FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
AND
FINDING OF NO PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE (FONPA)
FLIGHTLINE INSTALLATION DEVELOPMENT
BEALE AIR FORCE BASE, CALIFORNIA
EAXX-007-57-UAF-1737969450

Pursuant to provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended by Public Law 30 118-5, the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 (42 United States Code 4321 et seq.), DoD NEPA Implementing Procedures (June 30, 2025), and Department of the Air Force (DAF) Implementing Procedures. DAF prepared the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) to address the potential environmental consequences associated with implementation of 15 Flightline installation development projects at Beale Air Force Base (AFB), California. The attached EA is incorporated by reference in this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)/Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA).

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide infrastructure improvements necessary to support the mission of the 9th Reconnaissance Wing (9 RW) and tenant units. The 15 projects considered in this EA were identified as priorities for installation development in the Beale AFB Installation Development Plan. The Proposed Action is needed to provide and maintain facilities and infrastructure that are adequate to support the needs of the 9 RW and its tenant units, and to do so in a manner that:

- Supports Air Force mission requirements, future mission capabilities requirements, and quality of life of units and airmen hosted by the installation;
- Meets applicable DoD installation master planning criteria, consistent with Unified Facilities Criteria 2-100-01, Installation Master Planning, and Air Force comprehensive planning policy and directives;
- Meets all applicable DoD, federal, state, and local laws and regulations such as, but not limited to, the Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Description of the Proposed Action (Alternative 1)

Under Alternative 1, 15 installation development projects would be implemented, involving both facilities and infrastructure, including 9 construction projects, 5 renovation and repair projects, and 1 demolition project. The proposed projects are estimated to occur over a 5-year period from 2026 through 2030, although some could occur later. Individual projects analyzed in the EA are considered independent of each other. Beale AFB might choose to implement all, none, or any combination of these projects.

Additional Alternatives

In addition to the No Action Alternative, alternatives for 5 of the 15 projects were considered in the EA. The other 10 projects would be the same under any of the alternatives. Any combination of these alternatives could be implemented.

Project 4 – Construct Wildland Fire Vehicle Storage Facility: three alternative sites were evaluated, all in the immediate vicinity of the firehouse, and called Alternative B, Alternative C, and Alternative D.

Project 5 – Construct Flightline Fitness Center: under Alternative B, a new fitness center would not be constructed; rather, a new fitness center would be installed within currently unused space in Building 1025.

Project 8 – Construct Fuel Transfer Line Access Road: under Alternative B, portions of the Fuel Transfer Line Access Road would take a different route, called Original Path.

Project 10 – Construct Additional Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Parking: under Alternative B, the existing parking area would be removed, and a two-story parking structure would be constructed at the same site.

Project 15 – Repair Upstream Storm Drainage Physiological Support Squadron, Building 1029: under Alternative B, the wing walls would be 6 feet long instead of 8 feet long, and rather than installing a debris pit and protective grating, rounded cobble would be excavated and replaced with angular riprap at a reduced elevation.

Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration

This EA has considered all reasonable alternatives. Alternatives considered, but eliminated, were evaluated for all projects except for Project 10 - Construct Additional POV Parking. The rationale for elimination varied by project but was generally because the alternative did not meet the selection standards established by the Air Force.

No Action Alternative

Analysis of the No Action Alternative provides a benchmark, enabling decision-makers to compare the magnitude of the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action. NEPA requires an EA to analyze the No Action Alternative. No action means that an action would not take place at this time, and the resulting environmental effects from taking no action would be compared with the effects of allowing the proposed activity to go forward. Under the No Action Alternative, the DAF would not implement the 15 installation development projects at Beale AFB. New construction, repairs, renovations, and demolition would not take place, and existing deficiencies would remain.

Summary of Environmental Findings

Environmental analysis focused on the following areas: noise, air quality, water resources, geological resources, wetlands and other waters of the United States, biological resources, cultural resources, infrastructure, hazardous materials and waste, and safety and health. Land use and socioeconomics were eliminated from detailed analysis, as they are not expected to be affected by the Proposed Action.

The environmental analysis determined that the Proposed Action and all action alternatives would not have significant impacts on the following resources:

Because of the noise generated by heavy equipment during construction, the Proposed Action and all action alternatives would result in short-term minor adverse impacts to the noise environment. No long-term or significant noise impacts would occur.

The Proposed Action and all action alternatives may cause short- and long-term minor adverse impacts on air quality resulting from fugitive dust and use of heavy equipment. Minor long-term impacts may occur from operation of heating equipment in new construction. Based on Air Conformity Applicability Model analysis, proposed project emissions would not be considered significant with respect to air quality impacts. The Proposed Action would not interfere with the region's ability to maintain compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for attainment area pollutants and would not interfere with the ability to achieve compliance for pollutants that contribute to ozone nonattainment. None of the criteria pollutants emission rates would exceed the 100-tons-per-year *de minimis* threshold; therefore, no impacts on air quality are expected.

