

INSTALLATION BOUNDARY FENCE REPLACEMENT: UPLAND AREAS
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

1.0 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

1.1 Background, Purpose, and Need for the Proposed Action

Moody Air Force Base (AFB), Georgia proposes to replace the boundary fence in upland areas in order to mark the legal and physical demarcation of the installation boundary. The barbed-wire fence that is currently in place is in serious disrepair and does not provide an adequate security barrier for Moody AFB. Fallen trees and severe overgrowth have knocked down portions of the fence leaving the base susceptible to unauthorized entry. The proposed action consists of installing a seven-foot chain-linked fence with out-rigging in upland areas around the boundary of Moody AFB.

1.2 Location of the Proposed Action

Moody Air Force Base is located in south-central Georgia approximately 10 miles northeast of Valdosta. The proposed action will occur along the boundary of Moody AFB from Mission Lake around Grand Bay Range to Eisemann Road. The fence would only be constructed in upland areas where adequate fencing is not already present. Section 1 of the proposed project area is located on the north side of the base next to Eisemann Road (Figure 3). Section 2 is located on the east side of the base (Figure 4). Sections 3 and 4 are located on the south side of the base (Figures 5 and 6). Section 5 is located next to Mission Lake (Figure 7). Refer to Figures 1 and 2 for the general location of Moody AFB and the general location of the proposed project.

1.3 Scope of the Environmental Review

Issues that could potentially be impacted by the proposed action include:

- Air Resources
- Wildlife Resources
- Vegetation Resources
- Soil Resources
- Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) Sites
- Safety

1.4 Applicable Regulations Required

The command at Moody AFB has the responsibility to ensure that all projects comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as well as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, Executive Order 11990, Executive Order 13112, the National

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Historic Preservation Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), and other applicable environmental laws and regulations.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Minimum Selection Criteria

The Air Force considered several alternatives to the Proposed Action. In the initial screening of these alternatives, the Air Force took into consideration minimum selection criteria. Only those alternatives that met these criteria were considered suitable for detailed analysis. The selection criteria were in conformance to existing laws, Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) and Department of the Air Force (AF) policy and regulations, and the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan.

2.2 Detailed Description of Proposed Action

The proposed action consists of removing the current fencing around the upland boundaries of Moody AFB where fencing is not adequate and installing a seven-foot chain-linked fence with two-foot barbed wire out-rigging. In some areas, vegetation would have to be cleared to a width of approximately 15 feet. The boundaries of each project section would be clearly marked to ensure that wetlands and other sensitive areas would not be harmed.

2.3 Alternatives

2.3.1 Alternative A

This alternative would be similar to the proposed action except that in areas of dense vegetation the fence would deviate around these areas in order to avoid extensive clearing.

2.3.2 Alternative B – No Action Alternative

Under this alternative, the fence would not be replaced. The inadequate barbed-wire fencing that currently exists would not be replaced and Moody AFB would continue to be in violation of the ‘Air Force Installation Security Program’. Security Forces personnel would continue to be forced to implement a more robust and thorough surveillance program to compensate for the lack of physical security.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Introduction

The physical and biological components of Moody Air Force Base (AFB) are described in Moody AFB’s INRMP and in the Moody AFB Natural Heritage Inventory Final Report. These documents are available for review in the Environmental Flight of the Civil Engineer Squadron. Only information specific to the project will be discussed here.

None of the analyzed alternatives would have significant negative impacts to areas of critical environmental concern, prime or unique farmlands, coastal zones, wilderness areas, floodplains, wild or scenic rivers, or to Native American religious concerns.

3.2 Air Resources

The Clean Air Act dictates that National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), established by the Environmental Protection Agency, must be maintained nationwide. The NAAQS have included standards for six “criteria” pollutants: ozone, nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide, particulate matter (10 microns or less), sulfur dioxide, and lead. Lowndes County is an attainment area for all NAAQS “criteria” pollutants. Specifically, in regards to the Clean Air Act and regulation of installation emissions, Moody AFB is classified as an area source and is considered a major source for criteria air pollutants. Moody AFB currently operates under a Synthetic Minor Permit for Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs); that permit was issued on 31 August 1998.

3.3 Wildlife Resources

Because of the current state of the fence around the installation, the migration and emigration of wildlife species is currently not restricted. Common wildlife species that may occur transiently on the site would include white-tailed deer, Virginia opossum, armadillo, coyote and raccoons. Surveys for rare, threatened, and endangered (RTE) species were conducted in 1993-94 by The Nature Conservancy, in 1995 by Geo-Marine, and in 2001 by BHE Environmental. Additional surveys of the proposed project area were conducted by installation personnel as part of this action. No RTE species have been reported to occur along the boundary of the installation or within the 15-foot wide zone of vegetation/ground disturbance that would occur as part of the proposed action.

