FINDING ON NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FNSI)

CONVOY LIVE FIRE (CLF) RANGE AT JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD YAKIMA TRAINING CENTER (JBLM YTC)

Introduction

Headquarters, Department of the Army (DA) has programmed the construction of a Convoy Live Fire (CLF) Range in Fiscal Year 13 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord Yakima Training Center (JBLM YTC) as part of the Army Master Range Program. It has been determined by the DA Assistant Chief of Staff, Operations and Plans (G-3) that this range is required to train Active Component Units stationed at JBLM. JBLM YTC has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to identify and evaluate potential adverse environmental effects associated with the Proposed Action— construction of a CLF range at JBLM YTC, Washington.

The purpose for this action is to address a range short-fall for a CLF Range at JBLM YTC by providing a year-round, comprehensive and realistic live-fire training and range facility. Construction and designation of a permanent CLF Range area would provide JBLM YTC with the capability to fully support mission-essential training tasks for CLF and train Soldiers to effectively respond to attacks on convoys in theater (e.g., ambushes, snipers, Improvised Explosive Devices). There is a need for a dedicated range that would improve efficiency, effectiveness, and reduce impacts on existing land uses and resources from its use. CLF training is a mission essential task that all Army units must complete prior to deployment, and in accordance with DA G-3 requirements. A CLF Range is needed at JBLM YTC to support training requirements for military units that train at JBLM YTC. In accordance with both Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and Army National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1508.13 and 32 CFR 651.21 respectively), this FNSI hereby incorporates the entire EA by reference.

1. Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action: The Proposed Action is to construct, operate, and maintain a CLF Range to Army Training Circular 25-8, *Training Ranges*, standards at JBLM YTC.

Alternatives Considered and Evaluated: Chapter 2 of the EA presents a discussion of the alternatives evaluated. Four sites were initially considered during site planning, which included Training Area (TA) 12 Range 15, TA 11 Range 10, TA 6 and TA 4. Based on the screening criteria analysis presented in Section 2.3 of the EA, only one of the four sites considered, TA 12 (Range 15) fully met the five required screening elements and was carried forward for evaluation in the EA.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, the CLF Range would not be constructed. JBLM YTC would continue to utilize sub-optimal, temporary ranges for CLF training that do not provide Soldiers with optimal quality training.

Proposed Action Alternative – A CLF Range would be constructed, operated, and maintained at JBLM YTC at a site within the Range 15 footprint. Construction of the CLF Range would entail placement of a Range Operations Control Area (ROCA) facility, a parking area for the ROCA facility, an air-vaulted latrine facility, an ammo breakdown area, and targetry. In addition, approximately 3.9 miles of trenching would be required along the existing main road through the site for power and control wires to connect targetry with the ROCA. A 2.2-mile extension of the wired electrical service (power feed) may also be pursued if it is determined to be economically viable to supply power to the ROCA. Construction footprints around the targetry/objectives would have a typical footprint of disturbance of approximately 98 feet (30 meters) around each specific target and approximately 328 feet (100 meters) around moving targets. Establishment of maintenance roads (unimproved roads approximately 10 feet [3 meters] wide)

would also be required for targetry maintenance during operations. Construction would also involve demolition of existing Range 15 target pits.

All targetry would be fully automated, utilizing event-specific, computer-driven target scenarios and scoring. Use of the CLF and Range 15 combined is estimated to be about 242 days per year. Power for the new CLF facility would be provided by two generators (a 60 kilowatt (kW) generator for the ROCA and a 20 kW generator near the Entry Control Point) or via a power feed from the existing ROCA. Convoy movements to the new range would be able to utilize low water crossings at Selah Creek and existing roads within JBLM YTC. During operations, prior to CLF Range training, units would assemble in the ROCA parking area.

2. Environmental Analysis

Environmental Consequences and Comparison of Alternatives: The EA's Chapter 3 discusses the affected environment and potential environmental consequences for the Proposed Action Alternative by valued environmental component (VEC). The No Action Alternative serves as a baseline from which to compare the potential impacts of the Proposed Action Alternative. Due to the nature of the Proposed Action and the nature of effects, it was determined that the following VECs would have negligible adverse effects and were not retained for further analysis within the EA: wetlands, land use, infrastructure and utilities, solid and hazardous waste, noise, and socioeconomics. A summary of potential effects for the VECs retained for further analysis is presented in Table 1. As shown in Table 1, implementation of the Proposed Action is not anticipated to result in adverse significant environmental impacts. Potential permits, plans, and measures to reduce adverse impacts identified within the EA analysis are also included within the table which support the impact determinations presented.

