

COVER SHEET

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4 **a. Responsible Agency:** U.S. Army, Fort Bliss
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6 **b. Proposals and Actions:** McGregor Range, located in Otero County, New Mexico, has supported the
7 military mission of the U.S. Army at Fort Bliss from the 1940s to the present. In 1986, the public lands
8 comprising McGregor Range were withdrawn from the public domain for a period of 15 years through
9 the *Military Lands Withdrawal Act* (Public Law 99-606). This withdrawal expires November 6, 2001.
10 To continue the military use of these public lands, the U.S. Army must apply for continuation of the
11 withdrawal in accordance with the *Engle Act of 1958*, which requires an Act of Congress for military
12 withdrawals encompassing more than 5,000 acres. This *Legislative Environmental Impact Statement*
13 has been prepared in support of an application by the U.S. Army to renew the withdrawal of McGregor
14 Range for military use. The Army's application for renewal of the McGregor Range withdrawal is for the
15 50-year period 2001 through 2051. The Army is considering six Alternatives. Under Alternative 1, the
16 Army's proposed action, the boundaries of McGregor Range would be the same as the 1986 withdrawal
17 (609,935 acres). Under Alternative 2, the Tularosa Basin and Otero Mesa portions of McGregor Range
18 would be withdrawn for continued military use (569,395 acres). The Sacramento Mountains foothills
19 portion of McGregor Range, including the Culp Canyon Wilderness Study Area, would return to the
20 public domain. Under Alternative 3, the Tularosa Basin portion of McGregor Range would be
21 withdrawn for military use (429,395 acres). The Otero Mesa and Sacramento Mountains foothills
22 portions of the range would return to the public domain. Under Alternative 4, only the portion of the
23 Tularosa Basin south of New Mexico Highway 506 would be withdrawn (365,395 acres). No portion of
24 McGregor Range north of New Mexico Highway 506 and on Otero Mesa would be withdrawn for
25 military use. Under Alternative 5, the No Action Alternative, the withdrawal of McGregor Range would
26 not be renewed. Alternative 6 would require potential congressional action to establish a National
27 Conservation Area on Otero Mesa and designate Culp Canyon as a wilderness area, in addition to the
28 return of Otero Mesa and the Sacramento Mountains foothills portion of McGregor Range to the public
29 domain.
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31 **c. Comments and Inquiries:** Written comments regarding this document should be directed to:
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42 **d. Designation:** Draft *Legislative Environmental Impact Statement*
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44 **e. Abstract:** This Draft *Legislative Environmental Impact Statement* has been prepared in accordance
45 with the *National Environmental Policy Act*. The document includes analyses of the potential
46 environmental consequences that the alternative actions may have on land use, airspace, transportation,
47 utilities, earth resources, air quality, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources,
48 socioeconomics, environmental justice, noise, safety, and hazardous substances and waste. The findings
49 indicate that potential environmental impacts from the proposed actions and the alternatives may include
50 changes to land use, and some impacts to biological resources and cultural resources.
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