3.4 Vegetation Resources

The current installation boundary fence has not been maintained in several years. Consequently, trees, shrubs, and other vegetation have been allowed to grow in and around the fence. Section 1 of the proposed project area (Figure 3) consists of dense vegetation comprised mainly of upland water oaks, small pine trees and shrubs. Section 2 (Figure 4) consists of pine plantations. Sections 3 and 4 (Figures 5 and 6) consist of small mixed hardwoods, pine trees and shrubs with vegetation being quite dense in some areas. Section 5 (Figure 7) consists of small oaks and shrubs also with areas of dense vegetation. Representative photos of each section showing the current vegetative state are at Appendix A.

3.5 Soil Resources

The soils underlying Section 1 (Figure 3) of the proposed project area are classified as Tifton loamy sand (TfA and TfB), Stilson loamy sand (Se) and Johnston loam (Jo). These soils range from very poorly drained to well drained with 0 to 2 percent slopes.

The soils underlying Section 2 (Figure 4) of the proposed project area are classified as Mascotte sand (Mn), Leefield loamy sand (Le), Alapaha loamy sand (At), Olustee sand (Oa) and Pelham loamy sand (Pe). These soils range from poorly drained to somewhat poorly drained with 0 to 3 percent slopes.

The soils underlying Section 3 (Figure 5) of the proposed project area are classified as Mascotte sand (Mn), Bayboro loam (Bm), Leefield loamy sand (Le), Olustee sand (Oa), Pelham loamy sand (Pe) and Johnston loam (Jo). These soils range from very poorly drained to somewhat poorly drained with 0 to 3 percent slopes.

The soils underlying Section 4 (Figure 6) of the proposed project area are classified as Mascotte sand (Mn), Olustee sand (Oa) and Pelham loamy sand (Pe). These soils are poorly drained with 0 to 2 percent slopes.

The soils underlying Section 5 (Figure 7) of the proposed project area are classified as Leefield loamy sand (Le), Olustee sand (Oa) and Pelham loamy sand (Pe). These soils range from poorly drained to somewhat poorly drained with 0 to 3 percent slopes.

These soils are not classified as a prime or unique farmland according to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Department of Agriculture. Additionally, these soils are not classified as hydric (wetland) soils by the NRCS or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

3.6 Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) Sites

One ERP site, the Burma Road Landfill (LF-01), lies in the proposed project area at Section 5 (Figure 7). This site, which covers approximately 1.5 acres, is located approximately 800 feet southeast of Mission Lake and 75 feet north of the Moody AFB southern boundary. Contamination associated with this site is primarily limited to groundwater contamination by benzene at depths greater than 35 feet below the ground surface. Additionally, there are elevated levels of total petroleum hydrocarbons in the soils located between 8 to 10 feet below the ground surface.

3.7 Safety

A few electrical power lines are located in the proposed project area at Section 3 (Figure 5). These lines are approximately 25 feet above ground level, suspended by wooden poles.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

4.1 Air Resources

4.1.1 Proposed Action

The construction of the chain-linked fence would lead to temporary increases in air emissions as a result of the equipment used to install the posts. However, these air emissions would be of short-term duration and would be present only during the initial construction of the fence.

Therefore, these emissions are not considered a significant impact on overall air resources on the installation.

4.1.2 Alternative A

The impacts to air resources as a result of this alternative would be similar to the proposed action. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts to air resources as a result of this alternative.

4.1.3 Alternative B- No Action Alternative

There would be no impacts to air resources as a result of this alternative.

4.2 Wildlife Resources

4.2.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action would hamper the ability of wildlife species to cross the installation boundary. However, the proposed fence configuration would not preclude the movement of wildlife species. Wildlife species seeking to cross the boundary fence would be forced to climb, jump, or go under the fence. Smaller wildlife species, such as amphibians, reptiles, and rodents, would continue to be able to cross the installation boundary without impedance. Following a period of adjustment to the presence of the fence, there should be no significant impacts to wildlife species as a result of implementation of the proposed action.

4.2.2 Alternative A

The impacts to wildlife resources as a result of this alternative would be similar to the proposed action. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts to wildlife resources as a result of this alternative.

4.2.3 Alternative B – No Action Alternative

There would be no impacts to wildlife resources as a result of this alternative.

4.3 Vegetation Resources

4.3.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action would require extensive clearing of dense vegetation in some places producing minor disturbances in the vegetation of the project area during construction. A 15-foot wide corridor of vegetation would have to be cleared to facilitate the construction of the fence. Merchantable trees would be sold and removed under a small lot timber sale. The remaining vegetation would be removed as part of the construction process. All of the vegetation present on the fence lines are common native species that are traditionally found in areas of disturbance and that are well represented throughout the region. Therefore, the loss of

vegetation within the fence corridor would not result in any significant impacts to vegetation resources as a whole.

4.3.2 Alternative A

Under this alternative, areas of dense vegetation would be avoided by constructing the fence closer to the road. This would diminish much of the vegetation disturbance associated with fence construction and would be less costly as well. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts to vegetation resources as a result of the proposed action.

