

## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to consider the potential environmental impacts prior to undertaking a course of action. Within the Department of the Army, NEPA is implemented through regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508), with supplemental requirements provided under Army Regulation 32 CFR Part 651, *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*. In adherence with NEPA and 32 CFR Part 651, the Army has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider the environmental effects of leasing a parcel of land to El Paso Community College (EPCC) for the construction and operation of EPCC's East Fort Bliss Campus.

**Description of Action:** Under the Proposed Action, EPCC would lease an approximate 200-acre parcel of land from Fort Bliss for the construction and operation of the proposed EPCC East Fort Bliss Campus. The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1) and the No Action Alternative were considered in this EA:

- **The Proposed Action Alternative** involves construction and operation by of a community college campus by EPCC on approximately 200 acres of Army-owned undeveloped land located within the South Training Area. The land would be leased to EPCC under a long-term lease agreement.
- **The No Action Alternative** involves no construction or operation of a campus by EPCC within Fort Bliss.

**Procedure:** An analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with each alternative is addressed in the *EPCC East Fort Bliss Campus Environmental Assessment*, September, 2010. The findings of this EA are incorporated into this final decision document. Potential resource related issues and impacts were determined relevant if they fell within the scope of the Proposed Action, if they suggested different actions, or if they influenced the decision on the Proposed Action.

Public comments were received up to 30 days following the EA's announcement. Comments are recorded in the Administrative Record. Relevant concerns have been incorporated into the EA and the Final Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI).

**Summary of Comments:** The Draft EA and FNSI were made available for a 30-day public comment period. Notices were placed in El Paso Times (September 19, 2010) and in the Fort Bliss Monitor (September 23, 2010). The public comment period began, September 19, 2010 and ended October 19, 2010. No comments on the Draft EA and FNSI were received during the public comment period.

**Discussion of Anticipated Environmental Effects:** Impacts associated with the implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative and the No Action Alternative would range from beneficial impacts to moderate adverse impacts affecting the natural and human environment (Table 1). Overall, any adverse impacts would be deemed minor through implementation of management actions, best management practices (BMPs), and other measures to reduce impacts. In addition, the cumulative effects analysis determined that no significant adverse cumulative impacts would occur to the resource/issues as a result of past, present, and foreseeable future projects in conjunction with the Proposed Action.

**Table 1. Summary of Potential Environmental Effects for the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative**

Resource/Issue	Alternatives	
	Proposed Action	No Action
Land Use	Negligible	None
Noise	Minor	None
Air Quality	Minor	None
Geology and Soils	Minor	None
Biological Resources		
Protected Species	Minor	None
Vegetation	Minor	None
Wildlife	Minor	None
Water Resources		
Surface Water	Minor	None
Groundwater	Minor	None
Federal Wetlands	None	None
Utilities		
Water Supply	Minor	None
Sanitary Wastewater	Minor	None
Energy	Minor	None
Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice	Beneficial	None
Cultural Resources	Minor	None
Visual Quality/Aesthetics	Minor	None
Hazardous Materials and Waste	Minor	None
Human Health and Safety	Minor	None
Traffic and Transportation	Moderate	None

**Measures for Reduction of Impacts:** As discussed in Chapter 4 of the *EPCC East Fort Bliss Campus Environmental Assessment*, September, 2010, additional measures of reducing would be undertaken as part of the Proposed Action which includes:

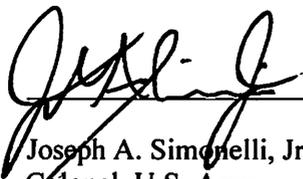
- Due to the proximity of the proposed East Fort Bliss Campus site to El Paso International Airport, any onsite permanent water would incorporate the use of bird balls to camouflage the liquid surface from the air and deter birds and waterfowl. Provided the proposed East Fort Bliss Campus design meets the requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Advisory Circular 150/5200-33B - Hazardous Wildlife Attractants On or Near Airports, the Proposed Action is not anticipated to have an adverse effect on bird aircraft strike hazard (BASH) considerations.
- Landscape design would be compatible with the BASH program and would include measures to avoid attracting avian species such as minimizing outside trees to discourage nesting habitat; designing buildings with no shady spots under cooling systems, vent systems, or ducting so as not to provide nesting habitat; and discouraging permanent water on the site.
- In order to reduce the potential for the introduction and spread of invasive species to the site, any necessary fill materials would be obtained by EPCC from nearby sites to reduce unwanted

invasive weed dispersal. Borrow pits would also be inspected by EPCC for exotic weeds before use.

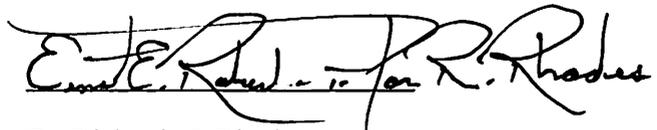
- Given the property's past use as a military training area, prior to start of project, EPCC contractors would receive an unexploded ordnance safety briefing given by Fort Bliss Range Safety office. Any soil discoloration, odors, rubbish and/or any environmental concerns uncovered during construction would be notified by the contractor to the appropriate authority (e.g., Contracting Officer, Contracting Officer's Representative, Project Manager, Project Engineer, and the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Compliance) immediately of the findings. Included in the notification shall be a brief statement to the Contracting Officer stating the exact location, extent of the work affected and a description of the findings. The contractor would suspend work on the site of the discovery and would continue construction operations in all other areas.
- Due to the property's proximity to the historical Butterfield Trail, during site design and construction, no disturbance will occur within 50 feet of the Trail, east to west, all along the footprint of the proposed campus.
- To minimize overall adverse impacts during construction, only those areas necessary to accommodate the planned construction would be graded. This would serve to reduce the potential for wind erosion and dust and reduce overall impacts to vegetation and wildlife habitat.

**Conclusions:** Based on the review of the information contained in the EA, Fort Bliss has determined that the implementation of the Proposed Action with accompanying management plans, best management practices, regulatory requirements, and mitigations would not significantly affect the quality of the environment within the meaning of NEPA Section 102(2)(C). The preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Action is not required.

Approved by:



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Approved by:



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