptions were made to estimate effects where information was unavailable. Unavoidable adverse effects are disclosed where they are anticipated. IDARNG would follow accepted conservation and mitigation measures to minimize potential effects to resources and energy requirements and conservation measures would not be affected.

5.16.1 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

The irretrievable and irreversible commitments of resources that are associated with each alternative are summarized here. An irreversible commitment of resources is defined as the loss of future options. The term applies primarily to the effects of using nonrenewable resources, such as minerals or cultural resources, or to the loss of an experience as an indirect effect of a permanent change in the nature or character of the land. Irreversible commitments are those that cannot be reversed, except perhaps in the extreme long term.

An irretrievable commitment of resources is defined as the loss of production, harvest, or use of natural resources. The amount of production foregone is irretrievable, but the action is not irreversible. If the use changes, it is possible to resume production. Irretrievable commitments are those that are lost for a period of time.

Irretrievably and irreversibly committed resources are those that are consumed during the construction and implementation of a project and that cannot be reused. Because their reuse is impossible, they are considered irretrievably and irreversibly committed to the development of the proposed project. These resources would include expendable materials necessary for construction, as well as fuels and other forms of energy that are utilized during project implementation.

Surface disturbing activities would cause localized unavoidable impacts. Although these impacts would be mitigated to the extent possible, unavoidable damage is inevitable. The construction of facilities would reduce the amount of vegetation available for wildlife. However, the vegetation that would be impacted at the Edgemeade site is dominated by non-native grasses and does not have a high wildlife value; and although these impacts are unavoidable, they would be concentrated in generally localized, previously disturbed areas. Soils and vegetation would be disturbed during construction. However, native grasses would be seeded into the disturbed areas the following winter.

During construction activities under all alternatives, non-renewable resources would be consumed. Because reuse of these resources may not be possible, they could be considered irreversibly and irretrievably committed should the actions be implemented. Fossil fuels, labor, and construction materials would be expended in the project; these are generally not retrievable. Expenditure of public funds, which are not retrievable, would also be required.

5.16.2 Relationship of Short-Term Uses and Long-Term Productivity

Section 102(C) of NEPA requires discussion of the relationship between local, short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity of resources. Short term impacts are those changes that are caused by ground disturbing activities that generally revert to pre-disturbed conditions within a few years. Long-term impacts persist beyond a few years.

Under all alternatives, short-term disturbances of soils, vegetation, and wildlife habitat from construction and use would occur but long-term productivity of the site would not decrease since all alternatives call for activity to remain within currently disturbed areas. An effective vegetation restoration effort to replace existing weedy vegetation with sagebrush-steppe habitat would offset any losses of vegetation that would result from implementation of the alternatives. The short-term use of resources and impacts of construction are consistent with the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity for the area.

6.0 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 COMPARISON OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE ALTERNATIVES

This EA addresses potential impacts that could result from constructing the Edgemoade Readiness Center. It examines the potential impacts generated directly from construction activities, and the environmental benefits or disadvantages of alternatives to the proposed project. Archeological and biological surveys were conducted on 25 August 2006; information from these surveys was used in this analysis. Based on the types of activities involved and the issues identified through internal discussion and public input, resources of concern addressed include: transportation, visual resources, land use, socioeconomics, environmental justice, cultural resources, biological resources including birds of prey, noise, soils, water resources, air quality, waste management, and safety. Table 5 summarizes the environmental impacts of the No Action alternative, the Proposed Action alternative, and Alternative C – Demolition alternative.

Table 5. Potential Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives Analyzed.

Resource	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action Alternative	Alternative C – Demolition
Transportation	Conditions would continue as they are currently; during operation of the facility there is limited to no disruption to traffic.	Impacts to traffic during construction would be minor and temporary; impacts during facility operation would result in limited to no disruption to traffic.	Impacts to traffic during construction would be minor and temporary; impacts during facility operation would result in limited to no disruption to traffic.
Visual Resources	There would be no change in visual resources from current conditions. Short-term and low level impacts would be expected during repairs.	The addition of new facilities to the existing facilities would result in minor, long-term impacts to visual resources.	The replacement of some of the existing facilities with new facilities would result in minor, long-term impacts to visual resources.
Land Use	No impacts or changes to current land use in the area would result.	No impacts or changes to current land use in the area would result.	No impacts or changes to current land use in the area would result.
Socioeconomics	No change to existing conditions would occur and there would be no impact to socioeconomic conditions.	There would be no substantial short or long term impacts to socioeconomic conditions.	There would be no substantial short or long term impacts to socioeconomic conditions.
Environmental Justice	No change to existing conditions would occur and there would be no impact to environmental justice.	Based on available information, no impacts with regard to environmental justice are anticipated. Implementation would not result in any increased environmental health or safety risks to children.	Based on available information, no impacts with regard to environmental justice are anticipated. Implementation would not result in any increased environmental health or safety risks to children.