4.3.3 Alternative B – No Action Alternative

There would be no significant impacts to vegetation resources as a result of this alternative.

4.4 Soil Resources

4.4.1 Proposed Action

The soil types in the proposed project area are recognized by the NRCS as being suitable for construction purposes. The provisions of the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Law would be followed, and silt fences and other protective techniques would be employed to minimize soil erosion. These soils are not classified as hydric soils. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts to soil resources as a result of the proposed action.

4.4.2 Alternative A

The impacts to soil resources as a result of this alternative would be similar to the proposed action. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts to soil resources as a result of this alternative.

4.4.3 Alternative B – No Action Alternative

There would be no impacts to soil resources as a result of this alternative.

4.5 Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) Sites

4.5.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action would extend over an ERP site (Figure 7). Only one surface soil sampling location for the LF-01 site is located within or near the proposed fence line. Elevated levels of Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons were detected primarily between 8 to 10 feet below ground surface. According to the human health risk assessment performed for this site, risk associated with exposure to soil can be considered minimal. Therefore, data does not indicate a significant level of concern for worker health during the installation of the fence. Due to the limited soil samples relative to the area covered by the fencing, it cannot be guaranteed that contaminated soils will not be encountered while installing the fence posts. However, the contaminated soils would not pose a threat to human health. Additionally, a benzene groundwater plume runs under

the base boundary in this area at a depth of 35-80 feet. The fence posts would not be installed to a depth that would necessitate land use controls. No ERP waiver would be required. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts to ERP sites as a result of the proposed action.

4.5.2. Alternative A

The impacts to ERP sites as a result of this alternative would be similar to the proposed action. Under this alternative, no additional ERP sites would be affected. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts to ERP sites as a result of this alternative.

4.5.3 Alternative B – No Action Alternative

There would be no impacts to any ERP sites as a result of this alternative.

4.6 Safety

4.6.1 Proposed Action

Because a few power lines are located in the proposed project area at Section 3 (Figure 5), workers would need to be cautious of this potential hazard.

4.6.2 Alternative A

The impacts to safety as a result of this alternative would be similar to the proposed action. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts to safety as a result of this alternative.

4.6.3 Alternative B – No Action Alternative

There would be no impacts to safety as a result of this alternative.

5.0 LIST OF AGENCIES CONSULTED

Due to the minimal adverse impacts of the proposed action, few outside agencies were consulted. Consultation was conducted with the State Historic Preservation Office, City of Valdosta, Lowndes County Board of Commissioners, Lanier County Board of Commissioners, and the Georgia State Clearinghouse.

