

**PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE FIELDING OF THE
MANEUVER - SHORT RANGE AIR DEFENSE CAPABILITY**

DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Prepared by

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May 2021

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**DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for Fielding the M-SHORAD Battalion**

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Draft Finding of No Significant Impact for Fielding M-SHORAD Battalions

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code Section 4321 et seq.) requires federal agencies to consider potential environmental impacts prior to undertaking a major Federal action. The Department of the Army (Army) prepared a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) in accordance with NEPA, the regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500-1508 (40 CFR § 1500-1508), and the Army's procedures for implementing NEPA, Environmental Analysis of Army Actions (32 CFR Part 651). This PEA is titled "*Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Fielding M-SHORAD Battalions.*" This PEA is incorporated by reference in this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), and addresses environmental effects of the proposed fielding of M-SHORAD battalions. The intent of the fielding is to enhance the Army's air defense capabilities.

The PEA provides a broad and programmatic analysis to determine potential impacts on the environmental and socioeconomic areas of concern at each of the six installations under consideration. The PEA also considers the general capacity of each installation to support an M-SHORAD battalion given its existing baseline conditions. The programmatic approach is designed to allow for early planning, coordination, and flexibility throughout implementation of the Army's process of fielding M-SHORAD battalions. If a potential impact has not been analyzed in sufficient detail in the PEA, it would require additional analysis such as tiering from or supplementing the PEA.

Decisions on where to station the M-SHORAD units will be made by Army decision-makers based on the information in this EA/FONSI as well as other mission-related considerations.

PROPOSED ACTION

The Army plans to field¹³⁸ M-SHORAD Battalions to enhance the defensive capability of Divisions against the increased capability of near peer adversaries to project lethal air power. M-SHORAD will improve air defense capability in current maneuver formations. The proposed action would address the priority to protect tactical maneuver forces from aerial threats. The PEA analyzes the fielding at six installations in more detail, including Fort Bliss, Fort Hood, Fort Riley, Fort Stewart, Fort Carson, and Fort Sill.

ALTERNATIVES

The PEA looked at one action Alternative and a No Action Alternative. The alternatives considered and analyzed in the PEA were:

No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative is required by CEQ regulations and provides baseline conditions and a benchmark against which to compare environmental impacts from the Proposed Action alternatives (40 CFR § 1502.14(d)). Under the No Action Alternative, fielding the M-SHORAD battalion would

¹³⁸ "Field" – refers to sending new equipment and technology to an installation(s). As part of the fielding action, soldiers will be stationed at an installation(s) to train with and maintain the M-SHORAD capability.

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not occur. Force structure, personnel, and equipment would not change at any of these installations as a result of this initiative. Therefore, the No Action Alternative would not address the Army's needs for enhanced air defense capabilities at the division level.

Proposed Action Alternative

The Proposed Action analyzed within the PEA was to field the M-SHORAD battalions at three of the six installations assessed. The M-SHORAD battalion would consist of approximately 550 soldiers, 40 M-SHORAD vehicles, and 195 associated support vehicles. In addition, radars, communications equipment, and small arms would outfit the battalion.

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

No significant impacts are anticipated as a result of implementing the Proposed Action at any of the six installations assessed in this PEA. Each of the resource areas identified in Appendix A of this FONSI was analyzed for potential impacts resulting from implementing the Proposed Action and any known cumulative actions. Potential impacts were broken down into the following categories: beneficial impacts, no impacts, and potential adverse impacts (negligible, minor, moderate/ less than significant, or significant). These impacts are summarized in Table 9.1-1 in the FONSI Appendix A below.

Impacts are anticipated to be minimized through avoidance, and the implementation of existing environmental protection measures. Avoidance strategies depend on the installation selected, the increase in the number of soldiers at the installation, and where construction activities are planned. Examples of environmental protection measures would include implementing erosion and stormwater control measures; maintaining vehicles and equipment; and sustaining vegetation cover at the construction and training sites. Buffers for sensitive resources (biological and cultural) are employed during construction and training, depending on the requirements of the installation. For the proposed action, no new mitigation measures are needed nor have any been identified. The Army will continue to adhere to legal and regulatory requirements, and continue to implement its approved management plans, standard operation procedures, and best management practices (BMPs).

PUBLIC REVIEW AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

Introduction

The PEA and draft FONSI were made available for public, agency, and Tribal review on May 19, 2021 when a Notice of Availability was published in the Federal Register. That same day, electronic copies of the PEA and draft FONSI were made available for download from the United States Army Environmental Command (USAEC) website at:

<https://aec.army.mil/index.php?cID=352>. Comments were requested to be submitted at US Army Environmental Command, ATTN: M-SHORAD Public Comments, 2455 Reynolds Road Mail Stop 112, JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234-7588 or by email to: usarmy.jbsa.aec.nepa@mail.mil using the subject line M-SHORAD Public Comment. If you have questions regarding these documents please contact the USAEC Public Affairs Office by email at usarmy.jbsa.aec.mbx@mail.mil or by phone at 443-243-0313, 210-792-6683, or toll-free 855-846-3940.

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Comments Received and Responses

Provide summary of comments received.

CONCLUSION

Based on a careful review of the PEA, which is incorporated by reference, and comments received as a result of the MMDDYY Notice of Availability publication, I have determined that no significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts to the human or natural environment are anticipated at any of the six installations as a result of implementation of either Alternative. The information in public comments and other new information discussed in the Public Review and Interagency Coordination section of this document do not constitute significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns that would require supplementation of the PEA. Nevertheless, all comments were taken into account in making this decision. The Army's review indicates that the PEA's analysis is adequate and that its conclusion that there are no significant impacts from either alternative is still valid. The Army concludes that the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative are not major Federal actions that would significantly affect the quality of the environment per Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA; an environmental impact statement is not required, and will not be prepared. My decision is based on the PEA's analysis of potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts associated with the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative. This decision meets the requirements of the NEPA and its implementing regulations and has been made after taking into account all submitted information and considering a full range of reasonable alternatives and all environmental impacts. This concludes the NEPA process for this action.

[INSERT SIGNATURE BLOCK]

Date

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9.1 FONSI APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF THE EFFECTS FROM BOTH ALTERNATIVES

Table 9.1-1. Summary of the Potential Effects of the Evaluated Alternatives

Resource Area	Proposed Action <i>Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative</i>	No Action Alternative <i>Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative</i>
Air Quality	Less than significant adverse effects	Less than significant adverse effects
Airspace	Minor adverse effect	Minor adverse effect
Biological Resources	Less than significant adverse effects	Less than significant adverse effects
Cultural Resources	Less than significant adverse effects	Less than significant adverse effects
Soils	Less than significant adverse effects	Less than significant adverse effects
Land Use and Compatibility	Less than significant adverse effects	Less than significant adverse effects
Socio-economics	Less than significant beneficial effects	Minor beneficial effects
Traffic and Transportation	Less than significant adverse effects	Less than significant adverse effects
Facilities	Less than significant adverse effects	Less than significant adverse effects
Water Resources	Less than significant adverse effects	Less than significant adverse effects