Resource	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action Alternative	Alternative C – Demolition
Cultural Resources	There would be no anticipated impact on existing cultural resources.	Implementation of the Proposed Action would result in extant buildings remaining intact. Therefore, there would be no anticipated impact on existing archaeological sites.	Implementation of Alternative C would result in the demolition of the extant dormitory (future eligible in 2040 for inclusion on the NRHP).
Biological Resources including Birds of Prey	There would be no impact to any sensitive plant or animal species. Noxious weed controls would continue to be implemented as necessary. There would be no impact on birds of prey, their prey, or their habitat.	Construction activities may remove an insignificant amount of vegetation and individual small animals (rodents, birds) may be temporarily displaced but effects would be short term and localized. <i>Lepidium papilliferum</i> , if it should be found in planned subsequent surveys, would be protected. Noxious weed controls would be implemented to minimize the spread of invasive plants in disturbed areas. No significant long-term effects on biological resources are anticipated. There would be no impact on migratory birds, birds of prey, their prey, or their habitat.	Effects to biological resources would be the same as described for the Proposed Action, although construction of the new facilities in areas currently occupied by buildings would result in removal of less habitat. Construction and use activities would be confined to areas already in use as National Guard facilities. There would be no impact on migratory birds, birds of prey, their prey, or their habitat.
Noise	Noise levels would remain unchanged.	Only insignificant impacts are anticipated during the construction and operation phases; no long-term impacts are expected.	Only insignificant impacts are anticipated during the construction and operation phases; no long-term impacts are expected.
Soils	Soils would continue to be disturbed at the site as a result of regular, repeated training exercises.	Construction could disturb up to 4 acres of soils; this disturbance would be confined to previously disturbed areas. Operation of the facility would have the same impact on soils as the No Action alternative.	Construction could disturb up to 4 acres of soils; this disturbance would be confined to previously disturbed areas. Operation of the facility would have the same impact on soils as the No Action alternative.

Resource	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action Alternative	Alternative C – Demolition
Water Resources	There would be no impact to water resources.	Temporary ground disturbance during construction could result in short-term effects to water quality. BMPs would prevent sedimentation and there would be no significant impacts on water quality.	Temporary ground disturbance during construction could result in short-term effects to water quality. BMPs would prevent sedimentation and there would be no significant impacts on water quality.
Air Quality	There would be no impact to air quality other than the potential for some temporary fugitive dust resulting from regular, repeated training exercises.	Dust and exhaust emissions during construction may result in short-term adverse effects on air quality but these are not expected to cause an increase in local air pollutant concentrations beyond state and federal standards. Only insignificant short-term impacts are expected from the construction phase of the proposed project. The potential for fugitive dust during operation of the facility would be the same as the No Action alternative. No long-term impacts to air resources are anticipated.	Effects would be similar to those described for the Proposed Action.
Waste Management	No waste would be generated or disturbed under the No Action alternative other than standard office waste and garbage.	Any hazardous waste or solid waste generated from construction would be disposed of in accordance with state and federal regulations, resulting in no impact.	Any hazardous waste or solid waste generated from construction or from demolition of existing facilities would be disposed of in accordance with state and federal regulations, resulting in no impact.
Safety	There would be no impact to safety.	Construction activities would present common construction safety hazards. Impacts would be short term and temporary.	Construction and demolition activities would present common construction safety hazards. Impacts would be short term and temporary.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

Implementation of any of the alternatives including the Proposed Action would not have any significant, long-lasting, negative effects on any resources at the proposed site. Some of the current facilities are proposed for demolition under Alternative C. The three Quonset huts at the Edgemoade Readiness Center are recommended as eligible for inclusion on the NRHP. No actions are proposed that would affect these buildings. Consultation with SHPO and Native American Tribes has been completed and no further action is necessary with regard to protection of cultural resources (refer to correspondence in Appendices B and C). Since the analysis contained in this EA concludes that no significant adverse impacts are expected, an EIS will not be prepared and the NGB-ARE will issue a FNSI. Because the timing of the second phase of construction of the Readiness Center facility is dependent upon when IDARNG obtains necessary funding and program approval, IDARNG will review this EA with NGB-ARE staff prior to project implementation to determine whether or not the impacts analysis and regulators' comments are still current. If either part of the proposed action (the TUAS facility or the Readiness Center) is not constructed within three years of finalization of this document, IDARNG will determine the need to prepare an updated NEPA analysis in the form of a Supplemental EA or tiered Categorical Exclusion. ID ARNG will consult with NGB-ARE before determining whether additional NEPA analysis is necessary. This original EA would be utilized as the foundation for the updated analysis and supplemental analyses would focus on those issues that have changed.

7.0 REFERENCES

Army Regulation

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- 1998 Army Regulation 200-4, Cultural Resources Management. November 1 1998.

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- 1987 *Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act*. 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508.
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EO 13186, *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, January 10, 2001
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National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 95-515; Public Law 102-575; 16 U.S.C. 470)

NGB (National Guard Bureau)

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2003 The Archaeology of the Snake River Plain. Boise State University, Boise, Idaho. 230 p.

Quinney, D.

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2009 Final Rule. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Listing *Lepidium papilliferum* (Slickspot Peppergrass) as a Threatened Species Throughout Its Range. Federal Register, Vol. 74, No. 194. Thursday, October 8, 2009.

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2006 Sage Thrasher. <http://gf.state.wy.us/wildlife/CompConvStrategy/Species/Birds/PDFS/Sage%20Thrasher.pdf>.

8.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

A list of IDARNG and contract personnel involved in the preparation of this EA is included as Table 6.

