

DRAFT

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR THE
MODIFICATION OF SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE
FORT BLISS, TEXAS AND NEW MEXICO**



Prepared for:

FORT BLISS

Prepared by:

**Directorate of Public Works
Environmental Division, Fort Bliss**

February 2012

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DRAFT
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
MODIFICATION OF SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE
FORT BLISS, TEXAS AND NEW MEXICO

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1.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

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Proposed Action: Fort Bliss Military Reservation proposes to modify Special Use Airspace (SUA) over the South Training Areas and some adjacent lands in order to separate military and civilian aircraft operating in those areas. The Proposed Action would:

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- designate SUA (restricted airspace) in the South Training Areas and Training Areas 8 and 9 in the McGregor Range from the surface to a ceiling of 1,200 feet above ground level (AGL) (approximately 5,200 feet mean sea level [MSL]), including a triangular area over private land extending east of the South Training Areas and south of the Terrain Flying Area;
 - correct restricted airspace coordinates currently in effect for R-5103A airspace to extend that airspace south to the Texas/New Mexico state line and the edge of Fort Bliss property, as originally intended.

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Alternative Actions: One alternative action was evaluated as follows:

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- Alternative 1 – This alternative would extend SUA over the South Training Areas and McGregor Range Training Areas 8 and 9 as described for the Proposed Action, but the area over private lands east of the South Training Areas would not be included in the SUA. The R-5103A restricted airspace would also be extended.

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No Action: Under the No Action Alternative, no modification of airspace or designation of SUA would occur, and helicopter and Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) training missions would continue as they are currently. Low-level air operations in the South Training Areas would continue to have conflicts with, and pose a danger to, civilian air traffic.

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2.0 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND IMPACTS

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Implementation of the Proposed Action would have essentially no impacts on any resource except for national airspace and air traffic safety. The impacts on air traffic and airspace would be insignificant, because the SUA proposed as restricted is not normally used by civilian aircraft, and the restriction of civilian flight in that airspace would not cause unusual air traffic congestion

1 and would not hamper the ability of civilian aircraft to transit the area en route to or from El Paso
2 International Airport or to other areas away from El Paso. The cumulative impacts from the
3 construction of training facilities and support infrastructure have been addressed in the *Fort*
4 *Bliss, Texas and New Mexico Mission and Master Plan Final Supplemental Programmatic*
5 *Environmental Impact Statement* for which a Record of Decision (ROD) was signed 30 April
6 2007 and the *Fort Bliss Army Growth and Force Structure Realignment Final Environmental*
7 *Impact Statement* for which a ROD was signed 8 June 2010. The Environmental Assessment
8 (EA) for this action is tiered to these documents. The Proposed Action would not materially
9 change the analysis in these documents. When the SUA is implemented, Range Management
10 Operations – Airspace Scheduling, which coordinates with the Federal Aviation Administration
11 (FAA), would ensure that airspace conflicts do not occur between military aircraft operations or
12 between military and civilian aircraft. The Proposed Action would increase safety in the training
13 areas by providing positive separation between military and civilian aircraft during training
14 missions. It would also increase safety for civilian aircraft by preventing overflights by civilian
15 aircraft of danger areas, such as drop zones, shoot houses, live fire activities, terrain flying
16 operations, and munitions loading areas.

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18 **3.0 CONCLUSION**

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20 Based on the analysis of the Proposed Action and the design, construction, operation, and safety
21 measures presented in the EA, I conclude that the impacts of the Proposed Action will not
22 significantly affect the human or natural environment of Fort Bliss or the surrounding area. I
23 further conclude that implementation of the Proposed Action will not constitute a major Federal
24 action requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement, pursuant to the National
25 Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190). Therefore a Finding of No Significant
26 Impact (FNSI) is warranted.

27

28 **DRAFT**

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Date

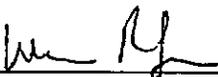
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PREPARED FOR:

Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security

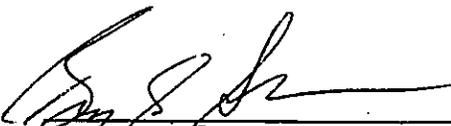


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Date

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17 November 2011

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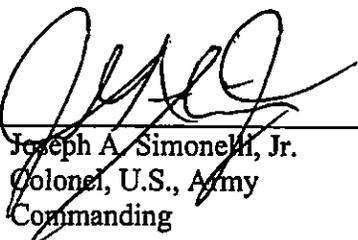


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15 November 2011

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APPROVED BY:



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30 JANUARY 2012

Date

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR THE
MODIFICATION OF SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE
FORT BLISS, TEXAS AND NEW MEXICO**

7 **Proposed Action**

8 Fort Bliss Military Reservation proposes to change airspace over the South Training Areas and
9 McGregor Range Training Areas 8 and 9 from Class G to Special Use Airspace (SUA) to restrict
10 flights in the area to military aircraft only from the surface to 1,200 feet above ground level
11 (AGL), including an area of private and state lands east of the South Training Areas and south of
12 the Terrain Flying Area in the Hueco Mountains. The new SUA would be adjacent to existing
13 Class C and Class E airspace for El Paso International Airport. The existing Restricted Airspace
14 R-5103A would be extended south to the Texas/New Mexico state line to align with the edge of
15 Fort Bliss property.

16
17 **Purpose**

18 The purpose of the Proposed Action is to accommodate new training requirements and increased
19 air traffic associated with the establishment of a Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) at Fort Bliss in
20 2012, as well as other aviation units, and to increase air traffic safety over live-fire areas, drop
21 zones, shoot houses, munitions loading areas, and terrain flying areas in the South Training
22 Areas and McGregor Range Training Areas 8 and 9. This Environmental Assessment (EA) was
23 prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the
24 President's Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for the implementation of NEPA, and
25 Army regulation\Federal regulation codified in 32 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 651 *et seq.*

26
27 **Alternatives**

28 The Proposed Action, the No Action Alternative, and one action alternative were carried forward
29 for analysis during the preparation of the EA. The No Action Alternative would not establish
30 new SUA over the South Training Areas and McGregor range training areas, and increased
31 training associated with the CAB stand-up scheduled for 2012 would be more difficult and
32 expensive. Also, existing and future safety concerns for civilian aircraft in the training area
33 would remain. Alternative 1 would be similar to the Proposed Action, but would not include

1 SUA over private and state land east of the South Training Areas and south of the Terrain Flying
2 Area.

3

4 **Environmental Consequences**

5 The Proposed Action would not change land use for any property on Fort Bliss or any property
6 outside of Fort Bliss. Fort Bliss property underlying the proposed SUA is currently used for
7 military training, and the property outside of Fort Bliss consists of rugged, mountainous terrain
8 in the Hueco Mountains utilized for cattle grazing.

9

10 The Proposed Action would primarily modify airspace within the current boundaries of Fort
11 Bliss to restrict civilian aviation traffic in areas not previously restricted. The SUA (restricted
12 airspace) proposed would provide safety improvements for civilian and military aviation in the
13 project area. Impacts on air transportation would be minimal, since most civilian and
14 commercial flights operate above the altitudes that would be restricted by the new SUA. No
15 other human or natural resources would be impacted by the Proposed Action.

16

17 Based upon the analyses of the EA, the Proposed Action would not have a major effect on the
18 environment. Therefore, no additional evaluation is warranted.

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SECTION 1.0
INTRODUCTION



1 **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

2
3 This Environmental Assessment (EA) addresses the potential effects, beneficial and adverse, of
4 the proposed modification of airspace to establish Special Use Airspace (SUA) at Fort Bliss to
5 prevent civilian aviation conflicts with military air traffic and munitions during training.
6

7 **1.1 Fort Bliss Background**

8 Fort Bliss is a multi-mission Army installation located in Texas and New Mexico (Figure 1-1).
9 The U.S. Army (Army) Garrison and Fort Bliss were originally established in 1849. Fort Bliss
10 has been the home of the Army Air Defense Artillery Center since 1957, with its primary
11 mission to support the Army’s Air Defense Artillery training. It consists of a Cantonment Area
12 (Main Post, William Beaumont Army Medical Center, and Logan Heights), Biggs Army Airfield
13 (BAAF), and the Fort Bliss Training Complex (FBTC). The FBTC contains approximately 1.1
14 million acres of land and is used for training and maneuvers by the Army and other units. The
15 FBTC is composed of the South Training Areas, Doña Ana Range-North Training Areas, and
16 McGregor Range, which are further subdivided into numbered training areas to manage and
17 schedule the different training missions (see Figure 1-1).
18

19 As a result of recent Department of Defense (DoD) initiatives, Fort Bliss is in transition from an
20 Air Defense Center to a major mounted training installation supporting multiple types of Brigade
21 Combat Teams (BCTs) under Forces Command (FORSCOM). These initiatives include Base
22 Closure and Realignment Act (BRAC), Army Transformation, Grow the Army, and Global
23 Defense Posture Realignment, among others. A major result of these initiatives is the re-
24 stationing of the First Armored Division (1AD) from Germany to Fort Bliss. The 1AD consists
25 of four heavy maneuver brigade combat teams (HBCTs), an aviation brigade, and a fires brigade.
26 Land use changes and range construction to accommodate these units were analyzed in the *Fort*
27 *Bliss Texas and New Mexico Mission and Master Plan Final Supplemental Programmatic*
28 *Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)*, for which a Record of Decision (ROD) was signed in
29 April 2007 (Army 2007a). Under this EIS, a large portion of the Fort Bliss training areas,
30 including the South Training Areas that are the focus of this EA, were authorized for weapons
31 firing activities.