APPENDIX A
PHOTOS
And
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

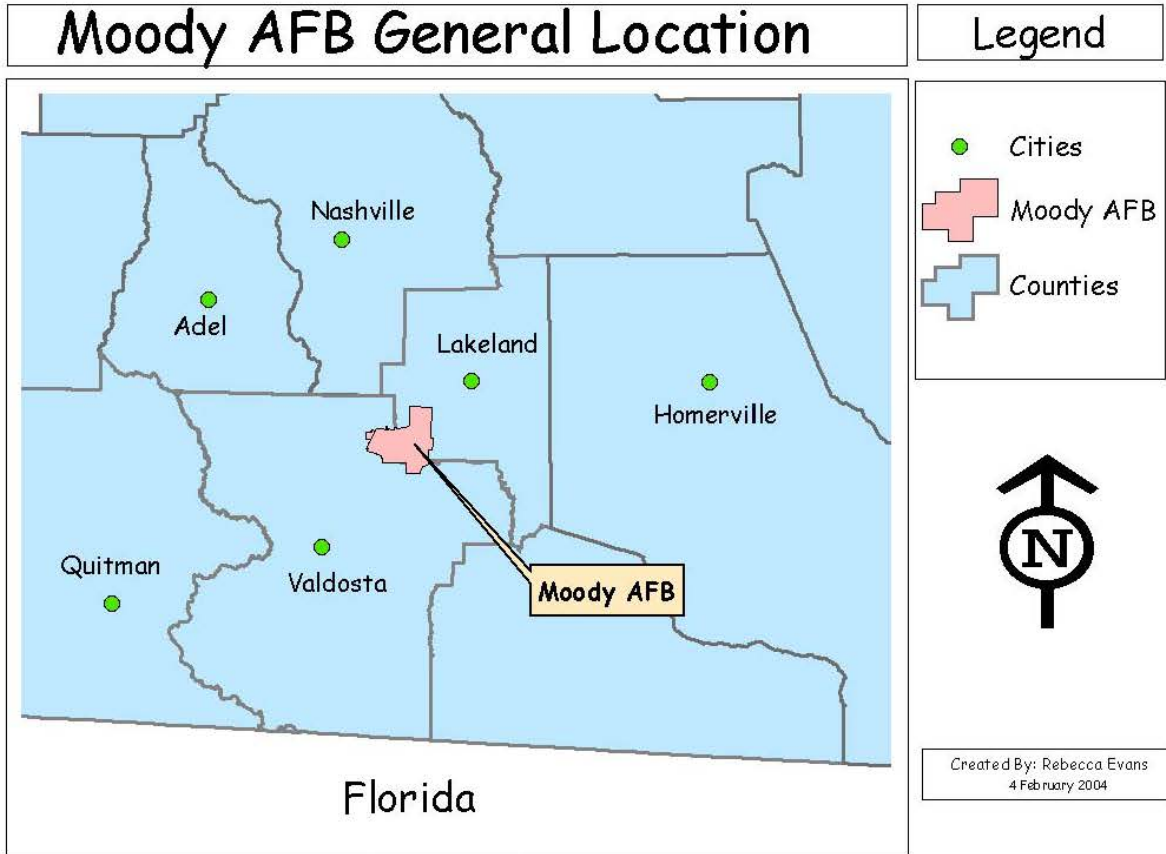
