

Draft Finding of No Significant Impact

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF OPERATIONAL READINESS TRAINING COMPLEX FORT HUNTER LIGGETT, MONTEREY COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508) for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S. Code 4321 et seq.) and 32 CFR Part 651 (*Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*), the US Army Corps of Engineers, the US Army Garrison Fort Hunter Liggett Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division, and the Army Reserve Installation Management Directorate performed Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) of the potential environmental effects associated with the construction and operation of a 700-member Operational Readiness Training Complex (ORTC) at Fort Hunter Liggett (FHL), Monterey County, California.

The EA Supplement document provides additional information and incorporates the *Final Environmental Assessment: Addressing Installation Development and Training at Fort Hunter Liggett, California, May 2010* (the 2010 Programmatic EA) by reference. The EA Supplement has been prepared to satisfy NEPA requirements for this project because the site layout and acreage required for the proposed ORTC was not defined in the 2010 Programmatic EA. Only resources not evaluated fully with respect to these changes in the original 2010 Programmatic EA are evaluated in detail in the EA Supplement.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to construct and operate a new 700-person ORTC to bring Fort Hunter Liggett to the standards of a premier Reserve Combat Support Training Center and to address the Grow the Army Force initiative. Adequate existing facilities are not available on FHL to support the requirements of the Reserve Combat Support Training Center. All existing facilities suitable for use are fully utilized. This project provides essential living and working facilities at FHL to support training for the Global War on Terror. If the proposed project is not implemented, FHL would not be able to support the Commander of the Army Reserve's directive to function as a premiere Reserve Combat Support Training Center. Soldiers would have to live and work out of substandard temporary and/or re-locatable buildings that have limited operational capabilities and limited useful life expectancies.

Description of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would consist of construction and operation of a 700-member ORTC. The ORTC would include the buildings listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Proposed Buildings in the Operational Readiness Training Complex Project Area

Building Name	Approximate Square Footage	Proposed Building Height (feet)
Barracks 1	30,560	36
Barracks 2	45,835	48
Barracks 3	45,835	48

TABLE 1
Proposed Buildings in the Operational Readiness Training Complex Project Area

Building Name	Approximate Square Footage	Proposed Building Height (feet)
Vehicle Maintenance Shop	11,855	36
Officers' Quarters	22,570	34
Dining Facility	16,760	28
Battalion Headquarters	11,235	24
Company Headquarters	19,580	22
Company Storage Sheds	4,800	26

*Under the Preferred Alternative, the Officers' Quarters and the Battalion Headquarters would be a three-story 48-foot-tall building.

The ORTC buildings would be of permanent construction with reinforced concrete foundations and floor slabs, precast concrete panel or structural concrete masonry walls; metal roof deck over open-web steel joists; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems; plumbing and mechanical systems; security systems; and electrical systems. The company sheds would be pre-engineered metal buildings. The Proposed Action would include construction of stormwater management areas. The design effort will be compliant with the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver standard, will feature low impact development, and will consider renewable energy initiatives. In addition, the US Army Reserve (USAR) would comply with requirements of Section 438 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007.

Additional construction activities would include paving, fencing, general site improvements, and extending utilities to serve the new facilities. Accessibility for disabled individuals would be provided. Some grading and leveling of land would likely be required onsite. Disturbed areas that are not within the footprint of the proposed buildings or parking areas would be landscaped and used to meet security setback requirements. Physical security measures or antiterrorism/force protection measures would be incorporated into the design and would include setbacks from roads, parking areas, and vehicle unloading areas. The final ground surface elevation would be roughly equivalent to the existing grade. The estimated start date of construction is 2013, with a construction completion date approximately 24 months following the start date. Operation of the facility is anticipated to begin after construction is completed. The new ORTC would support approximately 700 reservists.

Alternatives Considered But Dismissed

An alternative location for a facility similar to the ORTC was considered in the 2007 FHL Master Plan. The facility was proposed to be located in the areas between Sulphur Springs Road, Intrepid Road, Bradley Road, and Route Tampa. This alternative was dismissed from further evaluation because placement of the facility in this location precluded any future ORTC from being constructed contiguous with the proposed ORTC, which would eliminate the ability to share facilities.

Alternatives Considered in Detail

Each of the following alternatives would implement the Proposed Action on approximately 25 acres to the east of the existing access control point (ACP) (main gate) and between Route

Tampa and Mission Road on FHL in Monterey County, California (as shown on Figures 1 and 2 of the EA). The 25-acre site proposed for construction is hereafter called the “Property” and is illustrated in Figure 2 of the EA. The Property is mostly cleared and is being used as temporary storage for military equipment while solar arrays are being installed at the Equipment Concentration Site at FHL. No structures or buildings are present on the Property. Approximately 30 large valley oak trees are present on the Property. Access to the Property would be from Route Tampa.

Alternate site layouts for the proposed ORTC were developed to balance site constraints and master planning requirements. Site constraints include existing and future roads, 100-year floodplain, existing overhead electrical power lines, the existing cantonment boundary fence, and building heights (which were constrained to three-stories because of installation fire suppression capabilities and potential viewshed impacts). Master planning requirements include reduced use of undeveloped land within the cantonment and leaving enough open space within the Property for construction of a second ORTC at some point in the future if needed.

Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative would include construction of ORTC buildings in the layout shown on Figure 2 of the EA. This layout would combine the Officers’ Quarters and the Battalion Headquarters in a three-story building north of the three barracks buildings located along Route Tampa. The Dining Facility (DFAC) and the Company Headquarters buildings would be constructed south of the barracks buildings, and the VMS would be constructed south of the DFAC and the Company Headquarters buildings.

As a part of this construction and development, some of the valley oak trees on the site would be removed. Where possible, valley oak trees on the Property would be retained. Throughout the preliminary design process, efforts have been made to reduce the visual effects on historic properties from the new buildings through siting, building design, color schemes, and retention of existing landscape features. The exterior features of the buildings on the Property are to be designed to reflect the Spanish Revival style, in accordance with the FHL Installation Design Guide (IDG) and its supplements. The roofs of the ORTC buildings would be terra cotta in color, to reflect the color of traditional clay tile roofing of the Spanish Revival style. The exteriors of the buildings would be painted to mimic stucco in a beige earth tone in accordance with the FHL IDG guidelines. This is a design/build project, so the designs referenced in this report are preliminary and building designs have not been finalized.

This alternative was selected as the Preferred Alternative because the proposed layout is in accordance with the FHL Master Plan in that it provides a more-compact site layout by incorporating multi-story, vertical construction. In addition, this layout provides the desired design theme for FHL by placing the barracks along Route Tampa, which is a primary thoroughfare through FHL, and allows for future expansion of the ORTC.

Alternative 2

Alternative 2 would include construction of the ORTC on the Property in the layout shown on Figure 3 in the EA. This design would be very similar to the Preferred Alternative; however, the Officers’ Quarters would be a two-story building north of the three barracks buildings, and the Battalion Headquarters would be a one-story building constructed north of the DFAC.

Alternative 3

Alternative 3 would include construction of the ORTC on the Property in the layout shown on Figure 4 in the EA. This design would also be similar to the Preferred Alternative; however, the buildings would be laid out in a slightly different configuration. Buildings would be spread across a larger portion of the Property, whereas the layouts for the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 2 would be located on a smaller portion of the Property.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the 700-member ORTC would not be constructed and operated at Fort Hunter Liggett. If the No Action Alternative were implemented, Fort Hunter Liggett would not be able to support the Commander of the Army Reserve's directive to function as a premiere Reserve Combat Support Training Center. Soldiers would have to live and work out of substandard temporary and/or re-locatable buildings which have limited operational capabilities and limited useful life expectancies. The lack of adequate facilities would negatively affect training and operations, resulting in a reduced ability to achieve the unit's mission, which could compromise readiness and security. As such, the No Action Alternative does not fulfill the project's purpose and need, and is therefore not considered a feasible alternative. It is included in this analysis because it provides a baseline against which the benefits and negative impacts of the Proposed Action can be compared.

Potential Environmental Impacts

The EA Supplement contains a comprehensive evaluation of the existing conditions and environmental consequences of the Preferred Alternative and the No Action Alternative.

Preferred Alternative

Based on the analyses presented in the EA Supplement and incorporated by reference from the 2010 Programmatic EA, it is anticipated that implementing the Preferred Alternative would result in direct impacts to environmental resources, including noise, land use, air quality, geological resources, socioeconomics and environmental justice, infrastructure, traffic and transportation systems, health and safety, biological resources, hazardous materials and waste as a result of construction and operation of the ORTC. Although these direct impacts are expected to occur, no significant direct impacts to the quality of the environment, either human or natural, have been identified. The environmental resources that could be indirectly impacted by implementing the Preferred Alternative include water resources as a result of erosion and cultural resources as a result in changes to viewsheds. These indirect impacts are expected to be insignificant.

Given the size and the scale of the past and future developments in the areas surrounding the Property, the Preferred Alternative would not contribute significantly to the cumulative effects on the surrounding resources.

Alternative 2

Impacts under Alternative 2 would be similar to those for the Preferred Alternative.

Alternative 3

Impacts under Alternative 3 would be similar to those for the Preferred Alternative.

No Action Alternative

No significant direct impacts would occur under the No Action Alternative.

NEPA Determination

Based on the findings of the EA Supplement and incorporated by reference from the 2010 Programmatic EA, implementation of the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 2, or Alternative 3, the construction and operation of a 700-member ORTC at Fort Hunter Liggett in Monterey County, California, would not have significant, adverse, direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on the quality of the human or natural environment. The USAR has prepared this draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) to accompany the EA Supplement. This draft FNSI concludes that an Environmental Impact Statement, the next level of environmental impact investigation under the NEPA, is not required for this action.

Public Review and Comment

The EA Supplement and draft FNSI will be published for a 30-day public comment period from [dates to be determined], and will be available to the public for comment at the San Antonio School Library, 67550 Lockwood Jolon Road, Lockwood, CA 93932; Fort Hunter Liggett Library, Building 291, 7th Division Road, Fort Hunter Liggett, Jolon, CA 93928; and the Monterey County Free Library, 26 Central Avenue, Salinas, CA 93901; and on the Internet at: <http://www.liggett.army.mil/sites/dpw/enviromental.asp>. A copy of the public notice is provided in Appendix E of the EA Supplement.

SIGNATURE:

Approved by:

DONNA R. WILLIAMS
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Date