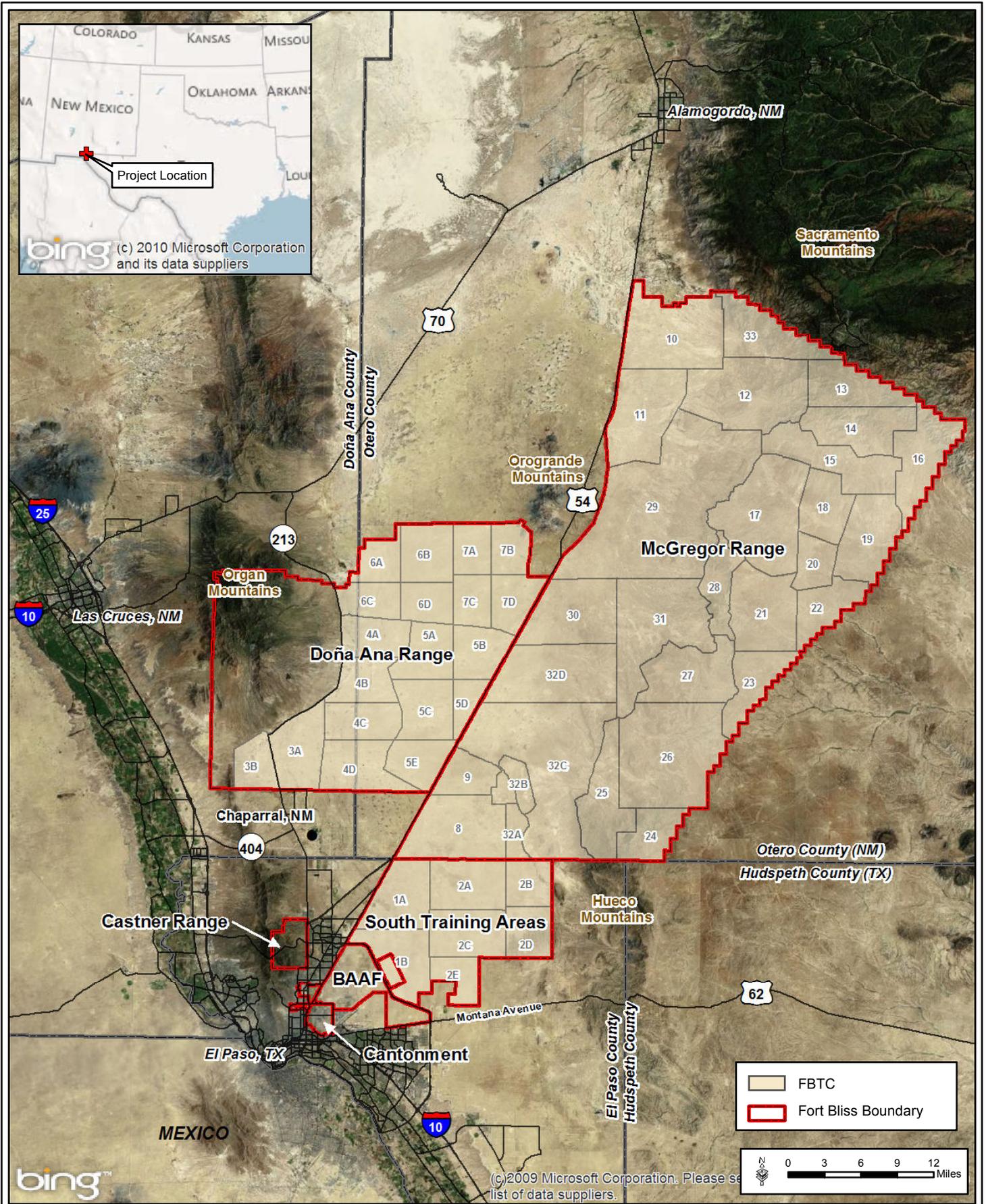


Figure 1-1: Fort Bliss Vicinity Map

1 In December 2007, the Army signed the ROD for the 2007 *Grow the Army Programmatic*
2 *Environmental Impact Statement*, programming the stationing of up to two light Infantry Brigade
3 Combat Teams (IBCTs) at Fort Bliss (Army 2007b). In June 2010, the Army signed the ROD
4 for the *Fort Bliss Army Growth and Force Structure Realignment Final Environmental Impact*
5 *Statement*, which will allow training of the IBCTs, as well as up to two Stryker Brigade Combat
6 Teams (SBCTs) at Fort Bliss (Army 2010). The SEIS also identified the establishment of a
7 Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) at Fort Bliss. Pursuant to force structure growth, including the
8 CAB, Fort Bliss will be required to facilitate the training for approximately 100 Army
9 helicopters and 100 Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). UAS are integrated components of any
10 intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) plan used by military commanders during
11 warfare situations. UAS missions provide unit commanders with current battlefield information
12 and the ability to influence actions at the time and place of their choosing. As such, the ability of
13 Fort Bliss to provide realistic training to units is essential to enhance the commanders'
14 effectiveness and improves the soldiers' survivability on the modern day battlefield. As Army
15 helicopters are a critical component of U.S. Army Combat Power and Theater Logistical
16 Sustainment, integrated Combat Aviation Training will be a major piece of the 1AD's combat
17 power.

18

19 **1.2 Purpose and Need**

20 The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide realistic mission training on Fort Bliss, which
21 involves live fire exercises and use of helicopters and UAS for mission support, without
22 endangering the general public and general aviation aircraft.

23

24 The Proposed Action is needed to restrict general aviation aircraft flight within danger areas on
25 Fort Bliss training ranges. More specifically, the need for the proposed SUA is: 1) to ensure that
26 civilian aircraft would remain well clear of live fire activity in the restricted airspace, the
27 weapons safety zones, air maneuver routes, missile assembly areas, and other hazardous areas; 2)
28 to provide transition airspace needed for helicopters, and other military aircraft flying in a
29 southerly direction from McGregor Range to lower operating altitudes in the South Training
30 Areas; 3) to afford fast moving military aircraft sufficient space to maneuver and remain within
31 restricted airspace when performing low-level simulated air attacks on tactical missile sites in

1 support of the Japanese Annual Service Practice and other CAB training events; and 4) to
2 provide better separation between military and civilian aircraft in airspace over private lands
3 adjacent to Fort Bliss and south of the Terrain Flying Area, but which will be used heavily by
4 helicopters.

5

6 **1.3 Background for the Proposed Action**

7 CABs are organized to conduct and/or support ground maneuvers through aviation operations.

8 The brigade must prepare to fight as whole support BCTs using pure or task-organized units, and

9 conduct multiple independent missions requiring pure or task-organized units. Each aviation

10 brigade is tailored for specific missions; however, each accepts other organizations and performs

11 missions not necessarily defined in the mission statement. Aviation brigade missions include:

12

- 13 • Reconnaissance
- 14 • Security
- 15 • Movement to contact
- 16 • Attack
- 17 • Air assault
- 18 • Air movement
- 19 • Smoke/obscurant (C2) support
- 20 • Aeromedical evacuation
- 21 • Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC)
- 22 • Personnel Recovery (PR) operations

23

24 The aviation brigade is also capable of conducting enabling missions to support operations and

25 facilitate regeneration of combat power. These enabling missions include:

26

- 27 • Downed aircraft recovery
- 28 • Forward Area Refuel Point (FARP) operations
- 29 • Aviation maintenance
- 30 • Air Traffic Services (ATS)

**Draft Environmental Assessment for the Modification of Special Use Airspace
Fort Bliss, Texas and New Mexico**

1 All these CABs have the capability to perform as a BCT when reinforced with appropriate
2 ground units. These brigades can perform screen missions without augmentation, and can
3 perform guard and cover missions when properly reinforced.

4

5 Helicopters employed as part of a CAB include the UH 60/HH 60 (Photograph 1-1), the AH 64
6 Longbow Apache (Photograph 1-2), and the CH 47 E (Photograph 1-3). As an integral part of
7 CAB training, helicopters are required to operate in unison with CAB ground forces, and they
8 normally fly at altitudes of 1,200 feet AGL or less.

9



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11 **Photograph 1-1. UH 60/HH 60 – Utility and
Medical Evacuation Helicopter**



12
13 **Photograph 1-2. AH 64 D Longbow Apache Attack
Helicopter**



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24 **Photograph 1-3. CH 47 E Medium Cargo
Helicopter**

1 UAS are organized and developed to provide three echelons of operation: (a) battalion and
2 below; (b) brigade level with BCTs and the battlefield surveillance brigade (BfSB); and (c)
3 division and above. This stratification of UAS maximizes operations and provides a combat
4 enabler to maneuver forces.

6 **1.4 Location of the Proposed Action**

7 Fort Bliss is located in west Texas, immediately north of El Paso, Texas, and extends north
8 across the state line into New Mexico (see Figure 1-1). The south boundary of the installation is
9 situated in El Paso, adjacent to and partially beneath the Class C and Class E airspace for the El
10 Paso International Airport. The proposed SUA would be located within the South Training
11 Areas in Hudspeth County, Texas, and McGregor Range Training Areas 8 and 9 in Otero
12 County, New Mexico, adjoining SUA R-5103A and R-5103B (Figure 1-2). The proposed SUA
13 would also extend south of the Terrain Flying Area in the Hueco Mountains adjacent to SUA R-
14 5103A.

16 **1.5 Airspace Background**

17 Generally, airspace has defined designations assigned by the Federal Aviation Administration
18 (FAA) and adopted from international norms to control flights of all aircraft, especially around
19 airports. These designations are letter-classified as follows (FAA 2008, FAA 2011):

- 21 • **Class A:** Generally, that airspace from 18,000 feet to 60,000 feet mean sea level (MSL).
22 All operations must be conducted under instrument flight rules (IFR) or special visual
23 flight rules (SVFR).
- 24 • **Class B:** Generally, that airspace from the surface up to 10,000 feet MSL surrounding the
25 busiest airports with heavy traffic operations. This airspace is individually tailored to the
26 specific airport in several layers. Air Traffic Control (ATC) clearance is required for all
27 aircraft. Operations may be conducted under IFR, SVFR, or visual flight rules (VFR)
28 clear of clouds.
- 29 • **Class C:** Generally, that airspace from the surface to 4,000 feet above the airport
30 elevation surrounding those airports that have an operational control tower and radar
31 control. Class C airspace is individually tailored in layers, but usually extends out to 10
32 nautical miles (NM) from 1,200 feet to 4,000 feet above the airport elevation. Entering
33 Class C airspace requires radio contact with the controlling ATC authority, and an ATC
34 clearance is ultimately required for landing. Operations may be conducted under IFR,
35 SVFR, or VFR.