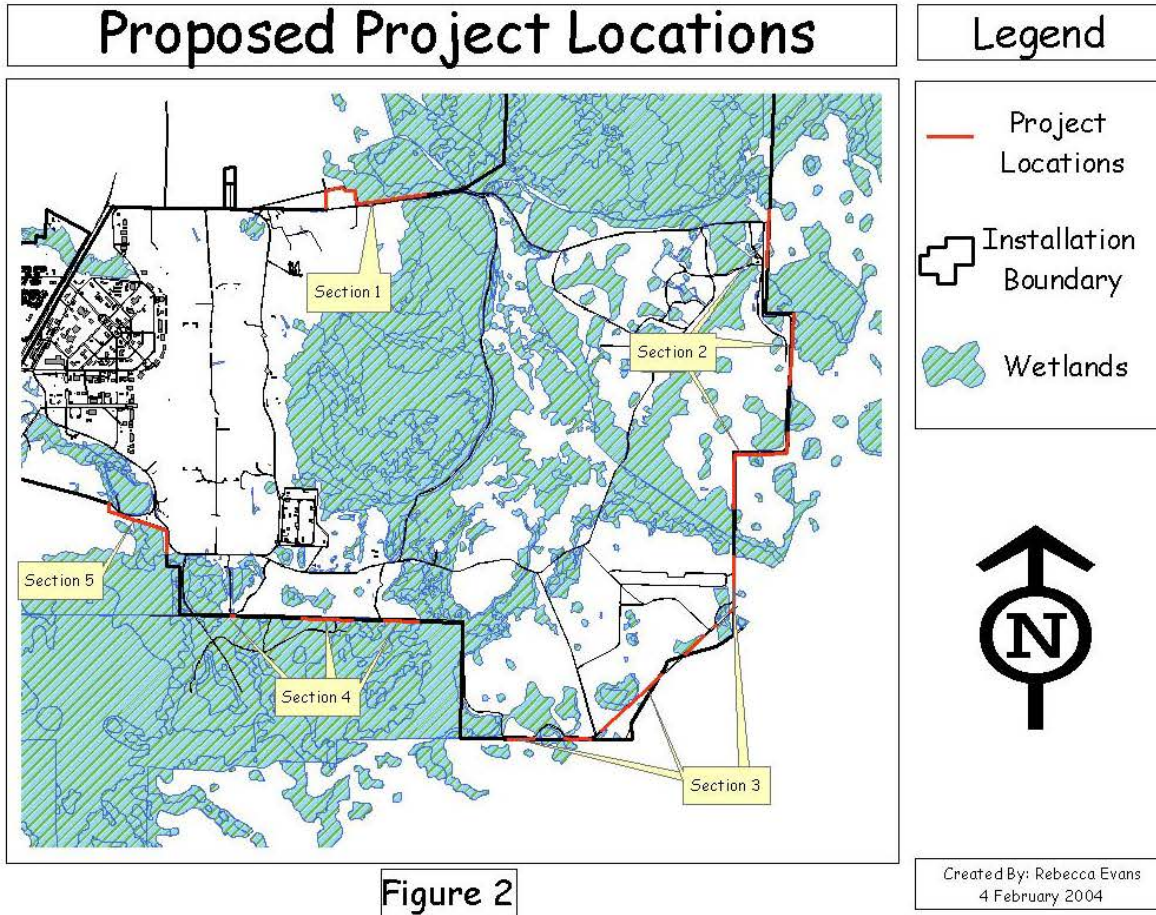
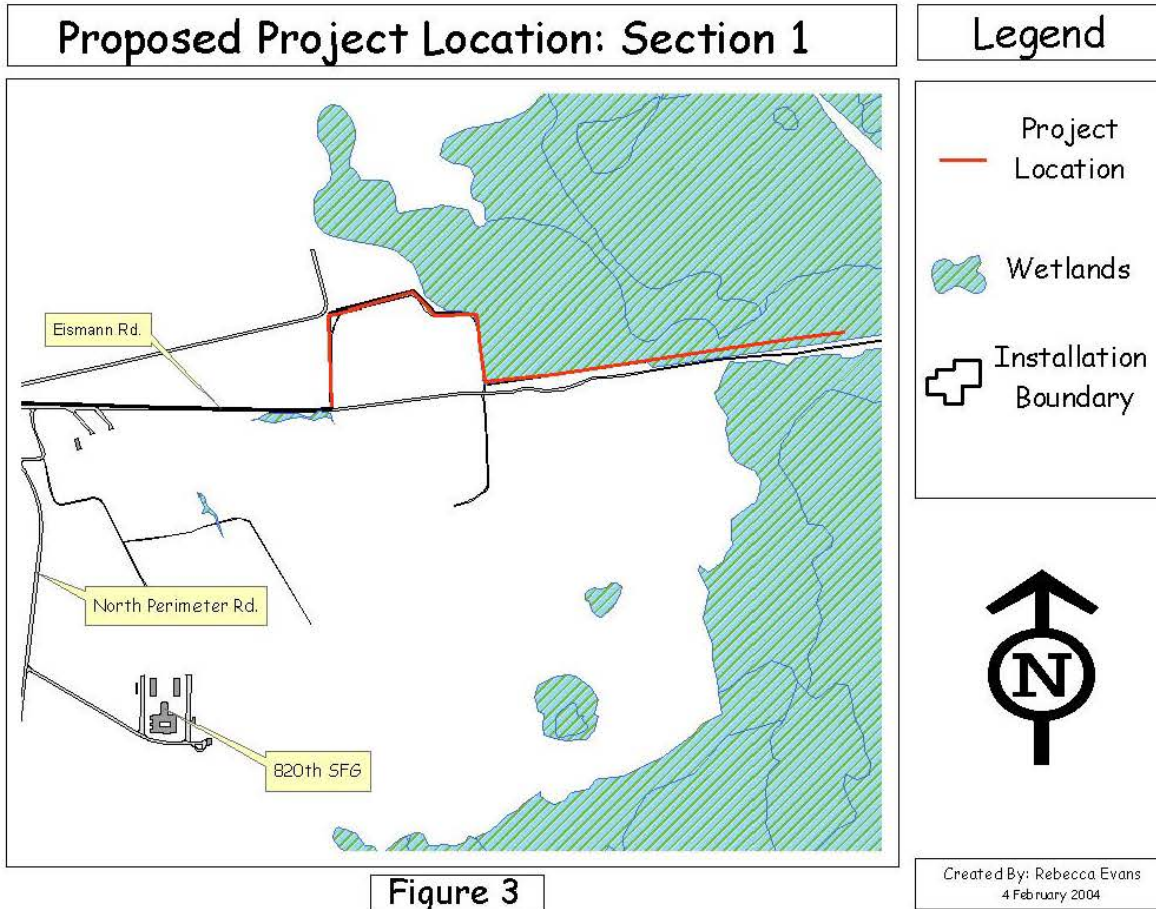


