

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) AND FINDING OF NO PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE (FONPA)

PERSONNEL RECOVERY (PR) CAMPUS MOODY AFB, GEORGIA

Pursuant to provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321–4270d, implementing Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations, 40 C.F.R. §§ 1500–1508, and 32 C.F.R. Part 989, Environmental Impact Analysis Process, the United States Air Force (Air Force) assessed the potential environmental consequences associated with the consolidation of 347th Rescue Group (347 RQG) facilities through development of a Personnel Recovery (PR) Campus at Moody Air Force Base (AFB), Georgia.

The purpose for this Proposed Action is to consolidate and improve facility support for the 347 RQG at Moody AFB through consolidation of all rescue aviation and maintenance functions; upgrade outdated facilities; reduce and/or eliminate existing Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) violations; and improve operational, ergonomic, and energy efficiencies. The Proposed Action is needed because the Moody AFB PR program is experiencing numerous facility shortfalls that currently impair mission effectiveness. There is a shortage of space and overcrowding, causing inadequate work space for training, mission planning, and briefing, as well as insufficient facilities for storage, parking aircraft, and shop space.

The Environmental Assessment (EA), incorporated by reference into this finding, analyzes the potential environmental consequences of activities associated with the PR Campus and provides environmental protection measures to avoid or reduce adverse environmental impacts.

The EA considers all potential impacts of Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative), Alternative 2, Alternative 3, and the No Action Alternative. The EA also considers cumulative environmental impacts with other projects at Moody AFB, Georgia.

ALTERNATIVE 1 (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)

Section 2.3.1 of the EA provides a detailed description of Alternative 1. Alternative 1 involves several components, including demolition activities, construction of facilities, and construction of supporting infrastructure. A summary is provided below:

Site preparation to allow for new construction would affect approximately 1.3 million square feet (SF) of area. This would include approximately 18 acres of tree removal, 5 acres of wetland fill, 0.6 acre of soil dewatering, and grading of the construction sites. Buildings 645/655 (16,620 SF) would be demolished to accommodate the new hangar and Squadron Operations (Squad Ops) building and the parts storage/warehouse functions would be moved to the new parts storage facility. Approximately 40,000 SF of roadway/pavement demolition would be needed to accommodate new facilities, roadways, and pavements. Approximately 7,100 linear feet of existing utility lines would need to be demolished in order to accommodate new facilities and rerouting of new utilities and roadways.

A 78,738 SF four-bay, side-loaded maintenance hangar would be constructed adjacent to the existing HH-60 parking apron, where buildings 645/655 are located. The maintenance hangar would include the Helicopter Maintenance Unit (HMU) and General Purpose Maintenance Shop and have hangar bays in the middle and shop and office space located in the wings along the north and south sides. Additional facility construction would include a new 34,000 SF Squadron Operations building and 18,400 SF parts storage building. The helicopter squadron operations building would provide administrative support for the squadron and the parts storage building would provide logistical support, housing parts and other components necessary for aircraft maintenance.

Additional infrastructure includes 47,000 SF of aerospace ground equipment staging area, 185,000 SF of vehicle parking, 375,000 SF of aircraft apron/taxiway, approximately 229,000 SF of roadway, 2,000 linear feet of fencing, approximately 285,000 SF of miscellaneous pavements (sidewalks, etc.), and a stormwater conveyance and collection system.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Alternative 2 (identified as Western Alternative 2A in the 2014 PR Campus Area Development Plan [ADP]) is similar to Alternative 1, with the exception being that the HMU would be co-located with the hangar and the Squad Ops building would be sited separately and to the south of the hangar where building 655 currently exists, rather than co-located with the hangar as in Alternative 1. All other project components under Alternative 2 would be the same as those described for Alternative 1. Transportation components and utilities would also be similar to Alternative 1 layouts.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Alternative 3 (identified as Western Alternative 2C in the 2014 PR Campus ADP) is similar to Alternative 2, with the exception being that the Squad Ops building would be sited separately and to the west of the hangar near the proposed privately owned vehicle parking lot rather than located south of the hangar. Additionally, the location of the parts storage building would be shifted west to accommodate the Squad Ops building. All other project components under Alternative 3 would be the same as those described for Alternative 1. Transportation components and utilities would also be similar to Alternative 1 layouts.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed PR Campus plan would not be implemented. No new facilities would be constructed and personnel would continue to utilize existing facilities and infrastructure.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Air Force has concluded that no significant adverse effects would result to the following resources as a result of the action alternatives: air quality, greenhouse gases, biological resources, geology and earth resources, land use and coastal zone resources, noise, public health and safety, transportation, and water resources. No significant adverse cumulative impacts would result from activities associated with Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative) when considered with past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future projects at Moody AFB. In addition, the EA concluded that the action alternatives

would not affect environmental justice, socioeconomics, public services and utilities, and recreation opportunities. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided concurrence on a finding of “not likely to adversely affect” Federally protected species for the Proposed Action under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and the Air Force completed consultation with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Officer regarding potential impacts to archaeological and historic building resources under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), which concurred with a finding of no adverse effect to cultural resources.

Water Resources (EA Section 4.7). Approximately 5 acres of wetlands impacted by the expansion of the parking apron would need to be mitigated through coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 wetland permit. The PR Campus project area is not located within the 100-year floodplain.

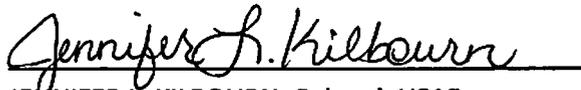
Earth Resources (EA Section 4.8). No significant impacts have been identified. There may be a temporary increase in the potential for soil erosion during construction activities. A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit is required for construction activities. Adherence to NPDES permit requirements and associated best management practices (as determined during the permitting process) for soil erosion would minimize the extent of any adverse impacts.

FINDING OF NO PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE

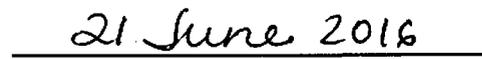
Per 32 C.F.R. § 989.14(g), there is no practicable alternative to disturbance of wetlands within the proposed PR Campus. The size and configuration requirements for the hangar and parking ramp preclude any other options in the PR Campus area. Additionally, the east ramp expansion cannot go any farther east, north, or south because of UFC clear zone requirements, and facilities that were recently built would have to be demolished and rebuilt elsewhere to accommodate a different layout. As a result, I find that there is no practicable alternative to implementing Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative) within wetlands.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on my review of the facts and analyses contained in the attached EA, conducted under the provisions of NEPA, CEQ regulations, and 32 C.F.R. Part 989, I conclude that the PR Campus would not have a significant environmental impact, either by itself or cumulatively with other projects at Moody AFB. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The signing of this Finding of No Significant Impact completes the environmental impact analysis process.



JENNIFER L. KILBOURN, Colonel, USAF
Chief, Civil Engineer Division (ACC/A4C)


DATE

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