Activities under the Proposed Action and all action alternatives may result in minor, short-term adverse impacts on geological resources through soil disturbance. No changes or impacts on topography and regional geology are expected under any alternative. Because the project sites would be stabilized and revegetated after construction, impacts to geological resources would be minor and short term.

There are no Historic Properties within or adjacent to the Proposed Action.. Therefore, per 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 800.4, Identification of Historic Properties, no historic properties would be affected by implementation of the Proposed Action and all action alternatives.

Under the Proposed Action and all action alternatives, there would be negligible, short-term increases in usage of hazardous materials, petroleum products, and hazardous wastes during construction, renovation, and demolition. Short-term, minor, adverse impacts could also occur from asbestos-containing materials (ACMs), lead-based paint (LBP), and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from proposed renovation of Flightline facilities. Surveys for these materials would be completed, as necessary, and all activities would adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local regulations and the installation's management plans to reduce potential exposure to, and release of, ACMs, LBP, and PCBs.

The Proposed Action and all action alternatives would have moderate, long-term beneficial impacts on safety and health, as existing deficiencies would be corrected. In the short term, contractors involved in construction, renovation, and demolition work would be exposed to a slightly greater health and safety risk; however, substantive adverse impacts to safety are not expected because construction workers would comply with requirements outlined in 29 CFR Part 1910 (General Industry) and Part 1926 (Construction), in addition to industrial hygiene directives. Likewise, facility operations would not have significant impacts to safety since requirements specified in Air Force Instruction 91-202 and Air Force Occupational Safety and Health program would be implemented with any DAF activity.

The Proposed Action and all action alternatives would have minor, short-term, adverse impacts on infrastructure resulting from temporary service interruptions during construction. No long-term adverse impacts are anticipated. Long-term, minor to moderate, beneficial impacts on infrastructure would result from improvement of the physical infrastructure and functionality of Beale AFB associated with the 15 projects. Construction, renovation, and demolition of buildings at Beale AFB would improve the overall state of infrastructure, specifically Transportation (Project 14), Electrical (Project 1), Liquid Fuels (Project 8), Water Supply (Project 12), Fire Protection Systems (Project 4 and several renovations that include fire system upgrades), and Stormwater Management (Projects 14 and 15).

All other findings are summarized below:

Water Resources

The Proposed Action and all action alternatives would result in short-term, minor adverse impacts on water resources from Projects 8, 12, and 14, which overlap with surface water features. Environmental protection measures, including erosion control protection, conducting all work during the dry season or periods of dry weather, and ensuring all equipment used below the ordinary high-water mark is free of exterior contamination, would be necessary to ensure there would be no significant impacts on water resources. For Project 12, trenchless installation would be employed in certain areas to prevent significant impacts to water resources. Long-term beneficial impacts on surface waters may result from these projects, as they would prevent or reduce future impacts by protecting wetlands. The Proposed Action and all action alternatives would result in minor short-term impacts during construction and long-term adverse impacts on stormwater management through an increase in impervious surface. Environmental protection measures would be implemented to minimize effects. Project 15 would result in a long-term beneficial impact on stormwater management by enlarging the storm drain. Under the Proposed Action and all alternatives, there would be negligible, long-term adverse impacts on 100-year floodplains from Projects 8 and 15. Project 12 is also located within the 100-year floodplain, but no impacts would occur because of the nature of the project. Projects 5, 6, 11, 13, and 15 are also located within the 500-year floodplain.

Wetlands and Other Surface Waters

The Proposed Action would result in permanent loss of 1.04 acres of surface waters. Impacts to surface waters were avoided as much as possible; however, complete avoidance was not possible for several projects because of a lack of available space or moving a project would require reconfiguration of existing

infrastructure. As part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permitting process, compensatory mitigation would be provided for unavoidable loss of jurisdictional surface waters and wetlands. Mitigation would be in the form of a purchase of credits from an off-site mitigation bank. This mitigation would ensure the project would result in no net loss of wetlands, as required under 33 CFR Part 332. Environmental protection measures, including those described for water and biological resources, would be implemented under all of the action alternatives to avoid or reduce impacts to adjacent surface waters. All action alternatives would affect the same amount of potential surface waters except for Projects 4, 5, 8, 10, and 15. Project 4 Alternative C would not affect surface waters, while the Proposed Action and Alternatives B and D would adversely affect surface waters. Project 8 Alternative B (Original Path) would affect 8.85 more acres of surface waters (including 2.22 acres of vernal pools) than the Proposed Action. Project 10 Alternative B would not affect surface waters. Project 15 Alternative B would include 6-foot-long wingwalls rather than 8 feet long and would affect slightly less surface waters.