Table 6. Individuals Involved in the Preparation of the EA.

Name	Title
Ryan Baum	GIS Specialist, North Wind, Inc.
Charles Chambers	Interagency Liaison Joint Installation Command, IDARNG
Jace Fahnestock, PhD	Botanist, Project Manager, North Wind, Inc.
Jake Fruhlinger	Cultural Resources Program Manager IDARNG
Kelly Green	NEPA Specialist, North Wind, Inc.
LTC Eugene Gussenhoven	Construction and Facilities Management Officer, IDARNG
Joseph Jimenez	Archaeologist, North Wind, Inc.
Kim Kearney, PE	Engineer, Vice President, North Wind, Inc.
Jeremy Otsot	Engineering Technician, IDARNG
LTC Joel Price	Deputy Environmental Management Officer, IDARNG
Dana Quinney	Natural Resources Manager, IDARNG
CPT Lee Rubel	Army Facilities Management Office, Contracting Officer Representative, IDARNG
SSG Kevin Thompson	Contracting Officer, IDARNG
Scott Webster	Biologist, North Wind, Inc.

9.0 AGENCIES AND INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED

A list of the agencies and organizations contacted during the preparation of this document is presented in Table 7. Consultation occurred originally in 2007 and again with availability of the draft EA in 2010. Correspondence related to both of these periods is enclosed in Appendices B and C.

Table 7. Agencies and Organizations Contacted.

Name	Title	Affiliation
Myron Adamson	Board Member	Elmore County Planning and Zoning
Jeff Foss*	Field Headquarters Supervisor	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Fish & Wildlife Office
Terry Mansfield	Deputy Director	Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Douglas McConnaughey	Director	Wings and Roots Program
Suzi Pengilly	Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer	Idaho State Historical Society
Jerry Taylor**	Boise District Manager	Bureau of Land Management
Patricia Roller-Burkhardt	Manager, Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey NCA	Four Rivers Field Office, Boise District BLM
Cal Groen	Director	Idaho State Department of Fish and Game
Gary Burton	Deputy State Supervisor	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office
Aden Seidlitz	Boise District Manager	Bureau of Land Management

*Jeff Foss was the USFWS contact in 2007; Gary Burton was the contact in 2010.

**Jerry Taylor was the BLM contact in 2007; Aden Seidlitz was the contact in 2010.

A list of individuals and additional organizations that received the project scoping materials and/or the Draft EA and FNSI is in the project file.

9.1 PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Intergovernmental notification prior to making a detailed statement of environmental impacts is required by EO 12373, *Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs*. Through the Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning (IICEP) process, the proponent of an action is required to notify concerned, federal, state, and local agencies and allow them sufficient time to evaluate potential environmental impacts of a proposed action. On February 16, 2007, an IICEP letter was mailed to agencies soliciting comments on the proposed project (Appendix B). Additional coordination occurred in 2010 when a supplemental letter was mailed to USFWS informing them about the changes to the proposal. These agencies will also be given an opportunity to comment on the EA.

Interested Tribes were consulted about this project through the Wings and Roots Native American Campfire. The IDARNG considered, through consultation with the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes, the effect of the proposed actions on protected tribal resources, tribal rights, and Indian lands. Correspondence related to that process is included in Appendices B and C. Further consultation will occur when the EA is made available for review.

In addition, IDARNG consulted with the SHPO regarding the proposed project. An initial letter was sent in 2007 with a follow up letter in 2010 alerting SHPO of the changes to the original proposal. SHPO responded with a letter dated March 11, 2010 stating that the project would have no effect on historic properties. Appendices B and C contain the correspondence related to that consultation.

Through this initial process and through internal project review, a list of environmental concerns was identified to address in the EA. These were based on the nature of the proposed work and an understanding of local conditions. They include:

- Potential for impacts to sensitive or protected plant and animal species and/or their habitat, if present
- Potential for impacts to cultural resources
- Potential for spread of invasive plant species from ground disturbance
- Potential for increased airborne particulate matter due to soil disturbance and construction
- Potential for increased noise
- Potential for increased soil erosion and water pollution.

APPENDIX A – Unit Orders

STATE OF IDAHO
MILITARY DIVISION
4040 Guard St.
Boise, ID 83705-5004

PERMANENT ORDER 314-001

10 November 2009

<u>NEW UNIT</u>	<u>OLD UNIT</u>	<u>STATION AND FEDERAL RECOGNITION DATE</u>	<u>REQUIRED STRENGTH</u>				<u>AUTHORIZED STRENGTH</u>			
			<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Co. C(-), 116 th BSTB WX42C0	N/A	3845 Hot Creek Rd. Mountain Home, ID 83647-5302 01 November 2009	4	0	104	108	4	0	104	108

Following unit action is directed:

Action: Unit Activation

Effective Date: 01 November 2009

MTOE and Date: 87305GNG11 CCNUM 0110

All paragraphs except for 2/3 paragraphs 403, 404 and 405

Authority: NGR 10-1

Additional Instructions: Unit structure is based on the 01 November 2009 MTOE. See attached MTOE extract for unit structure.