Table 1. Summary of Potential Environmental Effects from Baseline Conditions

VEC	Activity	No Action	Proposed Action	Permits, Plans, and Measures Identified for Reduction of Adverse Impacts
Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas	Construction	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• Prior to construction, the contractor would contact the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency (YRCAA) to determine the requirements for a Dust Control Plan and appropriate dust control measures. If dust might pose a nuisance or be a detriment to health or safety, preventive measures would be outlined in the Dust Control Plan and implemented by the contractor to prevent airborne dust during construction. • If temporary generators are used for construction, the contractor would contact the YRCAA concerning possible submittal of a Notice of Establishment of Temporary Portable Sources and provide YTC Public Works-Environmental Division with a copy of the notice.
	Operations	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• The control of smoke would be handled by smoke management techniques per the Installation Wildland Fire Management Plan (IWFMP) to meet regulatory and burn permit requirements and to determine the appropriate timing of prescribed fires and firebreak management. • If the Proposed Action pursues the use of the two generators to power the proposed CLF Range, JBLM YTC would coordinate with the Washington Department of Ecology and YRCAA to determine potential permitting or regulatory requirements.

Table 1. Summary of Potential Environmental Effects from Baseline Conditions

VEC	Activity	No Action	Proposed Action	Permits, Plans, and Measures Identified for Reduction of Adverse Impacts
Water Resources	Construction	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• To prevent water quality deterioration, all temporary construction-related footprint disturbances would be revegetated with appropriate plant species. • Unnamed intermittent upland tributary drainages disturbed during trenching and underground utility operations would be restored to their original grades following construction. • A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit would be required prior to construction activities. • To minimize impacts to surface water resources, the Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (CSWPPP) would be adhered to and would provide protection by ensuring contracts contain language requiring site operators to obtain a NPDES permit and develop a site-specific CSWPPP. The site-specific CSWPPP plan would include best management practices (BMPs) for erosion control and pollution prevention requirements.
	Operations	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• Existing mitigation associated with the 2011 Fort Lewis GTA action includes a requirement for the development of 12 additional storage and dip pond facilities across JBLM YTC. This would help mitigate the increase wildland fire potential due to the new CLF and would further reduce the potential for adverse impacts of wildland fire spread and sediment entering Selah Creek as fires would be suppressed more rapidly. • If necessary, stormwater runoff from the 5.8-acre ROCA area would be managed through site design, including the creation of upland release points.

Table 1. Summary of Potential Environmental Effects from Baseline Conditions

VEC	Activity	No Action	Proposed Action	Permits, Plans, and Measures Identified for Reduction of Adverse Impacts
Biological Resources	Construction	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• Temporary construction-related footprint disturbances would be revegetated with appropriate species. Ground cover revegetation would occur on-site at a 1:1 ratio (up to 32.7 acres disturbed, requiring up to 32.7 acres revegetated) and disturbances to shrub-steppe vegetation (sage-grouse habitat) would be mitigated through off-site restoration at a 3:1 ratio (up to 12.0 acres disturbed, requiring up to 36.0 acres restored). These measures would also serve to reduce the spread of noxious weeds; however, noxious weed management may be necessary to prevent the spread of invasive species in disturbed sites. • In order to further reduce the potential for disturbance to species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, ground-clearing activities, to the greatest extent possible, would be conducted outside the nesting season (February to August). If ground clearing activities are conducted within the nesting season, the amount of ground clearing activities would be minimized to the greatest extend practical.
	Operations	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• Existing mitigation associated with the 2011 Fort Lewis GTA action includes a requirement for the development of 12 additional storage and dip pond facilities across JBLM YTC. This mitigation would further reduce the potential for adverse impacts of wildland fire spread to biological resources as fires would be suppressed more rapidly. • Protection of newly discovered active leks outside current Sage-grouse Protection Area would be assessed on a case by case basis and may include protective measures outlined in the Sage-grouse Management Plan, which establishes a 1 kilometer protection radius from active lek areas. • To reduce the probability of take, JBLM YTC would, to the greatest extent possible, conduct maintenance activities outside of the MBTA nesting season (February to August).
Cultural Resources	Construction	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• Necessary surveys regarding Traditional Cultural Properties, Sacred Sites, and Areas of Contemporary Native American Use (ACNAUs) would be conducted prior to construction and identified resources would be managed according to the Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP).
	Operations	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• Any identified resources would be managed according to the ICRMP during operations of the proposed CLF Range.