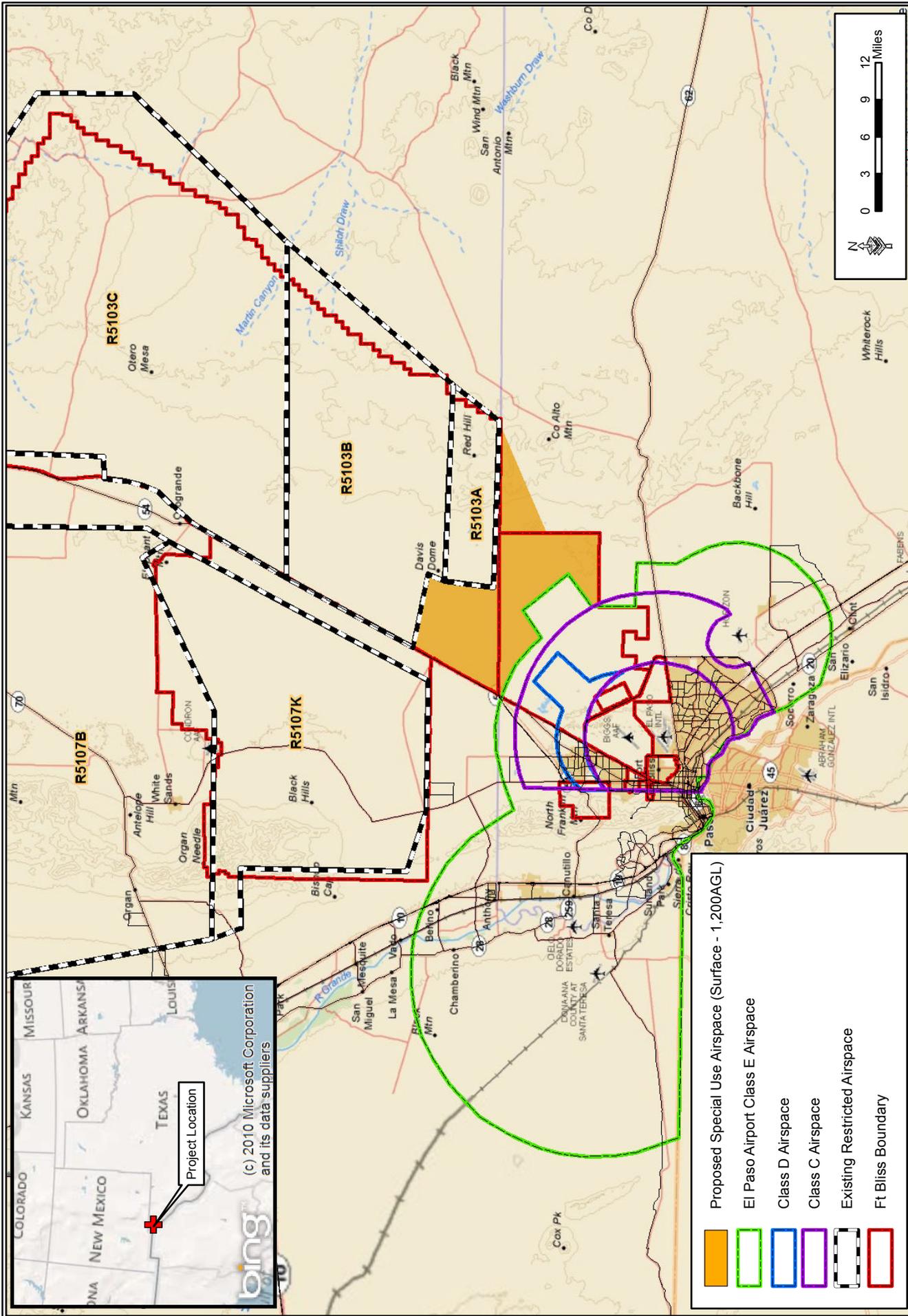


Figure 1-2: Fort Bliss Existing Airspace Map (FAA El Paso North Sectional)

- 1 • **Class D:** Generally, that airspace from the surface to 2,500 feet above the airport
2 elevation surrounding those airports that have an operational control tower. Aircraft
3 entering the airspace must establish and maintain radio contact with the controlling ATC.
4 Operations may be conducted under IFR, SVFR, or VFR, but aircraft separation services
5 are not provided.

- 6 • **Class E:** Generally, this is controlled airspace that is not Class A, B, C, or D. In the El
7 Paso area, Class E airspace begins at 1,200 feet above ground level (AGL) (except for
8 that Class E airspace assigned to El Paso International Airport, which begins at 700 feet
9 AGL) and extends up to, but not including, 18,000 feet MSL. Subdivisions within Class
10 E are for transitional purposes, extensions to the other controlled airspace classes, or
11 other uses. Operations may be conducted under IFR, SVFR, or VFR. Flights under VFR
12 are not subject to ATC clearance.

- 13 • **Class G:** Airspace that has not been designated as Class A, B, C, D, or E. Operations
14 may be conducted under IFR or VFR. ATC aircraft separation service is not provided.
15 Traffic information may be given as far as is practical with respect to other flights.

16

17 Airspace in the vicinity of Fort Bliss consists of a combination of Class C and Class E airspace
18 around the El Paso International Airport, Class D airspace around BAAF, Restricted Airspace
19 over the Fort Bliss Doña Ana and McGregor training ranges, and Class E and G airspace over
20 areas not controlled by the airspace designations listed previously (see Figure 1-2) (FAA 2011).
21 The Class G airspace below 1,200 feet AGL and Class E airspace above 1,200 feet AGL includes
22 the area over the South Training Areas where the Proposed Action would occur. The Class C
23 airspace surrounding the El Paso International Airport requires notification and permission from
24 the El Paso tower controller for operation of any aircraft in that airspace. Operations in the Class
25 D airspace for BAAF require notification and permission from the BAAF tower controller. The
26 Restricted Airspace (R-5103A and R-5103B) over the Fort Bliss McGregor Training Range is
27 controlled by Fort Bliss, and restricts operation of any civilian aircraft in the area when the
28 airspace restrictions are activated. The current FAA air navigation chart for the El Paso area can
29 be found in Appendix C.

30

31 **1.6 South Training Areas Utilization and Safety**

32 The South Training Areas consist of approximately 92,285 acres of relatively flat terrain in El
33 Paso County located adjacent to BAAF and other infrastructure associated with HBCT, IBCT,
34 and CAB operations (Figure 1-3). It is one of the most heavily utilized training areas on the
35 FBTC due to its proximity to BAAF and the relatively low cost for logistics and deployment of

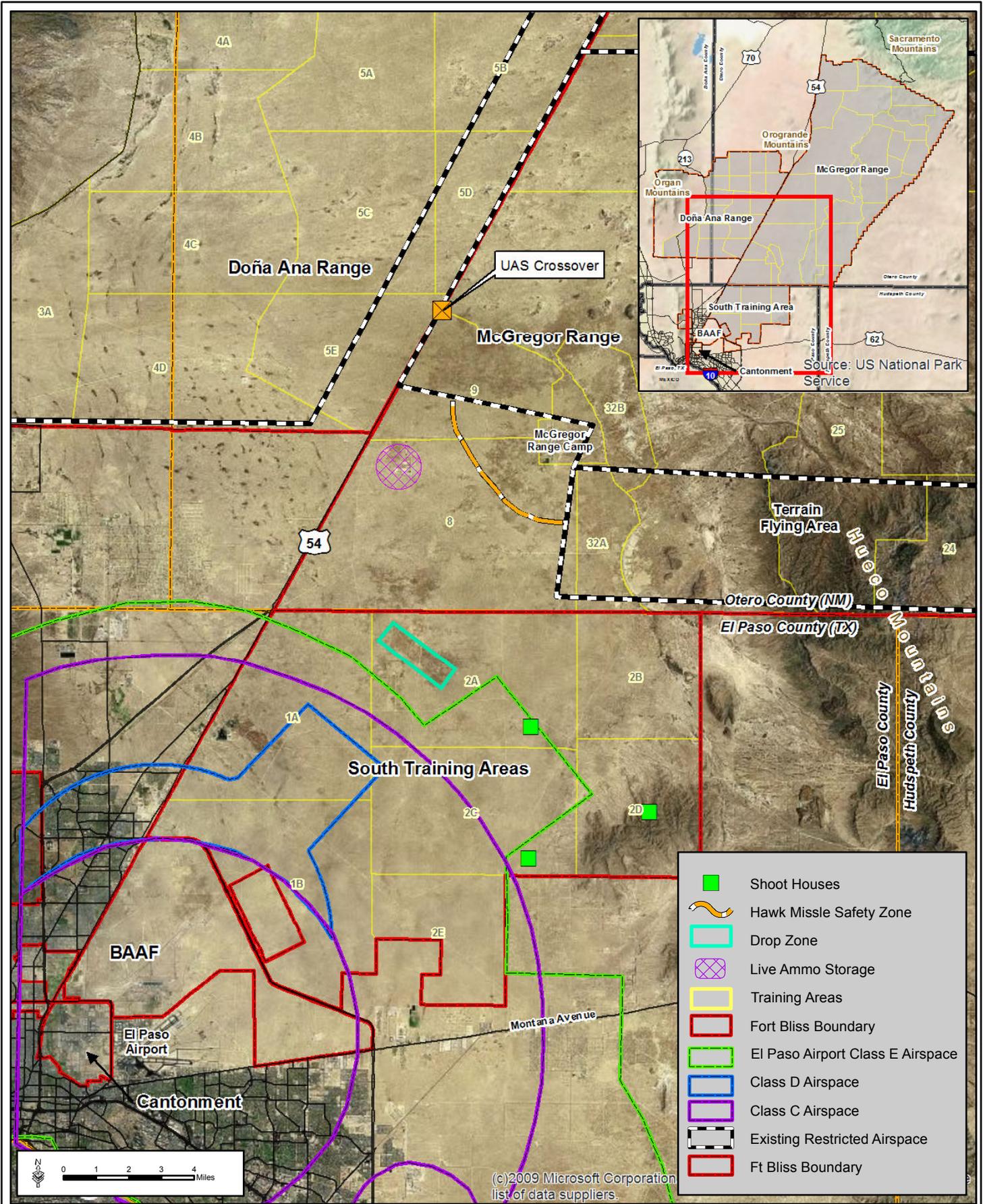


Figure 1-3: South Training Area and Airspace Hazards

1 training operations there. As such, it would be a primary training area for the new CAB
2 projected to station at Fort Bliss beginning in January and February 2012. The South Training
3 Areas currently are situated primarily in Class E and G airspace, south of Restricted Airspace R-
4 5103A and north of Class C airspace for El Paso International Airport. Class E Airspace for El
5 Paso International Airport also partially extends over the South Training Areas (see Figure 1-3).
6 Training Areas 8 and 9 in the McGregor Range are also located in Class E and G airspace. FAA
7 airspace descriptions and definitions are provided in Section 1.5.