Format: 740

FOR THE COMMANDER:



ANTHONY A. WICKHAM
COL, GS, IDARNG
JI

APPENDIX B – IICEP and Scoping Letters

Original 2007 Correspondence



IDAHO NATIONAL GUARD
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS
4040 WEST GUARD ST., BLDG. 600
BOISE, IDAHO 83705-5004
February 15, 2007



Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Attn: Terry Mansfield
Deputy Director
600 S. Walnut
P. O. Box 25
Boise, ID 83707

Dear Mr. Mansfield:

The Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG) has initiated a site-specific analysis to document the potential impacts on environmental resources associated with the creation of an upgraded training and support facility – the Edgemeade Readiness Center to replace existing facilities – near Mountain Home, Idaho.

The location of the proposed action is on leased land east of U.S. Highway 20 and south of Hot Creek Road in southwest Elmore County, Idaho, that has been occupied by the Guard since 1990. IDARNG is seeking public input to help determine the appropriate scope of an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NEPA process is explained and described in Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations published at 40 CFR 1500–1508. Scoping as part of the NEPA process provides an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed in an EA. The analysis process will identify potentially affected resources, disclose the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects to the natural and human environment associated with the Proposed Action as well as alternative actions, and, if appropriate, identify and assess mitigation measures.

The goal of the project is to provide a training and support facility that will provide office space for two to three full-time IDARNG staff and training facilities for up to 65 personnel on a monthly (several days per month) basis. The exact design specifications have not yet been finalized, but the proposed facility would be approximately 26,000 square feet in size and would contain supporting facilities such as vehicle compounds, utilities (electric, water, sewer, natural gas), a flammable materials storage building, and a controlled waste facility. Many of the facilities that are currently at the site reflect its past history and are not well-suited to the current mission of the IDARNG. Seven buildings currently occupy the site and some of them could be demolished as part of the proposed project. The proposed project could include demolition, excavation, grading, digging, and leveling of the soil. Some issues of concern that have been identified for analysis include visual resources, land use, socioeconomics, environmental justice, cultural resources, wildlife and vegetation including threatened, endangered and sensitive species, ambient noise levels, soil resources, water quality, air quality, waste management, and safety.

According to our records and based on our preliminary survey of the above referenced area, there are no resident populations of any federally listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species within the immediate vicinity of the proposed project location. Therefore, we have determined that the above referenced action would have no effect on such species. Pursuant to section 7 (a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act, we would appreciate your input specifically regarding threatened and endangered species, as well as any additional input you may have in regards to this action.

This project is being planned for development and construction around the year 2013.

If you have any questions, concerns, or issues please contact Major Eugene P. Gussenhoven, Idaho Army National Guard, Construction and Facility Management Officer, 4715 S. Byrd Street, Boise, Idaho 83706, or 208-422-3728, or eugene.gussenhoven@us.army.mil.

Please respond no later than 30 days from receipt of this correspondence.

Sincerely,



ALAN C. GAYHART
Brigadier General
Deputy Commanding General, IDARNG

Enclosure:
Map of proposed project location



**IDAHO NATIONAL GUARD
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS
4040 WEST GUARD ST., BLDG. 600
BOISE, IDAHO 83705-5004**



February 15, 2007

Bureau of Land Management

Attn: Jerry L. Taylor
District Manager
Boise District Office
3948 Development Ave.
Boise, ID 83705

Dear Mr. Taylor:

The Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG) has initiated a site-specific analysis to document the potential impacts on environmental resources associated with the creation of an upgraded training and support facility – the Edgemaede Readiness Center to replace existing facilities – near Mountain Home, Idaho.

The location of the proposed action is on leased land east of U.S. Highway 20 and south of Hot Creek Road in southwest Elmore County, Idaho, that has been occupied by the Guard since 1990. IDARNG is seeking public input to help determine the appropriate scope of an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NEPA process is explained and described in Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations published at 40 CFR 1500–1508. Scoping as part of the NEPA process provides an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed in an EA. The analysis process will identify potentially affected resources, disclose the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects to the natural and human environment associated with the Proposed Action as well as alternative actions, and, if appropriate, identify and assess mitigation measures.

The goal of the project is to provide a training and support facility that will provide office space for two to three full-time IDARNG staff and training facilities for up to 65 personnel on a monthly (several days per month) basis. The exact design specifications have not yet been finalized, but the proposed facility would be approximately 26,000 square feet in size and would contain supporting facilities such as vehicle compounds, utilities (electric, water, sewer, natural gas), a flammable materials storage building, and a controlled waste facility. Many of the facilities that are currently at the site reflect its past history and are not well-suited to the current mission of the IDARNG. Seven buildings currently occupy the site and some of them could be demolished as part of the proposed project. The proposed project could include demolition, excavation, grading, digging, and leveling of the soil. Some issues of concern that have been identified for analysis include visual resources, land use, socioeconomic, environmental justice, cultural resources, wildlife and vegetation including threatened, endangered and sensitive species, ambient noise levels, soil resources, water quality, air quality, waste management, and safety.

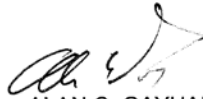
According to our records and based on our preliminary survey of the above referenced area, there are no resident populations of any federally listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species within the immediate vicinity of the proposed project location. Therefore, we have determined that the above referenced action would have no effect on such species. Pursuant to section 7 (a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act, we would appreciate your input specifically regarding threatened and endangered species, as well as any additional input you may have in regards to this action.

