



SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR

Expansion of the Foreign Military Sales F-35 Pilot Training Center

at Ebbing Air National Guard Base, Arkansas



Welcome to this Public Hearing



Expansion of the Foreign Military Sales F-35 Pilot Training Center

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What is the National Environmental Policy Act?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is our national charter for making informed decisions while considering environmental impacts. NEPA requires all federal agencies making a proposal that may significantly impact the environment to consider:

- A range of reasonable alternatives
- Potential environmental or health consequences
- Tribal, government agency, and public input



What is a Supplemental EIS?

Federal agencies are required to prepare a supplement to an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) if one of the following two conditions are met:

- The agency makes substantial changes to the Proposed Action that are relevant to environmental concerns
- There are substantial new circumstances or information about the significance of adverse effects

When this occurs, the agency must prepare and publish a supplement to an EIS, known as a SEIS.

The agency generally follows the same NEPA process including:

- Publication of a Draft SEIS for public comment
- Preparation of a Final SEIS
- Signing of a Record of Decision (ROD)

What is Public Involvement?

NEPA and the Department of the Air Force (DAF) regulations require Tribal, government agency, and public participation throughout the environmental impact analysis process. Tribal, government agency, and public participation is an integral part of the SEIS. The purpose of soliciting input is to identify interested parties and relevant issues so they can be considered in the SEIS.

The DAF has issued a Draft SEIS for the Expansion of the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) F-35 Pilot Training Center (PTC) at Ebbing Air National Guard (ANG) Base where the ANG is a tenant at Fort Smith Regional Airport (FSRA), Arkansas. The Draft SEIS is in the public comment period and public hearing stage of the NEPA process. The hearings are part of the ongoing public involvement process associated with the SEIS.



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What is the Background of the Proposed Action?

- In 2023, DAF completed an EIS for the Beddown of a FMS PTC at Ebbing ANG Base, Arkansas or Selfridge ANG Base, Michigan (2023 FMS PTC EIS).
- On March 11, 2023, DAF signed a ROD selecting Ebbing ANG Base as the location to establish the FMS F-35 PTC, which included:
 - Beddown of 24 F-35 aircraft
 - Relocation of 12 F-16 aircraft from Luke AFB
 - Various infrastructure projects
 - Additional personnel



- After the DAF signed the ROD, FMS nation customers purchased additional F-35 aircraft and developed new training requirements, which means:
 - DAF must expand the scope of the FMS PTC beddown at Ebbing ANG Base to accommodate the additional F-35 aircraft
 - Changes from the 2023 FMS PTC and ROD are substantial enough to require DAF to prepare a SEIS

What is the Purpose and Need of the Proposed Action?

The purpose of the Proposed Action is:

- To establish a permanent FMS PTC at a single location within the Continental U.S. to provide consolidated FMS F-35 pilot training for our FMS nation customers

The need for the Proposed Action is:

- To expand F-35 capacity at Ebbing ANG Base beyond the limits authorized in the 2023 FMS PTC EIS and ROD to meet nation customer agreements and training requirements

Who are the Cooperating Agencies?

There are two Cooperating Agencies:



- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
 - Ebbing ANG Base is a tenant at FSRA
 - FAA must review and approve an updated Airport Layout Plan that incorporates any new construction projects on FSRA property that is leased to Ebbing ANG Base
 - FAA has jurisdiction by law and special expertise related to the SEIS's proposed action at FSRA



- U. S. Forest Service (USFS)
 - USFS manages several areas under the airspace and ranges including national forests, Wilderness Areas, and Wild and Scenic Rivers
 - USFS has specialized expertise on these resources under the airspace and have contributed to the environmental effects analyses presented in the Draft SEIS



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What are the Alternatives for this SEIS?