8
9 The South Training Areas, as well as Training Areas 8 and 9 of the McGregor Range, currently
10 contain facilities and operations, as shown in Figure 1-3, that pose a safety risk for low-flying
11 aircraft. The live ammunition storage and supply depot, located near U.S. Highway 54 (US 54)
12 in Area 8 of the McGregor Range, is a no-fly zone for military aircraft due to the potential for
13 explosive accidents during ammunition handling. The Hawk missile assembly area Safety Zone,
14 located in Areas 8 and 9, is also a hazard zone for the same reason. These hazard areas should
15 also be civilian no-fly zones due to the potential for explosive accidents.

16
17 There are airborne drop zones in the South Training Areas that will be used with increased
18 frequency as CAB training operations are brought to full strength. Live fire shoot houses located
19 in the South Training Areas are currently under a Small Arms Safety Area (SARSA) to minimize
20 stray fire hazards for low-flying aircraft. The entire South Training Areas have been approved
21 for live-fire exercises, as provided in the SEIS (Army 2007a), which would pose a safety concern
22 for low-flying aircraft between the surface and 1,200 feet AGL during military operations when
23 live-fire exercises are authorized. Designation of individual Controlled Firing Areas (CFAs) for
24 each scheduled small arms live-fire exercise in the South Training Areas would be impractical
25 for CAB training, and would have a severe negative impact on the Army's mission, requiring
26 observers during exercises and suspension of training when civilian aircraft fly over.

27
28 Transition airspace is necessary for helicopters and other military aircraft flying from the
29 McGregor Range and the UAS crossover lane to the north in order to descend to CAB operating
30 altitudes in the South Training Areas.

1.7 Scope and Content of the Environmental Assessment

This EA was prepared in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as amended (42 U.S. Code [U.S.C.], 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) NEPA implementing regulations at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1500, and 32 CFR 651 – Environmental Analysis of Army Actions. NEPA is a Federal environmental law establishing a national policy of procedural requirements for all Federal government agencies, including the preparation of EAs for proposed agency actions. NEPA directs the Army to disclose the effects of its proposed activities at Fort Bliss to the public and officials who must make decisions concerning the proposal.

Under NEPA, the analysis of environmental conditions only addresses those areas, or Region of Influence (ROI), and environmental resources with the potential to be affected by the Proposed Action or alternatives. Locations and resources with no potential to be affected need not be analyzed. The ROI includes all areas and lands that might be affected, and may change depending on how the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic resources they contain or support are affected.

The purpose of this EA is to develop and evaluate alternatives for the Proposed Action and evaluate potential impacts of alternatives on pertinent resources on the FBTC and the adjacent natural and human environment. Resources that could potentially be affected as a result of the proposed restricted (SUA) airspace designations and that are evaluated in this EA include national airspace and air traffic safety. No construction, ground activities, economic changes, or personnel changes would occur as a result of the Proposed Action; therefore, no other resources associated with the natural or human environment would be impacted. National airspace and air traffic safety changes and impacts are guided by FAA regulations, including *Order JO 7400.2G, Procedures for Handling Airspace Matters* (FAA 2008), and *Order 1050.1E, CHG 1, Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures* (FAA 2006).

1.8 Applicable Environmental Statutes and Regulations

Table 1-1 summarizes the pertinent environmental regulations, laws, and Executive Orders (E.O.) that guided the development of this EA. Due to lack of impacts on most resources and

**Draft Environmental Assessment for the Modification of Special Use Airspace
Fort Bliss, Texas and New Mexico**

1 lack of construction or operational changes at Fort Bliss, most of the statutes and regulations
2 listed in Table 1-1 are not relevant to the Proposed Action.

3
4

Table 1-1. Applicable Environmental Statutes and Regulations

Federal Laws and Regulations
Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act
Clean Air Act of 1970, as amended
Clean Water Act of 1987, as amended
Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1986
Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended
Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act
Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1972
National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended
National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended
Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990
Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976
Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974
Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954
Executive Orders and Army Regulations
Environmental Effects of Army Actions (32 CFR 651)
Environmental Protection and Enhancement (AR 200-1)
Exotic & Non-Native Species (E.O. 13112)
Protection of Migratory Birds and Game Mammals (E.O. 11629)
Flood Plain Management (E.O. 11988)
Protection of Wetlands (E.O. 11990)
Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations And Low-Income Populations (E.O. 12898)
Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks (E.O. 13045)
FAA Regulations
Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures (Order 1050.1E)
Procedures for Handling Airspace Matters (Order JO 7400.2G)

5
6

1.9 Decision(s) to be Made

7 The U.S. Army, Forces Command-Fort Bliss, is the lead agency responsible for the completion
8 of the EA, assisted by U.S. Army Installation Management Command Headquarters, U.S. Army
9 Garrison. If no significant environmental impacts are determined based on the evaluation of
10 impacts in the EA, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) will be signed by the

1 Commanding General. If it is determined that the Proposed Action will have significant
2 environmental impacts, the action will be dropped or a Notice of Intent will then be published,
3 leading to the preparation of an EIS. NEPA documentation for the decision will be submitted to
4 the FAA as part of the justification for the requested designation of the SUA. The FAA is a
5 cooperating agency in the preparation of this EA.

6
7 The EA, the FNSI, and all other appropriate planning documents will be provided to both the
8 Installation and Garrison Commanders for review and consideration. The signature page for the
9 EA and FNSI package will be signed by both Commanders to indicate approval.

10
11 **1.10 Public Participation**

12 Coordination with appropriate Federal and state agencies has occurred during the preparation of
13 this EA. The primary Federal agency consulted is the FAA. The draft EA and draft FNSI will
14 be sent to the FAA for comment and coordination. Following FAA consensus on the draft EA
15 and draft FNSI, the document will be made available to the general public, for a 30-day review
16 and comment period in accordance with coordination requirements as set forth by 32 CFR 651.
17 A notice of availability will also be placed in the *El Paso Times*, *Las Cruces Sun-News*, and
18 *Alamogordo Daily News* newspapers announcing that the draft EA and draft FNSI will be
19 available for review at public libraries and at Fort Bliss. On Fort Bliss, the EA and draft FNSI
20 will be available for review at the Public Affairs Office on Slater Road, Building 15. Copies of
21 the draft EA and draft FNSI will be sent to the individuals and agencies listed in Section 6.0.

22
23 All pertinent comments received during the 30-day public review period will be addressed before
24 the FNSI can be signed. Correspondence received during this review period will be included as
25 Appendix A to the Final EA and retained as part of the administrative record.

SECTION 2.0
DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES



1 **2.0 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES**

2
3 In accordance with CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.14) and 32 CFR Part 651, the EA must
4 identify and describe all reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action, including the No Action
5 Alternative. This EA analyzes the Proposed Action, one action alternative, and the No Action
6 Alternative.

7
8 **2.1 Proposed Action**

9 The Proposed Action is to:

- 10
11 • designate SUA (restricted airspace) in the South Training Areas and Training Areas 8 and
12 9 in the McGregor Range from the surface to a ceiling of 1,200 feet AGL (approximately
13 5,200 feet mean sea level [MSL]), including a triangular area over private land extending
14 east of the South Training Areas and south of the Terrain Flying Area;
- 15 • correct restricted airspace coordinates currently in effect for R-5103A airspace to extend
16 that airspace south to the Texas/New Mexico state line and the edge of Fort Bliss
17 property, as originally intended.

18
19 This would not interfere with commercial aircraft operating out of El Paso International Airport,
20 since normal VFR and IFR takeoff climb angles and landing patterns in that direction would
21 place aircraft above the proposed SUA (1,200 feet AGL).

22
23 The proposed SUA over the South Training Areas would restrict operation of civilian aircraft
24 from the surface to an altitude of 1,200 feet AGL (equivalent to approximately 5,200 feet MSL).
25 The proposed SUA would extend north of the El Paso International Airport to a point that it
26 adjoins the R-5103A and R-5103B airspace. An area east of the South Training Areas and south
27 of the Terrain Flying Area would be included in the SUA. The expected military usage of the
28 SUA would be 5 days per week, with a daily usage of 15 hours per day. The SUA would be
29 accessible to civilian aircraft during times when military operations are not being conducted;
30 however, civilian aircraft would have to obtain permission to access the SUA, as is required for
31 all restricted airspace. No airspace used by commercial air traffic would be altered by the
32 proposed restricted airspace expansions. The proposed restricted airspace (SUA) is shown in

1 Figure 2-1. A three-dimensional depiction of the proposed changes and their relationship to
2 other airspace in the El Paso area is shown in Figure 2-2.

3
4 The description of the proposed SUA is as follows:

5 **R-5103A South Extension to the Texas/New Mexico State Line**

6 **Boundaries** – Beginning at lat. 32°00'30"N., long. 106°10'03"W.;;
7 to lat. 32°00'08"N., long. 106°10'31.6"W.;;
8 to lat. 32°00'05.5"N., long. 105°57'07.8"W.;;
9 to lat. 32°00'15"N., long. 105°56'41.9"W.;;
10 to the point of beginning.

11
12 **SUA over the South Training Areas and McGregor Range**

13 **Boundaries** – Beginning at lat. 32°06'00" N., long. 106°15'32" W.;;
14 to lat. 31°59'53.4"N., long. 106°19'29.9"W.;;
15 to lat. 31°59'51.5"N., long. 106°19'31.8"W.;;
16 to lat. 31°59'13.8"N., long. 106°17'49.2"W.;;
17 to lat. 31°58'13.9"N., long. 106°16'02.2"W.;;
18 to lat. 31°57'04.1"N., long. 106°14'38.1"W.;;
19 to lat. 31°58'22.4"N., long. 106°12'23.6"W.;;
20 to lat. 31°55'16.2"N., long. 106°9'21.2"W.;;
21 to lat. 31°53'35.4"N., long. 106°12'01"W.;;
22 to lat. 31°53'04.8"N., long. 106°11'48.6"W.;;
23 to lat. 31°53'04.7"N., long. 106°05'57.5"W.;;
24 to lat. 31°56'48.1"N., long. 106°05'59.6"W.;;
25 to lat. 32°00'05.5"N., long. 105°57'07.8"W.;;
26 to lat. 32°00'08"N., long. 106°10'31.7"W.;;
27 to lat. 32°00'30"N., long. 106°10'27"W.;;
28 to lat. 32°03'55"N., long. 106°10'00"W.;;
29 to lat. 32°05'02"N., long. 106°09'22"W.;;
30 to the point of beginning.