Table 1. Summary of Potential Environmental Effects from Baseline Conditions

VEC	Activity	No Action	Proposed Action	Permits, Plans, and Measures Identified for Reduction of Adverse Impacts
Soil Resources	Construction	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• BMPs specified in the Installation's Cultural and Natural Resources Management Plan and the operator's CSWPPP would be implemented to control water runoff and erosion and establish permanent vegetation cover through seeding and re-establishment of desirable vegetative cover at sites disturbed during construction to 70 percent of pre-disturbance cover levels. • Range construction would require compliance with the NPDES permit and may require a site-specific Erosion Control Management Plan, or equivalent.
	Operations	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• Ongoing land management would maintain a desirable vegetative cover to minimize bare soil condition sites; limiting exposed soils to areas in and around targetry, and other improved sites, such as parking areas in and around the ROCA.
Wildland Fire	Construction	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• Construction of the CLF Range would require pre-incident plans, firebreaks, and other essential wildland fire management procedures as part of construction management plans.
	Operations	No Impact	Less than significant impact	• Impacts would be reduced through existing Integrated Wildland Fire Management Plan procedures, including the review and potential expansion of primary and secondary containment areas on adjacent land; developing pre-incident wildland fire plans specifically for the new CLF Range; firebreak maintenance to adequately compartmentalize potential fires due to the CLF Range; restrictions on the use of pyrotechnics on high fire danger days; and prescribed burns in areas where fires frequently recur. • Existing mitigation associated with the 2011 Fort Lewis GTA action includes a requirement for the development of 12 additional storage and dip pond facilities across JBLM YTC would help mitigate wildland fire due to the new CLF Range.

Cumulative Impacts: Cumulative effects are the combination of impacts of the Proposed Action, when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of who undertakes those other actions (Council on Environmental Quality [CEQ] Regulation 1508.7). Cumulative effects can result from actions occurring over a period of time that are minor when each is considered individually, but may be significant when viewed collectively.

JBLM YTC is used for multiple types of training including gunnery, demolition, construction, off-road maneuver and aviation related operations, while the land surrounding JBLM YTC is used mostly for agricultural and livestock purposes. At Range 15 specifically, current uses are primarily as a tank gunnery range that supports firing of both small and large caliber weapon systems. Reasonably foreseeable future actions that are expected to take place on or around JBLM YTC, or were determined to have a potential cumulative effect regarding the Proposed Action included in this analysis include 17th Fires Brigade Firebases; Multi-Purpose Machine Gun Range; Pacific Power Powerline Project: Vantage to Pomona Heights; Realignment, Growth, and Stationing of Army Aviation Assets at JBLM YTC; Vantage Wind

Power Project; Washington Army National Guard Tactical Unmanned Aerial System Training Facility; Urban Operations Village; Sniper Field Fire Range; Combined Arms Collective Training Facility; and the Yakima Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan, if fully implemented.

The range development projects and realignment, growth, and stationing projects generally indicate a cumulative increase in the development and use of training facilities at JBLM YTC. Increased construction and training at JBLM YTC would cause the potential for significant cumulative adverse impacts to the VECs analyzed within the EA. Limited other actions outside of JBLM YTC (powerline and wind projects) were determined to have the potential to cause cumulative adverse effects. The Yakima Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan was viewed as a beneficial cumulative impact to watershed management and improvement of water resources within the Yakima Basin.

As the Proposed Action would have the potential for adverse impacts to air quality and greenhouse gases, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, soil resources and wildland fires, these VECs were reviewed in Chapter 3 of the EA to determine whether or not implementation of the Proposed Action would cause the potential for significant adverse cumulative effects to these VECs. The cumulative effects analysis of these VECs within the EA determined that the Proposed Action would not likely cause any appreciable significant cumulative impacts.

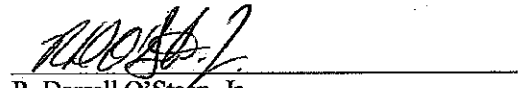
Proposed Impact Reduction Measures: As demonstrated in Table 1, impacts resulting from the Proposed Action would be less than significant; therefore, no mitigation would be required. Various permits, plans, and measures, however, have been identified within the EA analysis that would be undertaken by JBLM YTC to further minimize adverse effects.

3. Public Review and Comment

The Draft EA/Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) on the CLF Range has been made available for a 30-day public review and comment period. Documents have also been made available at the Yakima Valley Regional Library (102 N. 3rd Street, Yakima, Washington), and the Ellensburg Public Library (209 N. Ruby, Ellensburg, Washington). A Public Notice was published in two local newspapers (Yakima Herald Republic, and The Daily Record). All documents have been posted on http://www.lewis.army.mil/publicworks/sites/envir/eia_backup.htm. No comments were received during the comment period.

4. Finding of No Significant Impact

I have considered the results of the analysis in the EA; the comments received during the public comment period, and associated cumulative effects. Based on these factors, I have decided to proceed with the Proposed Action Alternative, construction and operation of a CLF Range at a site within the JBLM YTC Range 15 footprint. Implementation of the Proposed Action, along with specified permits, plans, and measures identified above will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human life or natural environment. This analysis fulfills the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), as well as the requirements of the Environmental Analysis of Army Actions (32 CFR Part 651). Therefore, issuance of a FNSI is warranted and an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary.



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Date

R. Darrell O'Steen, Jr.
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding
Joint Base Lewis-McChord Yakima Training Center