Biological Resources

The Proposed Action and all action alternatives are expected to result in short-term, minor adverse impacts on vegetation and wildlife during construction, renovation, and demolition. Environmental protection measures, including protection of off-road access routes, revegetation with native seed mix, dust control, and protection of vernal pool habitat, would be implemented to avoid or reduce impacts to less than significant. The Proposed Action and all action alternatives would directly impact habitat for two federally listed species — vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp. To avoid significant impacts, compensatory mitigation would be provided at a ratio of 1:1 for indirect effects (1 acre of existing habitat preserved for every 1 acre of habitat indirectly affected) and 3:l or 4:1 for direct effects (3 or 4 acres of habitat preserved for every 1 acre of habitat directly affected), depending on location. All action alternatives would have the same level of impacts on special status species except for Projects 8, 10, and 15. Project 8 Alternative B (Original Path) would affect 2.13 acres of vernal pool habitat; this amount is 2.12 acres more than the Proposed Action. Project 10 Alternative B would not affect vernal pool habitat. Project 15 would include 6-foot-long wingwalls rather than 8 feet long, which would slightly reduce the affected area of vernal pool habitat compared with the Proposed Action. Consultation on the Proposed Action with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act concluded in September 2025 with receipt of a Biological Opinion which includes an Incidental Take Statement for vernal pool branchiopods. Consultation was not conducted for the alternatives to Projects 8, 10, and 15; it is limited to the Proposed Action only.

Mitigations

The DAF will be responsible for ensuring that the mitigations listed above in the environmental findings section and in the EA are in place before any specific action would be taken. The Air Force will oversee and verify mitigations are fully funded and are in place and being carried out as identified in this FONSI/FONPA and the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (MMP). The MMP will be further developed subsequent to this FONSI and will include points of contact for oversight and completion of the mitigation as well as the anticipated timing for mitigation actions. Beale AFB will offset the effects to vernal pool branchiopod habitat through purchase of credits from a Service-approved conservation or mitigation bank or other equivalent method subject to the Service's review and approval. The purchase will be completed prior to initiating each activity. Permanent loss of habitat will be offset by preserving existing vernal pool branchiopod habitat at a ratio of 4 acres of preservation for every 1 acre impacted (4:1) where effects occur within the Beale Core Recovery Area and at a ratio of 3:1 for effects outside of the Core Area. Temporary effects will be offset at a ratio of 1:1. Based on the proposed project designs, a total of 2.52 acres of credits will be purchased to offset 0.42 acres of permanent and 1.22 acres of temporary effects. Compensatory mitigation for the unavoidable loss of jurisdictional surface waters will occur during future project-specific USACE permitting process. It is expected the mitigation monitoring will generally consist of on-the-ground inspections, and any subsequent actions necessary to address deficiencies discovered during the inspections. The EA refers to the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Conservation Measures (CMs). For this FONSI/FONPA and in compliance with Air Force regulation, BMPs and CMs will be carried forward and monitored in the MMP.

Public Involvement
A Notice of Availability for the Draft EA and proposed FONSI/FONPA was published in the *Appeal-Democrat* inviting the public to review and comment on the Draft EA during the 30-day public comment period. The Draft EA and proposed FONSI/FONPA were made available for public review at local public libraries in Yuba City, Marysville, and Wheatland, California, and online at https://www.beale.af.mil/Information/Units/Environmental-Information/. No public comments were received.

FONSI. After review of the EA prepared in accordance with requirements of NEPA and which is hereby incorporated by reference, I have determined that the Proposed Action to provide installation development at Beale AFB, California, with implementation of compensatory mitigation for impacts to federally listed species and surface waters as outlined in EA Section 3.7.3, Section 3.8.3, and Appendix E, would not have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. Project 16 would not be implemented until after consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act has been completed. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared. This decision has been made after considering all submitted information, including a review of public and agency comments submitted during the 30-day public comment period, and considering a full range of practical alternatives that meet project requirements and are within the legal authority of the Department of the Air Force.

An MMP will be developed and implemented before any action will be taken, but no later than 90 days from the date of the FONSI.

FONPA. After careful review of the EA, which is incorporated by reference, I have concluded that based on the location of several projects there are no practicable alternatives to implementing those proposed projects without directly impacting wetlands. All practicable measures will be taken to minimize harm to or within wetlands.

Impacts to wetlands have been reduced to the maximum extent possible through project design and implementation of environmental protection measures; however, several projects would have a direct, minor adverse impact on wetlands. As a result of ground disturbance and fill operations, the Proposed Action will permanently impact 1.04 acres of wetlands. Avoidance of wetland impacts is not practicable because of project requirements and the existing extent of wetlands within the project area. A Section 404 permit under the Clean Water Act would be required from USACE, and the DAF would be required to mitigate for impacts by purchasing wetland mitigation bank credits or in lieu payments. Based on my review of the facts and analyses contained in the attached EA, I find that there is no practicable alternative to construction in a wetland. This finding fulfills the requirements of Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands for a FONPA.

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