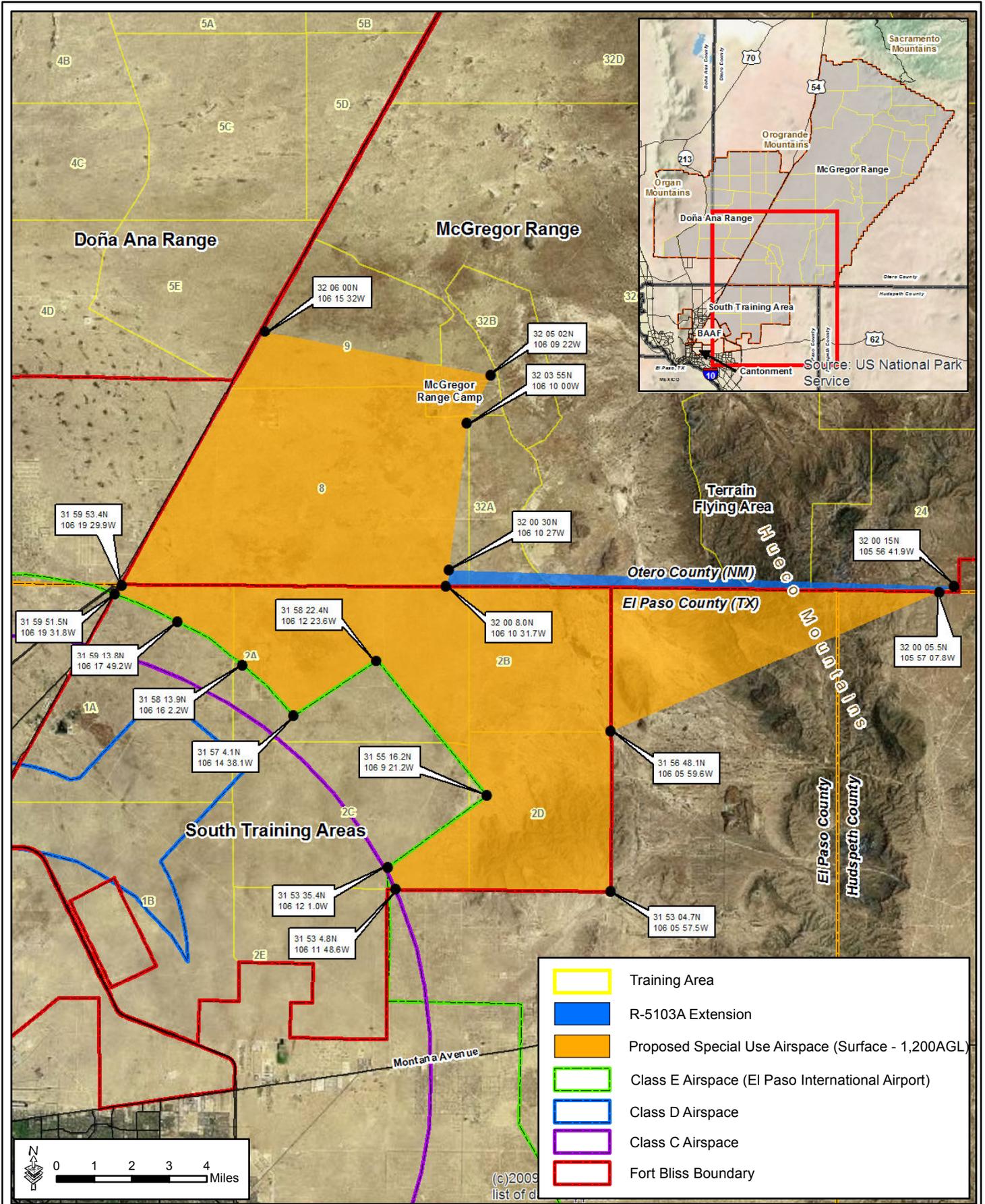


Figure 2-1: Proposed Action Special Use Airspace Boundaries

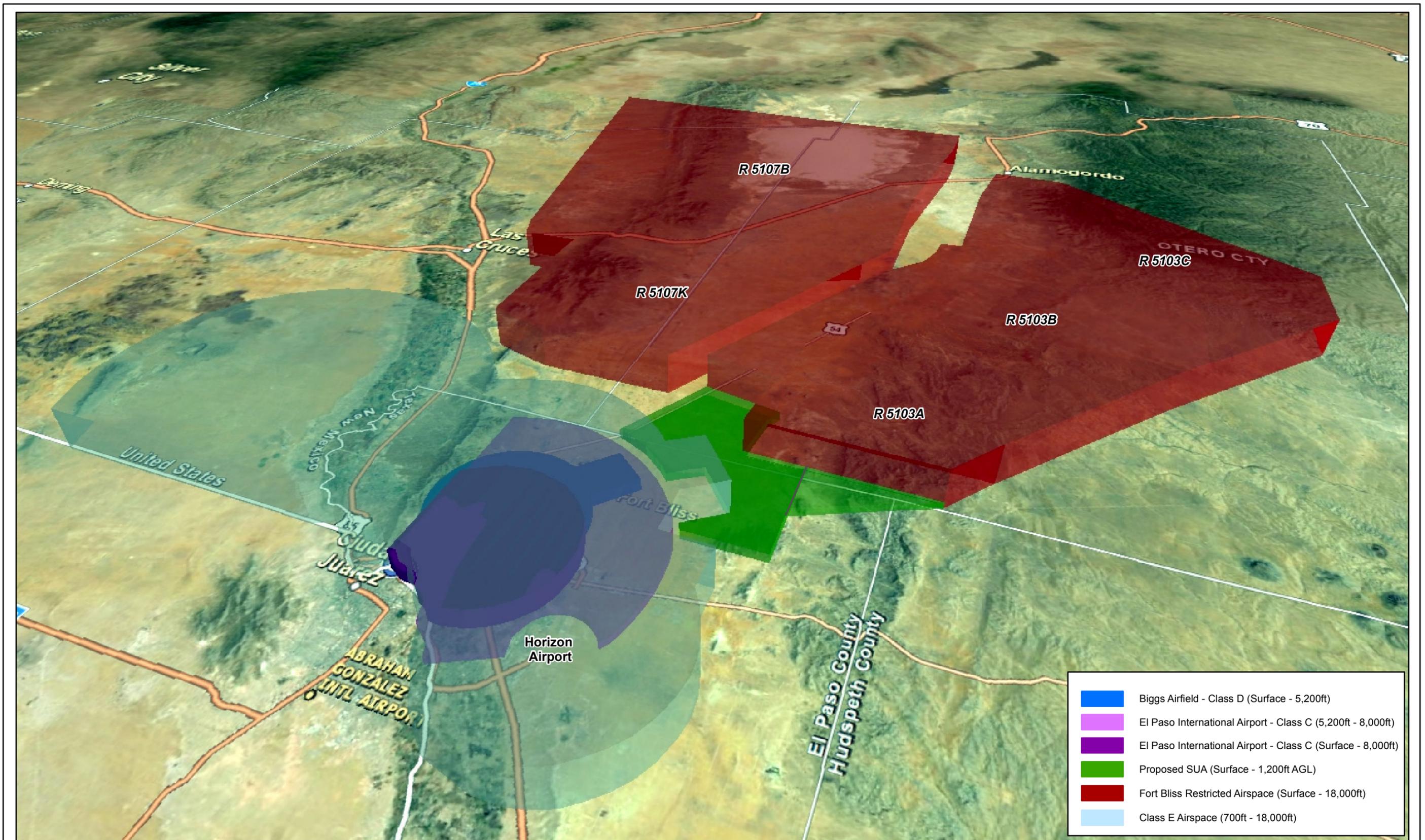


Figure 2-2: Fort Bliss Airspace and Proposed Changes

1	Designated Altitudes	Surface to 1,200 feet AGL
2	Time of Designation	0700 to 2000 (7:00 AM to 8:00 PM) Monday through Friday
3	Controlling Agency	FAA, Albuquerque, New Mexico Traffic Control Center
4	Using Agency	Commanding General, U.S. Army and Fort Bliss, Texas

5

6 **2.2 Alternative 1**

7 Alternative 1 would extend the SUA over the South Training Areas and McGregor Range
8 training areas as proposed for the Proposed Action, but the area over private and state lands east
9 of the South Training Areas would not be included in the SUA (Figure 2-3). The R-5103A
10 restricted airspace would also be extended to the Fort Bliss boundary, as described in the
11 Proposed Action. The description of the proposed SUA and the location coordinates for
12 Alternative 1 can be found in Appendix B. This alternative would partially meet the purpose and
13 need for the action; however, the military training flight spillover from the Terrain Flying Area
14 southward would not be addressed, and would be subject to conflicts with civilian aircraft.

15

16 **2.3 No Action Alternative**

17 NEPA and Army implementing regulations require the analysis of all reasonable alternatives,
18 including the No Action Alternative. The No Action Alternative provides a benchmark, enabling
19 decision makers to compare the magnitude of environmental effects of the action alternatives.

20

21 Under the No Action Alternative, UAS training missions would continue as they are currently.
22 This would require an FAA Certificate of Authorization (COA) for use of the Terrain Flying
23 Area 5. Live-fire activities and low-level helicopter operations in the South Training Areas
24 would continue to have conflicts with, and pose a danger to, civilian air traffic. The No Action
25 Alternative would result in training delays, excess expenditure of training funds, and possibly
26 shortened training, which would not satisfy Army standards.