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If you have any questions, concerns, or issues please contact Major Eugene P. Gussenhoven, Idaho Army National Guard, Construction and Facility Management Officer, 4715 S. Byrd Street, Boise, Idaho 83706, or 208-422-3728, or eugene.gussenhoven@us.army.mil.

Please respond no later than 30 days from receipt of this correspondence.

Sincerely,



ALAN C. GAYHART
Brigadier General
Deputy Commanding General, IDARNG

Enclosure:
Map of proposed project location



IDAHO NATIONAL GUARD
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS
4040 WEST GUARD ST., BLDG. 600
BOISE, IDAHO 83705-5004



February 15, 2007

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Attn: Mr. Jeff Foss
 Field Headquarters Supervisor
 Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office
 1387 S. Vinnell Way
 Room 368
 Boise, ID 83709

Dear Mr. Foss:

The Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG) has initiated a site-specific analysis to document the potential impacts on environmental resources associated with the creation of an upgraded training and support facility – the Edgemoade Readiness Center to replace existing facilities – near Mountain Home, Idaho.

The location of the proposed action is on leased land east of U.S. Highway 20 and south of Hot Creek Road in southwest Elmore County, Idaho, that has been occupied by the Guard since 1990. IDARNG is seeking public input to help determine the appropriate scope of an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NEPA process is explained and described in Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations published at 40 CFR 1500–1508. Scoping as part of the NEPA process provides an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed in an EA. The analysis process will identify potentially affected resources, disclose the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects to the natural and human environment associated with the Proposed Action as well as alternative actions, and, if appropriate, identify and assess mitigation measures.

The goal of the project is to provide a training and support facility that will provide office space for two to three full-time IDARNG staff and training facilities for up to 65 personnel on a monthly (several days per month) basis. The exact design specifications have not yet been finalized, but the proposed facility would be approximately 26,000 square feet in size and would contain supporting facilities such as vehicle compounds, utilities (electric, water, sewer, natural gas), a flammable materials storage building, and a controlled waste facility. Many of the facilities that are currently at the site reflect its past history and are not well-suited to the current mission of the IDARNG. Seven buildings currently occupy the site and some of them could be demolished as part of the proposed project. The proposed project could include demolition, excavation, grading, digging, and leveling of the soil. Some issues of concern that have been identified for analysis include visual resources, land use, socioeconomics, environmental justice, cultural resources, wildlife and vegetation

including threatened, endangered and sensitive species, ambient noise levels, soil resources, water quality, air quality, waste management, and safety.

According to our records and based on our preliminary survey of the above referenced area, there are no resident populations of any federally listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species within the immediate vicinity of the proposed project location. Therefore, we have determined that the above referenced action would have no effect on such species. Pursuant to section 7 (a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act, we would appreciate your input specifically regarding threatened and endangered species, as well as any additional input you may have in regards to this action.

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Please respond no later than 30 days from receipt of this correspondence.

Sincerely,



ALAN C. GAYHART
Brigadier General
Deputy Commanding General, IDARNG

Enclosure:
Map of proposed project location



**IDAHO NATIONAL GUARD
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS
4040 WEST GUARD ST., BLDG. 600
BOISE, IDAHO 83705-5004**



February 15, 2007

Elmore County Planning & Zoning

Attn: Mr. Myron Adamson
520 East 2nd South
Mountain Home, Idaho 83647

Dear Mr. Adamson:

The Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG) has initiated a site-specific analysis to document the potential impacts on environmental resources associated with the creation of an upgraded training and support facility – the Edgemeade Readiness Center to replace existing facilities – near Mountain Home, Idaho.

The location of the proposed action is on leased land east of U.S. Highway 20 and south of Hot Creek Road in southwest Elmore County, Idaho, that has been occupied by the Guard since 1990. IDARNG is seeking public input to help determine the appropriate scope of an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NEPA process is explained and described in Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations published at 40 CFR 1500–1508. Scoping as part of the NEPA process provides an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed in an EA. The analysis process will identify potentially affected resources, disclose the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects to the natural and human environment associated with the Proposed Action as well as alternative actions, and, if appropriate, identify and assess mitigation measures.

The goal of the project is to provide a training and support facility that will provide office space for two to three full-time IDARNG staff and training facilities for up to 65 personnel on a monthly (several days per month) basis. The exact design specifications have not yet been finalized, but the proposed facility would be approximately 26,000 square feet in size and would contain supporting facilities such as vehicle compounds, utilities (electric, water, sewer, natural gas), a flammable materials storage building, and a controlled waste facility. Many of the facilities that are currently at the site reflect its past history and are not well-suited to the current mission of the IDARNG. Seven buildings currently occupy the site and some of them could be demolished as part of the proposed project. The proposed project could include demolition, excavation, grading, digging, and leveling of the soil. Some issues of concern that have been identified for analysis include visual resources, land use, socioeconomics, environmental justice, cultural resources, wildlife and vegetation including threatened, endangered and sensitive species, ambient noise levels, soil resources, water quality, air quality, waste management, and safety.

According to our records and based on our preliminary survey of the above referenced area, there are no resident populations of any federally listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species within the immediate vicinity of the proposed project location. Therefore, we have determined that the above referenced action would have no effect on such species. Pursuant to section 7 (a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act, we would appreciate your input specifically regarding threatened and endangered species, as well as any additional input you may have in regards to this action.