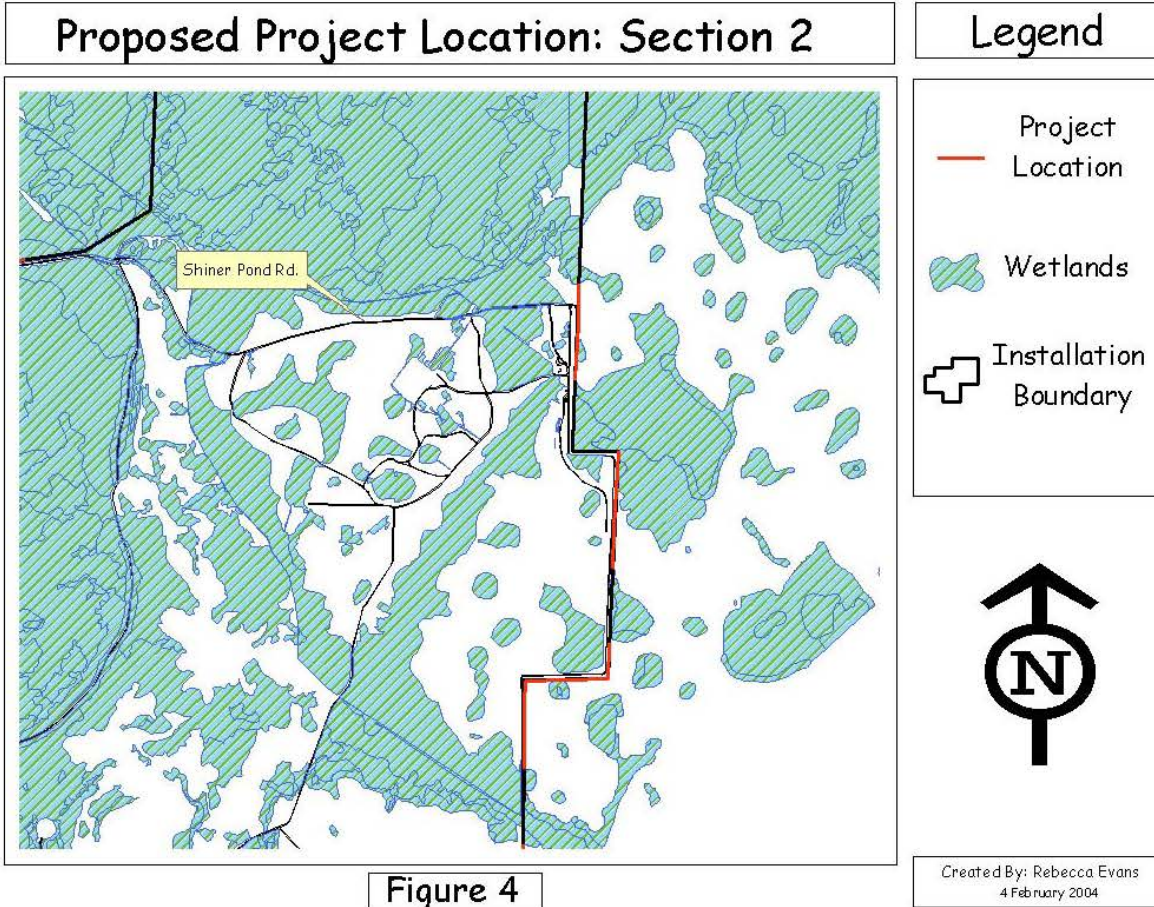
Figure 1





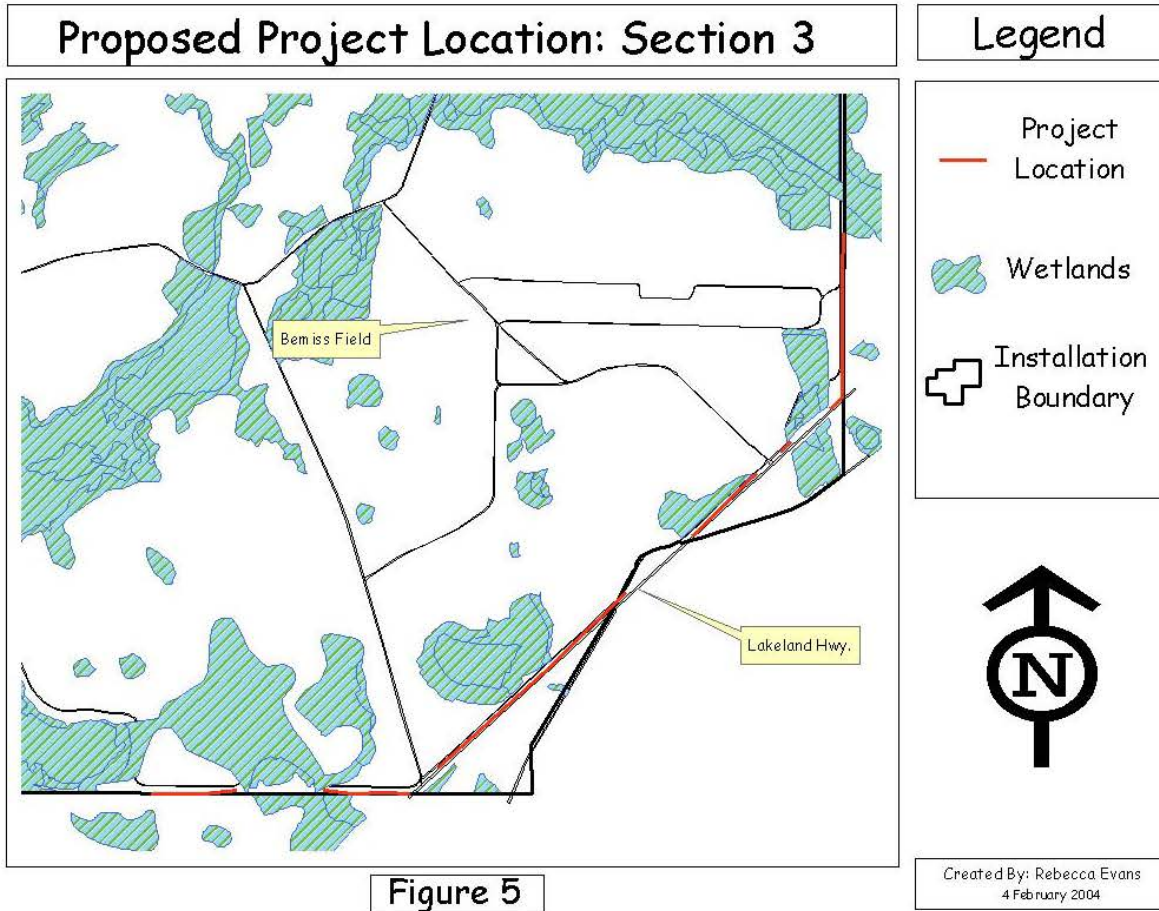
PHOTOS OF SECTION 1