27

28 **2.4 Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration**

29 **2.4.1 Military Operations Areas (MOA)**

30 The issuance of new MOAs to cover the areas in the South Training Areas where conflicts
31 between military and civilian flights occur was considered. This would require notification to

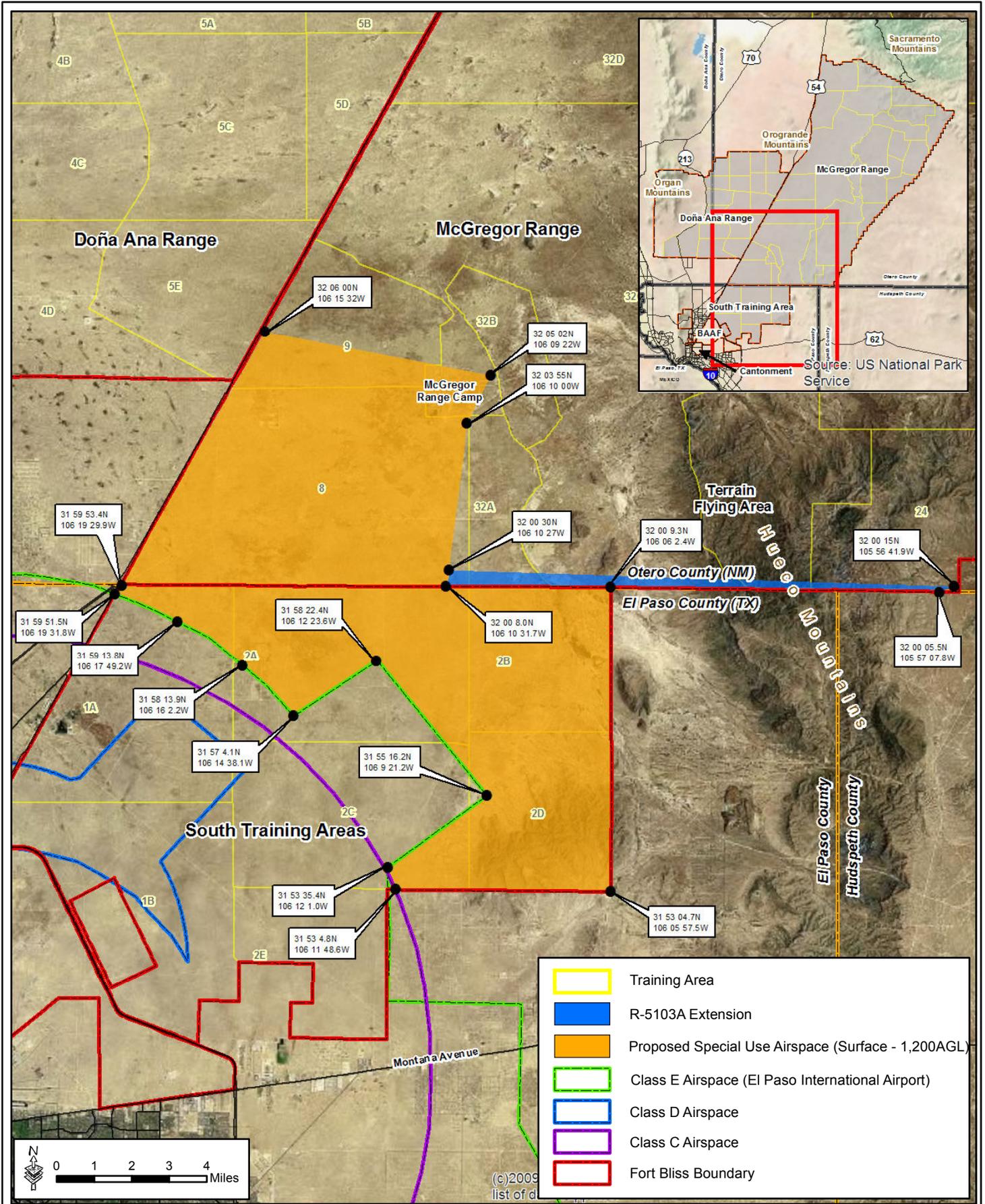


Figure 2-3: Alternative 1 Proposed Action Special Use Airspace Boundaries

1 non-participating civilian aircraft of military operations, but would not preclude civilian aircraft
2 from operating in or transiting the MOA during military use. Because the military use of the
3 South Training Areas would be continuous during daylight hours, and because the military use
4 area would be over lands primarily owned by Fort Bliss and at altitudes not normally visible to
5 ATC radar facilities in El Paso, the MOA would not separate military and civilian air traffic, and
6 would not meet the purpose and need for the action.

8 **2.4.2 Controlled Firing Areas (CFA)**

9 The use of CFAs to prevent impacts on civilian aircraft from active small arms firing activities in
10 the South Training Areas was considered; however, the designation of individual CFAs for each
11 training activity (activities would occur continuously and daily over a wide area) would be an
12 onerous requirement, with the obligation to establish perimeter monitors for each area to watch
13 for encroaching civilian aircraft. Civilian aircraft would not be required to avoid the operations
14 areas, and training activities would be subject to unscheduled and intermittent interruptions,
15 which would be costly for the Army and would not meet Army training standards.

17 **2.4.3 National Security Areas (NSA)**

18 Designation of an NSA over each hazardous munitions loading or handling area in the McGregor
19 Range Areas 8 and 9 was considered. However, NSAs are designated for ground facilities
20 security concerns, not for aircraft safety issues. Civilian aircraft are requested to voluntarily
21 avoid flight through NSAs, and such designation would not prevent a potential munitions
22 accident. The hazardous areas in Areas 8 and 9 are permanent features, which are surrounded by
23 other training areas better suited to designation of SUA. Therefore, individual NSAs would not
24 be practical or useful for the munitions hazard areas addressed in this EA.

26 **2.5 Relationship of Action Alternatives to Purpose and Need**

27 Table 2-1 illustrates the relationship between each of the action alternatives addressed in the EA
28 and the purpose and need for the action. While Alternative 1 would partially separate civilian
29 and military aircraft during training operations, there would still be areas of risk for civilian
30 aircraft for certain military flight operations.

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1

Table 2-1. Relationship between Purpose and Need and Alternatives

Requirements	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Alternative 1
Separate civilian and military aircraft during training operations	No	Yes	Partial
Prevent civilian aircraft encroachment over hazardous sites and munitions use areas	No	Yes	Yes
Allow for more realistic unrestricted day/night military training	No	Yes	Yes
Prevent military/civilian aircraft interaction south of the Terrain Flying Area	No	Yes	No

2

SECTION 3.0
AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND CONSEQUENCES



1 **3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND CONSEQUENCES**

2

3 This section of the EA describes the natural and human environment that exists within the
4 project area and the potential impacts of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative and
5 other Alternatives outlined in Section 2.0 of this document. Only those resources that have the
6 potential to be affected by any of the alternatives considered are described, as per CEQ guidance
7 (40 CFR 1501.7 [3]). No construction is involved in the Proposed Action or alternatives, and no
8 ground actions, additional personnel or equipment, or change in operations are proposed. All
9 impacts resulting from increased military aircraft activities and CAB operations were addressed
10 in previous environmental documents (Army 2007a, Army 2007b, and Army 2010). The only
11 resource that would be impacted by the Proposed Action or the alternatives is national airspace
12 and air traffic safety. The focus of this EA is on air traffic safety.

13

14 The following resources are not addressed in this EA for the reasons stated:

- 15
- 16 • Aesthetics – The Proposed Action would not change aesthetics or vistas visible to the
17 public.
 - 18 • Air Quality – No new military ground activities are proposed, and no new military
19 aircraft would be deployed that would result in additional air emissions. Air quality
20 impacts from CAB operations were addressed in previous environmental documents
21 incorporated by reference.
 - 22 • Coastal Resources – Fort Bliss is not located in or near any designated coastal area.
 - 23 • Compatible Land Use – The addition of SUA would be over lands owned by Fort Bliss
24 that are dedicated to military training. The SUA proposed over private lands would not
25 affect the surface use of that land, since it is range land used for cattle grazing.
 - 26 • Construction Impacts – No construction would be conducted as part of the Proposed
27 Action.
 - 28 • Department of Transportation Act: Section 4(f) – Designation of airspace for military
29 flight operations is exempt from section 4(f). The Department of Defense reauthorization
30 in 1997 provided that “[n]o military flight operations (including a military training
31 flight), or designation of airspace for such operation, may be treated as a transportation
32 program or project for the purposes of section 303(c) of title 49, United States Code.”
33 (PL 105-85, Nov. 18, 1997)
 - 34 • Farmlands – No farmlands or special agricultural soils exist within the area proposed for
35 the airspace restrictions.

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- 1 • Fish, Wildlife, and Plants – The Proposed Action would not involve any ground actions,
2 and would not change military operations that would affect any biological resources. All
3 biological resource impacts associated with the CAB operations were addressed in
4 previous environmental documents incorporated by reference.
- 5 • Floodplains – There are no floodplains within or near the area of the Proposed Action.
- 6 • Hazardous Materials, Pollution Prevention, and Solid Waste – The Proposed Action
7 would not generate any additional hazardous materials, petroleum products, solid wastes,
8 or explosives.
- 9 • Historical, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources – No activities are
10 proposed that would affect or be affected by any of these resources. Cultural resource
11 impacts of CAB operations were addressed in previous environmental documents
12 incorporated by reference.
- 13 • Light Emissions and Visual Impacts – No increased light emissions or visual impacts
14 would occur as part of the Proposed Action.
- 15 • Natural Resources and Energy Supply – The Proposed Action would have no effect on
16 natural resources. No additional energy use would occur as part of the Proposed Action.
- 17 • Noise – The designation of SUA over Fort Bliss Property would not change the level or
18 type of military training currently being conducted or proposed. All noise impacts
19 associated with CAB operations were addressed in previous environmental documents
20 incorporated by reference.
- 21 • Secondary (Induced)Impacts – No secondary impacts have been identified as a result of
22 the Proposed Action.
- 23 • Water Quality – No activities are proposed that would affect surface or groundwater, or
24 that would require additional water resources.
- 25 • Socioeconomic Impacts, Environmental Justice, and Children’s Environmental Health
26 and Safety Risks – The Proposed Action would not add or subtract personnel or facilities
27 to the existing Fort Bliss training mission, and no economic activities are proposed. All
28 designated SUA would be over military training lands or unoccupied range lands, and no
29 minority populations or children would be affected.
- 30 • Wetlands – There are no wetlands within the area affected by the Proposed Action.
- 31 • Wild and Scenic Rivers – There are no wild and scenic rivers located within or near the
32 area affected by the Proposed Action.