This project is being planned for development and construction around the year 2013.

If you have any questions, concerns, or issues please contact Major Eugene P. Gussenhoven, Idaho Army National Guard, Construction and Facility Management Officer, 4715 S. Byrd Street, Boise, Idaho 83706, or 208-422-3728, or eugene.gussenhoven@us.army.mil.

Please respond no later than 30 days from receipt of this correspondence.

Sincerely,



ALAN C. GAYHART
Brigadier General
Deputy Commanding General, IDARNG

Enclosure:
Map of proposed project location

2010 Correspondence



**IDAHO NATIONAL GUARD
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS
4040 WEST GUARD ST., BLDG 600
BOISE, IDAHO 83705-5004**



Suzi Pengilly
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Idaho State Historical Society
210 Main Street

16 February, 2010

Subject: Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG) Edgemoade Readiness Center

Dear Ms. Pengilly,

We are requesting comments relating to the proposed project associated with the Edgemoade Readiness Center. We originally requested comments in 2007 (see attached consultation letter) but due to the fact that the proposed action has changed, we are again requesting concurrence that the altered proposed project will have no adverse effect on any known cultural resources.

The global war on terrorism has presented new challenges resulting in increased military requirements. Current facilities at the Edgemoade site do not comply with current Army design standards and IDARNG requirements for meeting these present and future operational challenges; specifically, the facilities do not meet the regulations and requirements implemented after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. In consideration of the existing conditions and new challenges presented by the global war on terrorism, modernized facilities at the Edgemoade site are needed to meet the evolving mission of the unit (i.e., preparing soldiers for the current and future threats of global operations), comply with current design standards and requirements, and accommodate the larger number of soldiers to be stationed there. The proposed action to meet these needs would consist of constructing and operating a parking lot and a building that would house offices as well as storage and maintenance rooms (see attached map and photos). The new building and parking lot would be a modernization and upgrade compared to existing facilities. Upgrading the readiness center in Mountain Home would improve the quality of the training environment, the capabilities for full-spectrum operations, and allow for increased training support systems within the IDARNG. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to comply with requirements of the National Guard Bureau in order to better prepare for and ensure troop combat readiness and to maintain a high state of readiness for the unit stationed in the Mountain Home community, which includes having a properly trained and equipped Army National Guard force at this location.

Further adding to the problem of insufficient space at the current site, the IDARNG plans to assign the Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) platoon from A, 116th BSTB to the Edgemoade Readiness Center. Although the UAS platoon is not currently stationed at Edgemoade, this is the only location in the State of Idaho where the UAS platoon can be stationed that would allow

them to launch and recover their aircraft from one spot as well as control it directly from the Edgemeade Facility and be able to fly into the major training area at the Orchard Training Area (OTA) (no launches would take place from Edgemeade). When constructed, this new facility would be within the Snake River Birds of Prey Air Space corridor which covers the nearby OTA. The OTA is the IDARNG's IWQ and Tank / maneuver range.

As noted in the attached letter dated July 18th 2007, there are three Quonset Huts (IHSI # 39-18084, 18085, 18086) that were recommended as eligible for listing (see attached archaeological resources inventory report). In this letter, you recommended that if possible, the structures be avoided or moved off site to avoid further adverse impacts. With this letter, we want to inform you that we have taken your recommendations into consideration and as a result, the altered proposed action will avoid the three eligible structures completely and thus not adversely impact them.

If you have any questions or need additional information please feel free to contact me at (208) 272-4192 or jake.fruhlinger@us.army.mil.

Sincerely,

Jake Fruhlinger
Cultural Resource Manager
Idaho Army National Guard and Idaho Military Division



IDAHO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
4040 West Guard Street, Bldg. 600
Boise, Idaho 83705-5004



19 February 2010

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Attn: Mr. Jeff Foss
Field Headquarters Supervisor
Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office
1387 S. Vinnell Way
Room 368
Boise, ID 83709

Dear Mr. Foss:

The Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG) has completed preparation of a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and site-specific analysis to document the potential impacts on environmental resources associated with the creation of an upgraded training and support facility – the Edgemoade Readiness Center will replace outdated facilities and the Tactical Unmanned Aerial System Operations Facility will house a new mission at Mountain Home, Idaho. We request your assistance by reviewing the enclosed Draft EA and providing comments.

The location of the proposed action is on leased land east of U.S. Highway 20 and south of Hot Creek Road in southwest Elmore County, Idaho, that has been occupied by the Guard since 1990. IDARNG is seeking your input to with the completion of an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The goal of the project is to provide a training and support facility that will provide office space for two full-time IDARNG staff and training facilities for up to 140 personnel on a monthly (several days per month) basis. The exact design specifications have not yet been finalized, but the proposed facilities would be approximately 48,000 square feet in size and would contain supporting facilities such as vehicle compounds, utilities (electric, water, sewer, natural gas), a flammable materials storage building, and a controlled waste facility. Many of the facilities that are currently at the site reflect its past history and are not well-suited to the current mission of the IDARNG. Seven buildings currently occupy the site and some of them could be demolished as part of the proposed project. The proposed projects could include demolition, excavation, grading, digging, and leveling of the soil. Some issues of concern that have been identified for analysis include visual resources, land use, socioeconomics, environmental justice, cultural resources, wildlife and vegetation including threatened, endangered and sensitive species, ambient noise levels, soil resources, water quality, air quality, waste management, and safety.