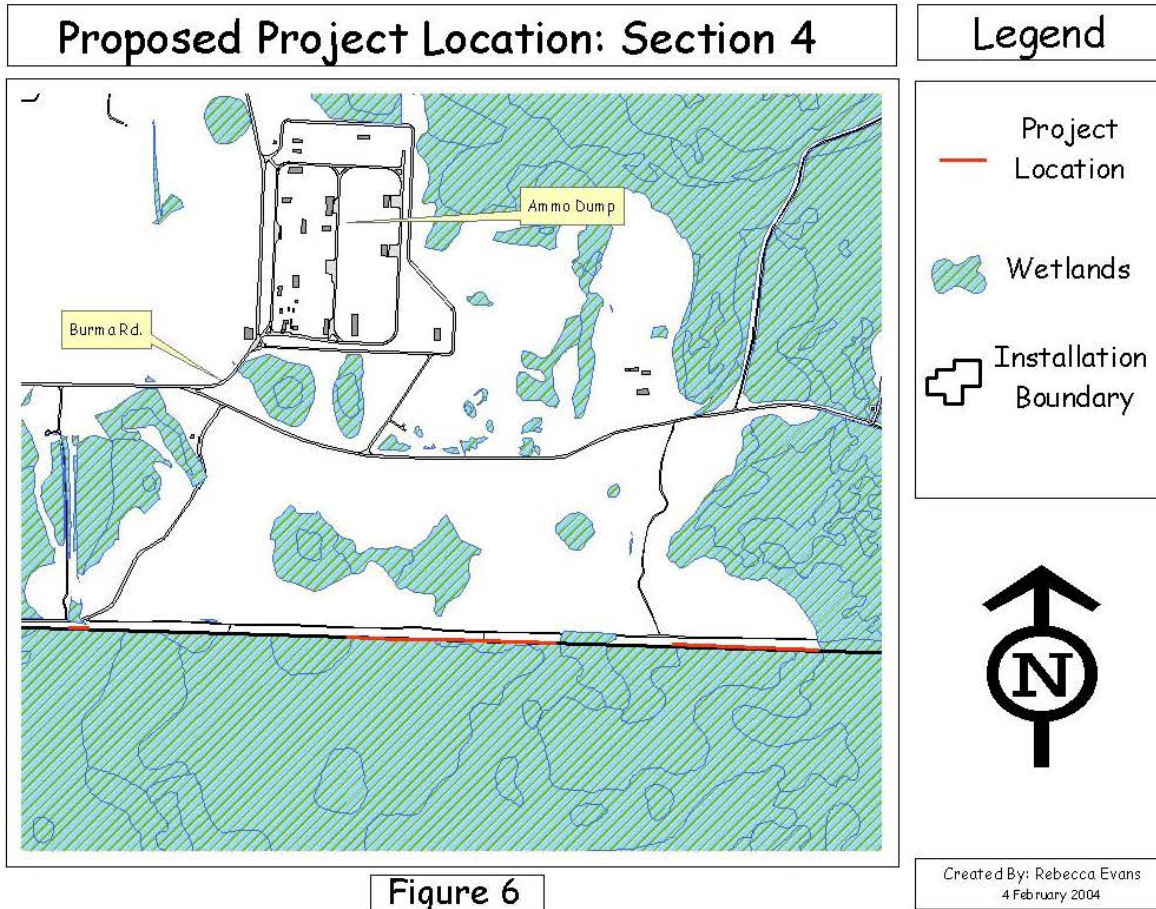
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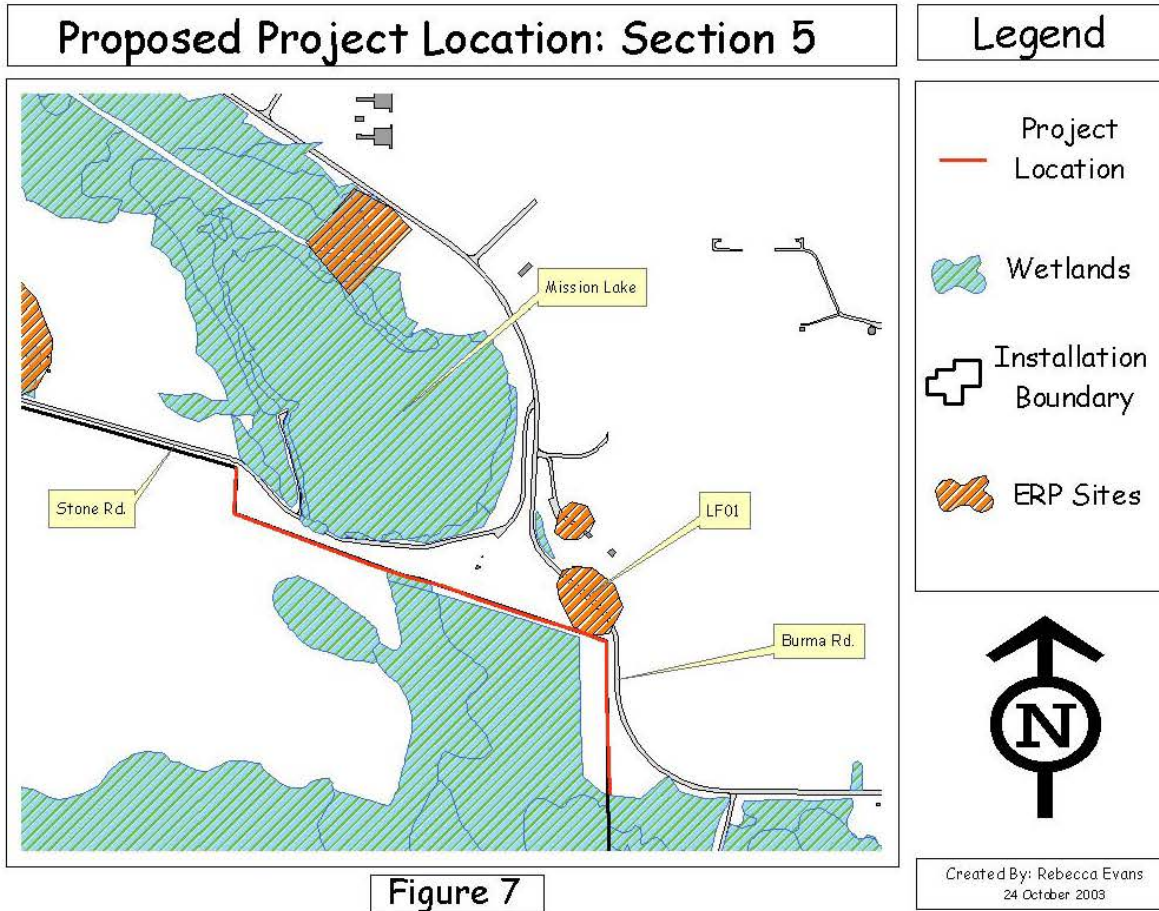
PHOTOS OF SECTION 3