33
34 In accordance with both NEPA and the CEQ regulations implementing NEPA, this EA will
35 examine the potential impacts on those resources that could be affected by the Proposed Action,
36 Alternative 1, or the No Action Alternative. More specifically, the EA will examine the potential
37 for direct, indirect, adverse, or beneficial impacts. The EA will also assess whether such impacts
38 are likely to be long-term, short-term, permanent, or cumulative.

1 **3.1 Airspace and Air Traffic Safety**

2 This resource consists of the commercial air traffic utilizing the El Paso International Airport and
3 BAAF, as well as the civilian aircraft operating in the vicinity of El Paso and Fort Bliss. This
4 includes aircraft based in the El Paso area and those aircraft transiting the El Paso area airspace.
5

6 **3.1.1 Affected Environment**

7 The airspace around El Paso and Fort Bliss is designated by the FAA as controlled airspace
8 around the El Paso International Airport and BAAF. The controlled airspace is designed to
9 provide aircraft separation for approach, landing, and takeoff from the airports in the El Paso
10 area. The location and types of controlled airspace were shown previously in Figure 1-2 and in
11 Appendix C. The Class C and E airspace around the El Paso International Airport dominates the
12 controlled airspace pattern over El Paso, and the SUA Restricted Areas over the FBTC dominate
13 the airspace north of El Paso. The Restricted Areas on the FBTC are restricted to military
14 aircraft flights only.
15

16 Between the El Paso International Airport Class C and E airspace and the Fort Bliss Restricted
17 Areas, there is a segment of airspace that is currently designated as Class G, or uncontrolled,
18 airspace below 1,200 feet AGL, with non-designated Class E airspace above that. Within the
19 Class G airspace and the non-designated Class E airspace, any aircraft can fly at any altitude
20 from the surface up to 18,000 feet MSL without contact with ATC at El Paso International
21 Airport or BAAF. This Class E and G airspace also connects with a Class E and G corridor
22 extending from El Paso to Alamogordo, New Mexico, generally following the US 54 corridor.
23

24 Within this Class E and G airspace area, most of which is over Fort Bliss property, the number of
25 aircraft operating is estimated at approximately 50 aircraft per week, mostly at altitudes of
26 between 6,500 and 8,500 feet MSL (FAA, El Paso, personal communication). The undesignated
27 Class E and Class G airspace is beyond the normal takeoff and landing approach slopes
28 controlled by ATC at El Paso International Airport, and commercial aircraft in that area are
29 operating at altitudes above 5,500 feet MSL. Military aircraft (primarily helicopters) flying out
30 of BAAF would generally operate in the Class E and G area at altitudes between the surface and

1 1,200 feet AGL as they land or take off for training on the FBTC. BAAF traffic is controlled by
2 the BAAF ATC within the (blue) Class D airspace assigned to BAAF (see Figure 1-2).

3
4 There is no aircraft separation service provided for aircraft operating at low altitudes in the Class
5 E and G airspace over the South Training Areas. Aircraft flying below 5,500 feet MSL are
6 generally not visible to El Paso International Airport ATC radar.

8 **3.1.2 Environmental Consequences**

9 The environmental consequences resulting from the Proposed Action and alternative actions are
10 defined as effects on commercial and other civilian aircraft related to flight paths, available flight
11 altitudes, disruption of normal flight patterns, and restrictions on past flight activities which
12 would no longer be available. Adverse and beneficial effects on flight safety for civilian and
13 military aircraft are also discussed.

15 **3.1.2.1 Proposed Action**

16 The Proposed Action would extend the current Restricted Airspace R-5103A south to the
17 Texas/New Mexico state line and the edge of Fort Bliss property, as was originally intended.
18 The Proposed Action would also designate SUA (Restricted Area) over the South Training Areas
19 and McGregor Range Training Areas 8 and 9 from the surface to 1,200 feet AGL (approximately
20 5,200 feet MSL). The SUA joins the R-5103A and R-5103B Restricted Areas over the
21 McGregor Range. This would result in a prohibition of civilian aircraft flight within the new
22 Restricted Area when it is activated and in use by Fort Bliss aircraft. This is expected to be from
23 0700 to 2000 hours (7:00 am to 8:00 pm) Monday through Friday of each week. This would
24 require any civilian aircraft to fly above 1,200 feet AGL during those times, but would not
25 inhibit transient civilian aircraft from flying over the South Training Areas. Aircraft approaching
26 El Paso International Airport would also be required to fly above 1,200 feet AGL in the
27 Restricted Area, but aircraft approaching El Paso International Airport for landing would
28 normally be above 1,200 feet AGL over that area prior to transitioning into the landing pattern,
29 and aircraft taking off from El Paso International Airport would also normally climb above 1,200
30 feet AGL over the area en route to a flight path out of the El Paso area. Therefore, the Proposed

1 Action would not interfere with normal aircraft landing and takeoff procedures for El Paso
2 International Airport.

3

4 IFR operations into and out of El Paso International Airport would not be compromised by the
5 Proposed Action, since authorized IFR flight paths and altitudes are above 1,200 feet AGL over
6 the South Training Areas. Most aircraft flying over the South Training Areas above 1,200 feet
7 AGL would normally be visible to El Paso ATC radar, which would also allow for additional
8 traffic separation service and added safety.

9

10 Aircraft operating in the Terrain Flying Area (R-5103A and R-5103B) northeast of the South
11 Training Areas would be afforded additional separation from civilian aircraft and added safety
12 when they transition into and out of that area in the Hueco Mountains.

13

14 The floor of the El Paso International Airport Class E airspace northeast of the airport would
15 remain at 700 feet AGL. Likewise, the floor of the undesignated Class E airspace over the South
16 Training Areas would remain at 1,200 feet AGL. This would not impose a hardship restriction
17 on aircraft operations in that area, since almost all aircraft currently operate above that altitude.

18 The Class G airspace over the South Training Areas would be replaced by the new SUA.

19 Aircraft transiting the area between El Paso International Airport and the Fort Bliss restricted
20 areas to the north would still be able to fly above 1,200 feet AGL to reach the flight corridor to
21 Alamogordo along US 54.

22

23 The Proposed Action would greatly reduce the potential for aircraft accidents by separating
24 military and civilian air traffic over the South Training Areas. Civilian aircraft would also be
25 protected from adverse impacts due to military training activities on the ground. Aviation safety
26 would be greatly enhanced, but only minimal impacts on or disruption of civilian or commercial
27 aircraft operations would result from implementation of the Proposed Action.

28

29 ***3.1.2.2 Alternative 1***

30 The only difference between the Proposed Action and Alternative 1 is the elimination of the
31 SUA over private and state lands east of the South Training Areas and south of the Terrain

1 Flying Area. The effects of Alternative 1 would be the same as for the Proposed Action, except
2 that the separation between civilian aircraft and military aircraft in the transition area south of the
3 Terrain Flying Area would be eliminated, and continuing safety concerns for all aircraft in that
4 area below 1,200 feet AGL would remain.

5
6 **3.1.2.3 No Action Alternative**

7 The No Action Alternative would leave the airspace designations over Fort Bliss and the South
8 Training Areas as they are currently. The addition of the CAB beginning in 2012 would result in
9 an increase in military flights, primarily helicopters, over the South Training Areas (Army 2010).
10 Increased use of drop zones, shoot houses, and live fire exercises would result in increased safety
11 risk for low-flying civilian aircraft, should they fly over the South Training Areas during training
12 exercises. Scheduled military training exercises in the South Training Areas would be subject to
13 interruption if civilian aircraft stray into the area.

14
15 **3.1.3 Cumulative Environmental Consequences**

16 **3.1.3.1 Proposed Action**

17 The Proposed Action Alternative would only cause minimal cumulative impacts on Fort Bliss or
18 in the El Paso area, since there are no other airspace changes planned for the area by any other
19 agencies. Beneficial cumulative effects would accrue for civilian and military aircraft operations
20 over the South Training Areas, as the separation of military and civilian aircraft would alleviate
21 safety concerns associated with increased military training flights expected to occur in 2012 and
22 beyond.

23
24 **3.1.3.2 Alternative 1**

25 Cumulative impacts for Alternative 1 would be similar to those for the Proposed Action;
26 however, continued and increasing conflicts between civilian and military air traffic over the
27 Hueco Mountains south of the Terrain Flying Area would remain.

28
29 **3.1.3.3 No Action Alternative**

30 Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no modification of airspace over the South
31 Training Areas and no restrictions on civilian air traffic would occur. Airspace congestion and

**Draft Environmental Assessment for the Modification of Special Use Airspace
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- 1 potential civilian/military air traffic conflicts would increase below 1,200 feet AGL when CAB
- 2 operations are scheduled to begin in 2012, resulting in cumulative impacts on air traffic safety.

SECTION 4.0
CONCLUSIONS



1 **4.0 CONCLUSIONS**

2

3 This EA describes proposed changes to airspace to include SUA over the southern part of Fort
4 Bliss. This action has been evaluated to determine potential environmental impacts and their
5 severity. If the Proposed Action alternative is carried out as described in the EA, the action
6 would have minimal impact on the environment.

7

8 Thus, a FNSI has been concluded. Accordingly, the U.S. Army has determined that an EIS
9 pursuant to NEPA is not required for the Proposed Action.

SECTION 5.0
REFERENCES



1 **5.0 REFERENCES**

2

3 Army Regulation 200-1. Environmental Quality, Environmental Protection and Enhancement.
4 Headquarters Department of the Army Washington, DC 21 February 1997.

5

6 Army (Air Defense Artillery Center and Fort Bliss) 2007a. Final Supplemental Programmatic
7 Environmental Impact Statement; Fort Bliss, Texas and New Mexico Mission and Master
8 Plan, March 2007.

9

10 Army (Department of the Army) 2007b. Final Environmental Impact Statement for Army
11 Growth and Force Structure Realignment, October 2007.

12

13 Army 2010. Fort Bliss Growth and Force Structure Realignment, Final Environmental Impact
14 Statement, March 2010.

15

16 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) 2006. Order 1050.1E, CHG 1, Environmental Impacts:
17 Policies and Procedures. March 20, 2006.

18

19 FAA 2008. Order JO 7400.2G, Procedures for Handling Airspace Matters. April 10, 2008.

20

21 FAA 2011. El Paso, North Sectional Aeronautical Chart, 86th Edition, 10 FEB 2011 to 28 JUL
22 2011.

SECTION 6.0
LIST OF PREPARERS



6.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

The following people were primarily responsible for preparing this Environmental Assessment.