According to our records and based on our preliminary survey of the above referenced area, there are no resident populations of any federally listed or proposed, threatened or endangered species within the immediate vicinity of the proposed project location. Therefore, we have determined that the above referenced action would have no effect on such species. Pursuant to section 7 (a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act,

we would appreciate your input specifically regarding threatened and endangered species, as well as any additional input you may have in regards to this action.

This first project is being planned for development and construction around the year 2011.

You are invited to now review the Draft EA and provide comments as appropriate. **Please provide your written comments and / or a letter stating that you received a copy of the EA and have no concerns within 15 days of receiving this letter to:**

IDAHO NATIONAL GUARD
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS
Construction Facilities Management Office
4715 South Byrd Street, Building 518
Boise, Idaho 83705-8095

Written comments provided by you will be included and responded to in the Final EA, which will be available to the public. Any questions concerning the Proposed Action should be directed to LTC Eugene P. Gussenhoven @ 208-272-3728, email eugene.gussenhoven@us.army.mil or CPT Lee D. Rubel @ 208-272-3730, email lee.rubel@us.army.mil. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Alan C. Gayhart
Brigadier General
Assistant Adjutant General/
Commander, Idaho Army National Guard

Enclosure

APPENDIX C – Comments and Letters Received

Original 2007 Correspondence



"The History and Preservation People"

Our mission: to educate through the identification, preservation, and interpretation of Idaho's cultural heritage.
www.idahohistory.net

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho

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Oral History
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Fax: (208) 334-3198

July 18, 2007

Mr. Jake Fruhlinger
Idaho Army National Guard
Gowen Field Building 518
4715 South Byrd St.
Boise, Idaho 83705-8095

RE: Edgemoade Readiness Center, Mountain Home, Idaho


Dear Jake:

Thank you for sending the archaeological report documenting archaeological and historical survey of the Edgemoade Readiness Center near Mountain Home, Idaho. The field work and report meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

We agree that sites 1403-1 through 1403-5 (10EL1980, 10EL1981, 10EL1982, 10EL1983, 10EL1984) are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. We also agree that the three Quonset huts (IHSI #39-18084, 39-18085, and 39-18086) are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. These properties should be avoided by project construction or transferred to a new owner and moved off site. Please let us know how you plan to proceed.

We appreciate your cooperation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 208-334-3847, ext. 107.

Sincerely,


Susan Pengilly Neitzel
Deputy SHPO

Cc: Jim Thomas, IDPR



The Idaho State Historical Society is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

The Wings and Roots Program

A Program of Native American Consultation with sovereign Tribal Governments using Facilitation, Mediation and Arbitration on a government-to-government basis

405 Creekside Place
Nampa, Idaho 83686
AdvoMediate@cableone.net
208-466-3539

August 1, 2007

**TO: Ms. Marjorie McHenry, Environmental Manager
Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG)**

**FROM: Douglas McConnaughey, Director
The Wings and Roots Program**

RE: Review of Idaho Army National Guard Native American Consultation

The Wings and Roots Program is an institutionalized third-party process of Native American Consultation utilizing Facilitation, Mediation and Arbitration. The process allows an equal eye-to-eye dynamic which creates an Administrative Record through a protocol of respectful accountability. This engaged forum occurs monthly, and allows the parties of the relationship to establish the rules, process and protocol.

The Idaho Army National Guard began consultation regarding the Edgemeade Armory Environmental Assessment (EA) through its meeting with the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes on April 18, 2007 through a briefing by Ms. Marjorie McHenry with questions initiated by tribal representatives. Subsequently, a field review session of the Edgemeade Armory in Mountain Home, Idaho, was conducted on June 07, 2007. Shoshone-Paiute Tribal Cultural Resources Director Ted Howard, as a tribal representative to the Wings and Roots Program, was in attendance and stated that due to previous and much-earlier disturbance of the ground in the 1950's, there was little or nothing left to concerns for cultural resources.

At a follow-up Wings and Roots meeting on June 20, 2007, tribal representatives did not have objections or concerns in the proposed undertaking stated in the Edgemeade Armory EA.

2010 Correspondence

"The History and Preservation People"

Our mission: to educate through the identification, preservation, and interpretation of Idaho's cultural heritage.
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Janet L. Gallimore
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March 11, 2010

Mr. Jake Fruhlinger
Idaho Army National Guard
Gowen Field Building 518
4715 South Byrd St.
Boise, Idaho 83705-8095


RE: Edgemoade Readiness Center, Mountain Home, Idaho

Dear Jake:

Thank you for notifying us of changes to the project upgrading the Edgemoade Readiness Center near Mountain Home, Idaho. We appreciate your efforts in avoiding effects on the three Quonset huts (IHSI #39-18084, 39-18085, and 39-18086) that are *eligible* for the National Register of Historic Places. No other historic properties were identified within the project area. Therefore, the project should have *no effect* on historic properties.

We appreciate your cooperation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 208-334-3847, ext. 107.