PHOTOS OF SECTION 4





PHOTOS OF SECTION 5



INSTALLATION BOUNDARY FENCE REPLACEMENT: UPLAND AREAS
MOODY AIR FORCE BASE, GEORGIA
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

1.1 Proposed Action

Moody Air Force Base (AFB), Georgia proposes to replace the boundary fence in upland areas in order to mark the legal and physical demarcation of the installation boundary. The barbed-wire fence that is currently in place is in serious disrepair and does not provide an adequate security barrier for Moody AFB. Fallen trees and severe overgrowth have knocked down portions of the fence leaving the base susceptible to unauthorized entry. The proposed action consists of installing a seven-foot chain-linked fence with out-rigging in upland areas around the boundary of Moody AFB.

The proposed action consists of removing the current fencing around the upland boundaries of Moody AFB where fencing is not adequate and installing a seven-foot chain-linked fence with two-foot barbed wire out-rigging. In some areas, vegetation would have to be cleared to a width of approximately 15 feet. The boundaries of each project section would be clearly marked to ensure that wetlands and other sensitive areas would not be harmed.

1.2 Alternatives

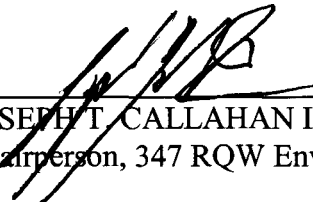
The two alternatives to the proposed action that were evaluated in the environmental assessment were: 1) modification of the proposed action to avoid areas of dense vegetation; and, 2) the no action alternative.

2.0 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Temporary increases in air emissions would occur, and a limited corridor of native vegetation would be removed. Additionally, there would be minor disruptions in medium to large animal movements across the installation boundary. However, none of these effects were considered significant. Therefore, there would not be any significant impacts to the environment as a result of implementation of the proposed action or any of the evaluated alternatives. Also, there were no significant cumulative effects noted that would occur as a result of implementation of the proposed action or any of the evaluated alternatives.

3.0 CONCLUSION:

The attached EA was prepared and evaluated pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (Public Law 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and according to 32 Code of Federal Regulations 989, *The Environmental Impact Analysis Process*. I have concluded that the proposed project titled, "Installation Boundary Fence Replacement: Upland Areas" does not constitute a "major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment" when considered individually or cumulatively in the context of the referenced act, including both direct and indirect impacts. Therefore, no further study is required, and a Finding of No Significant Impact is thus warranted.



JOSEPH T. CALLAHAN III, Colonel, USAF
Chairperson, 347 RQW Environmental Protection Committee

5-27-04
Date