Name	Agency/Organization	Discipline/ Expertise	Experience	Role in Preparing EA
Chris Ingram	Gulf South Research Corporation	Biology/Ecology	30 years NEPA and natural resources studies	EA review and comment Meetings and coordination
Steve Oivanki	Gulf South Research Corporation	Geology	20 years natural resources and NEPA studies	Project Manager EA preparation
Chris Cothron	Gulf South Research Corporation	GIS/Graphics	3 years GIS/graphics experience	GIS analysis and graphics
John Barrera	Fort Bliss Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division	NEPA Program Manager	20 years	Fort Bliss Project Manager EA review and comment
Benny Steagall	Fort Bliss Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security	Air Traffic and Airspace Officer	40 years	Proponent, EA review and comment
Eric Wolters	Fort Bliss Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division	NEPA Specialist	30 years	EA review and comment
John Kipp	Fort Bliss Environmental Division, NEPA Planner	Soil science, Geomorphology	25 years earth science and NEPA	EA review and comment

SECTION 7.0
DRAFT DISTRIBUTION LIST



1 **7.0 DRAFT DISTRIBUTION LIST**

2

3 **Libraries**

4 Alamogordo Public Library

5 920 Oregon Ave

6 Alamogordo, NM 88310

7

8 El Paso Main Public Library

9 501 North Oregon

10 El Paso TX 79901

11

12 Thomas Branigan Public Library

13 200 East Picacho Avenue

14 Las Cruces, NM 88001

15

16 **Civil Air Patrol**

17 Texas Wing Group 1

18 El Paso Squadron

19 8025 Boeing Dr

20 El Paso, TX 79925

21

22 **El Paso International Airport**

23 Attn: Air Traffic Control Operations

24 6701 Convair Road

25 El Paso, TX 79925

26

27 **Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association**

28 Pete Lehmann

29 Manager Air Traffic Services

30 421 Aviation Way

31 Fredrick, MD 21701

32

33 **Federal Aviation Administration**

34 Dennis Roberts

35 Federal Aviation Administration

36 Director, Airspace Services

37 Mission Support Services

38 800 Independence Avenue, SW

39 Suite 400 East

40 Washington, DC 20591

41

42

43

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**Draft Environmental Assessment for the Modification of Special Use Airspace
Fort Bliss, Texas and New Mexico**

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SECTION 8.0
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS



1 8.0 ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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3	1AD	First Armored Division
4	AGL	Above Ground Level
5	AR	Army Regulation
6	Army	U.S. Army
7	ATC	Air Traffic Control
8	ATS	Air Traffic Services
9	BAAF	Biggs Army Airfield
10	BCT	Brigade Combat Team
11	BfSB	Battlefield Surveillance Brigade
12	BRAC	Base Closure and Realignment Act
13	CAB	Combat Aviation Brigade
14	CASEVAC	Casualty Evacuation
15	CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
16	CFA	Controlled Firing Area
17	CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
18	COA	Certificate of Authorization
19	DoD	Department of Defense
20	DPW	Directorate of Public Works
21	EA	Environmental Assessment
22	EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
23	E.O.	Executive Order
24	FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
25	FARP	Forward Area Refuel Point
26	FBTC	Fort Bliss Training Complex
27	FNSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
28	FORSCOM	Forces Command
29	GSRC	Gulf South Research Corporation
30	HBCT	Heavy Maneuver Brigade Combat Team
31	IBCT	Infantry Brigade Combat Team
32	IFR	Instrument Flight Rules
33	ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
34	MOA	Military Operations Area
35	MSL	Mean Sea Level
36	NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
37	NM	Nautical Mile
38	NSA	National Security Area
39	PR	Personnel Recovery
40	ROD	Record of Decision
41	SARSA	Small Arms Safety Zone
42	SCBT	Stryker Brigade Combat Team
43	SUA	Special Use Airspace
44	SVFR	Special Visual Flight Rules
45	TA	Training Area

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1	UAS	Unmanned Aircraft System
2	U.S.	United States
3	USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
4	U.S.C.	U.S. Code
5	VEC	Valued Environmental Component
6	VFR	Visual Flight Rules
7	WSMR	White Sands Missile Range
8	WWII	World War II

APPENDIX A
CORRESPONDENCE



Correspondence and comments received during the public comment period will be included in this appendix.

APPENDIX B
ALTERNATIVES DEFINITIONS AND COORDINATES



ALTERNATIVE 1 DESCRIPTION

R-5103A South Extension to Texas/New Mexico State Line

Boundaries – Beginning at lat. 32°00'30"N., long. 106°10'03"W.;;
to lat. 32°00'08"N., long. 106°10'31.6"W.;;
to lat. 32°00'05.5"N., long. 105°57'07.8"W.;;
to lat. 32°00'15"N., long. 105°56'41.9"W.;;
to the point of beginning.

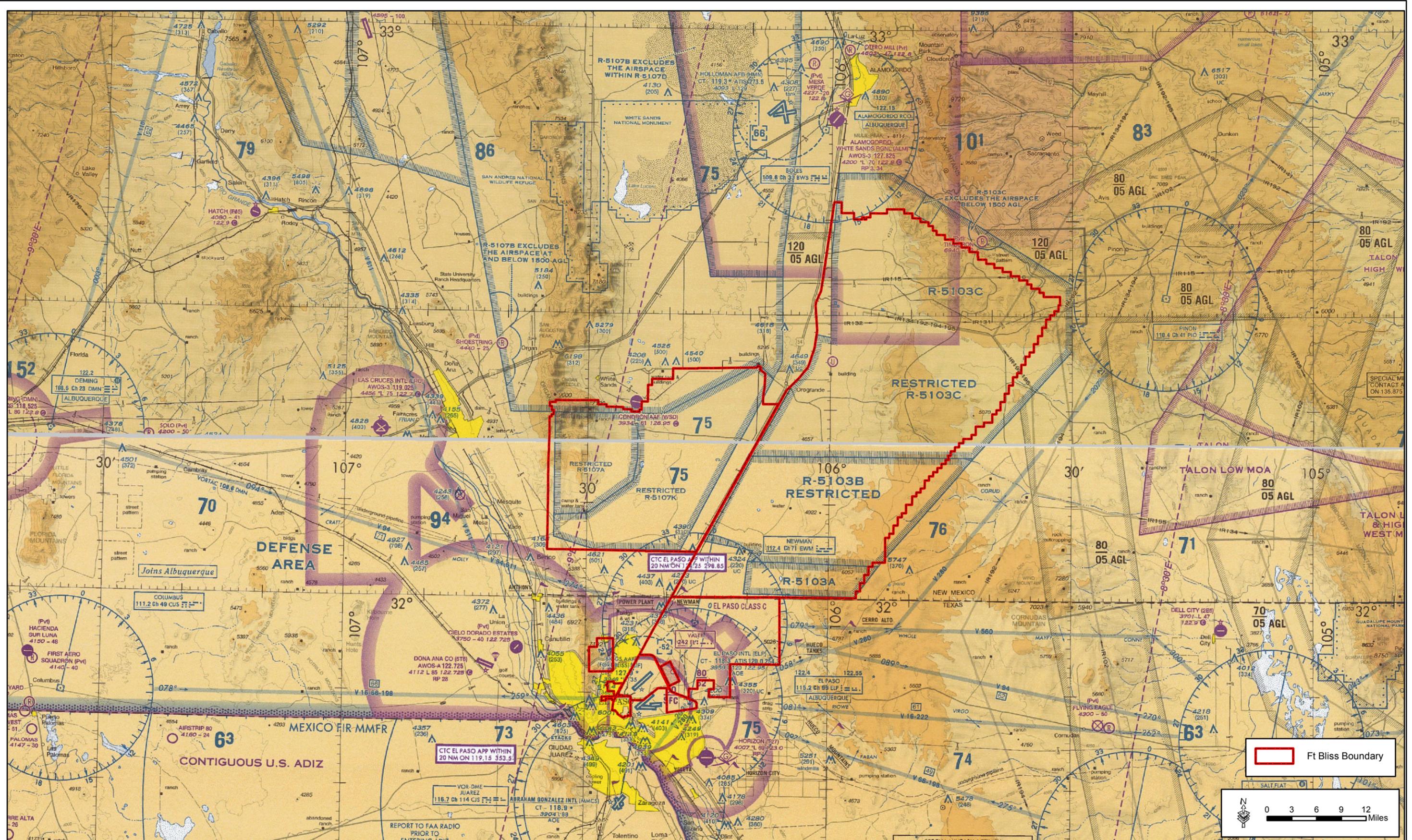
SUA over the South Training Areas and McGregor Range

Boundaries – Beginning at lat. 32°06'00" N., long. 106°15'32" W.;;
to lat. 31°59'53.4"N., long. 106°19'29.9"W.;;
to lat. 31°59'51.5"N., long. 106°19'31.8"W.;;
to lat. 31°59'13.8"N., long. 106°17'49.2"W.;;
to lat. 31°58'13.9"N., long. 106°16'02.2"W.;;
to lat. 31°57'04.1"N., long. 106°14'38.1"W.;;
to lat. 31°58'22.4"N., long. 106°12'23.6"W.;;
to lat. 31°55'16.2"N., long. 106°9'21.2"W.;;
to lat. 31°53'35.4"N., long. 106°12'01"W.;;
to lat. 31°53'04.8"N., long. 106°11'48.6"W.;;
to lat. 31°53'04.7"N., long. 106°05'57.5"W.;;
to lat. 32°00'9.3"N., long. 106°06'02.4"W.;;
to lat. 32°00'08"N., long. 106°10'31.7"W.;;
to lat. 32°00'30"N., long. 106°10'27"W.;;
to lat. 32°03'55"N., long. 106°10'00"W.;;
to lat. 32°05'02"N., long. 106°09'22"W.;;
to the point of beginning.

Designated Altitudes	Surface to 1,200 feet AGL
Time of Designation	0700 to 2000 Monday through Friday
Controlling Agency	FAA, Albuquerque, New Mexico Traffic Control Center
Using Agency	Commanding General, U.S. Army and Fort Bliss, Texas

APPENDIX C
FAA CURRENT AIRSPACE NAVIGATION CHART





Fort Bliss Existing Airspace Map (FAA El Paso North and Albuquerque South Sectionals)