Sincerely,


Susan Pengilly
Deputy SHPO



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APPENDIX D – Special Status Species

The following species have the potential to occur within the area but suitable habitat does not exist at the Edgemaede site in most instances.

Common Name	Status*	Habitat
Gray wolf (<i>Canis lupus</i>)	XN BLM Type 1	Forested, shrubland, grassland
Canada lynx (<i>Lynx canadensis</i>)	LT	Forested and riparian corridors
Bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	BLM Type 1	Wintering/nesting areas along the Snake River
Snake River physa snail (<i>Physa natricina</i>)	LE	Mainstem Snake River
Bliss Rapids snail (<i>Taylorconcha serpenticola</i>)	LT / BLM Type 1	Mainstem Snake River and tributaries around the community of Bliss, Idaho
Idaho springsnail (<i>Fontelicella idahoensis</i>)	LE / BLM Type 1	Mainstem Snake River only
Bull trout (<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>)	LT	Mainstem Snake River and tributaries
Yellow-billed cuckoo (<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>)	C	Cottonwood riparian corridors with dense willow understory
Southern Idaho ground squirrel (<i>Spermophilus brunneus endemicus</i>)	C	Native habitats with a high percentage of big sagebrush, native forbs and grasses
Greater sage-grouse (<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>)	C	Sagebrush steppe and grasslands
Pygmy rabbit (<i>Brachylagus idahoensis</i>)	BLM Type 2	Dense big-sagebrush steppe habitat
Townsend's big-eared bat (<i>Plecotus townsendii</i>)	BLM Type 3	Forest, riparian, sagebrush
Spotted bat (<i>Euderma maculatum</i>)	BLM Type 3	Forest, riparian, sagebrush
Prairie falcon (<i>Falco mexicanus</i>)	BLM Type 3	Open grasslands, sagebrush steppe, shrubland
Columbian sharp-tailed grouse (<i>Tympanuchus phasianellus columbianus</i>)	BLM Type 3	Sagebrush steppe, aspen forests, mountain shrub
Loggerhead shrike (<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>)	BLM Type 3	Sagebrush steppe, juniper woodlands, riparian corridors, annual grasslands
Sage sparrow (<i>Amphispiza belli</i>)	BLM Type 3	Sagebrush steppe, juniper woodlands
Brewer's sparrow (<i>Spizella breweri</i>)	BLM Type 3	Sagebrush steppe

* XN – Federally Listed as Experimental, Non-essential in Idaho

LT – Federally Listed Threatened

LE – Federally Listed Endangered

BLM Type 1 Federally threatened, endangered, proposed or candidate species

BLM Type 2 Rangewide/Globally imperiled species that are experiencing significant declines throughout their range with a high likelihood of being listed in the foreseeable future due to their rarity and/or significant endangerment factors.

BLM Type 3 Regional/State imperiled species that are experiencing significant declines in population or habitat and are in danger of regional or local extinctions in Idaho in the foreseeable future if factors contributing to their decline continues.

There are no gray wolf dens or rendezvous sites known to occur within or adjacent to the project area and the project area is not within any known pack territory. Therefore the proposed project would have “No Effect” on gray wolf.

There is no suitable habitat for the Canada lynx, bald eagle, yellow-billed cuckoo, Snake River physa snail, Bliss Rapids snail, Idaho springsnail, or bull trout within the project area. Therefore the proposed project would not directly or indirectly impact any of these species. The proposed project would have “No Effect” on the Canada lynx, bald eagle, yellow-billed cuckoo, Snake River physa snail, Bliss Rapids snail, Idaho springsnail, and bull trout. Habitat is marginal in the project area for sage grouse, which was placed on the candidate list for future action on March 5, 2010, meaning the species will not receive statutory protection under the ESA and that individual states continue to be responsible for their management. Sage-grouse are the largest North American grouse species, with a historical range covering much of the sagebrush-dominated ecosystems of North America. Conservative estimates indicate that 50 percent of its original range is no longer capable of supporting sage-grouse on an annual basis (Braun et al. 1976, Braun 1995). Changes in land use and land development are the primary causes of habitat loss, while habitat degradation is a complicated interaction among many factors including drought, livestock grazing, changes in natural fire regimes, and the spread of invasive, non-native species (Connelly et al. 2004).

Habitat is marginal in the project area for sharp-tailed grouse or pygmy rabbit due to the limited sagebrush density and native plant cover within the project area. The project area is outside the range of the Southern Idaho ground squirrel. These species would not be affected by the proposed project.

No special status plant species were identified in the project area. Special status plants that could potentially be present in the region are listed below. There is suitable habitat for only one of the special status plant species listed below, slickspot peppergrass. This species is discussed above in Sections 4.8.2.1 and 5.7.2.1.

- MacFarlane’s four-o’clock (*Mirabilis macfarlanei*) – Federally threatened
- Spalding’s silene (Spalding’s catchfly) (*Silene spaldingii*) – Federally threatened
- Ute ladies’ tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*) – Federally threatened
- Water howellia (*Howellia aquatilis*) – Federally threatened
- Slickspot peppergrass (*Lepidium papilliferum*) – Federally threatened
- Christ’s Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja christii*) – Candidate species
- Linear leaf moonwort (*Botrychium lineare*) – Candidate species