Proposed Action

Around the Installation and FSRA:

- Beddown 12 additional F-35 aircraft at Ebbing ANG Base
- Add 596 personnel
- Construct new facilities on Ebbing ANG Base and FSRA
- Increase airfield operations, incorporate short take-off and vertical landing (STOVL) operations, refine F-35 operations based on updated FMS nation customer training needs
- Subalternatives to construct a vertical landing pad (VLP) on the FSRA airfield for STOVL operations:
 - West VLP Site Subalternative
 - East VLP Site Subalternative

Under the Airspace and Ranges:

- Utilize the same airspace and ranges that were included in the 2023 FMS PTC EIS
- Increase the number of airspace events

Alternative 1

Around the Installation and FSRA:

- No additional aircraft would be beddown at Ebbing ANG Base
- No changes in personnel
- No new facilities would be constructed on Ebbing ANG Base
- Airfield operations would be modified for currently authorized F-35 aircraft to satisfy new FMS nation customer training requirements (e.g., STOVL operations) and refined operational procedures

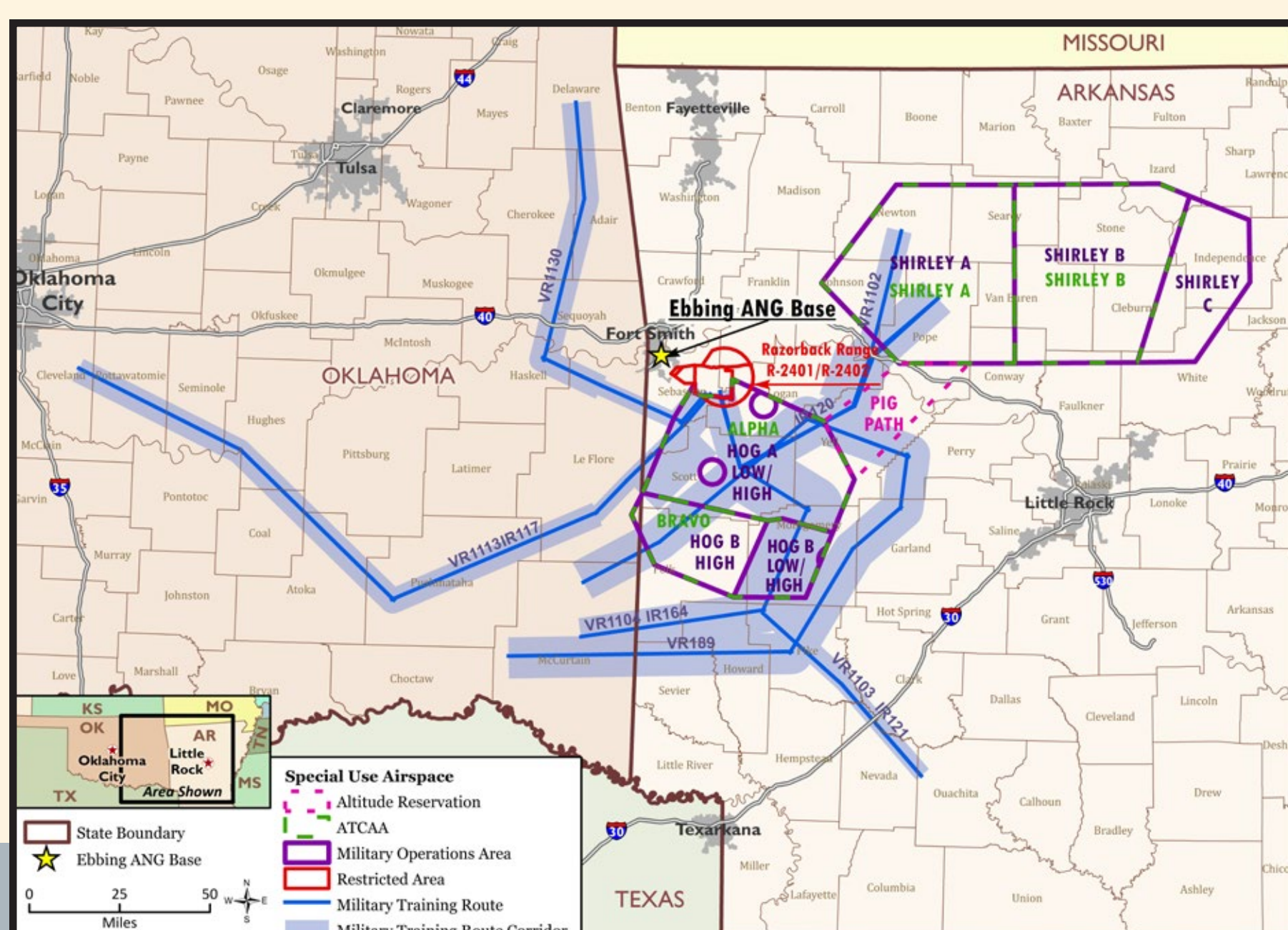
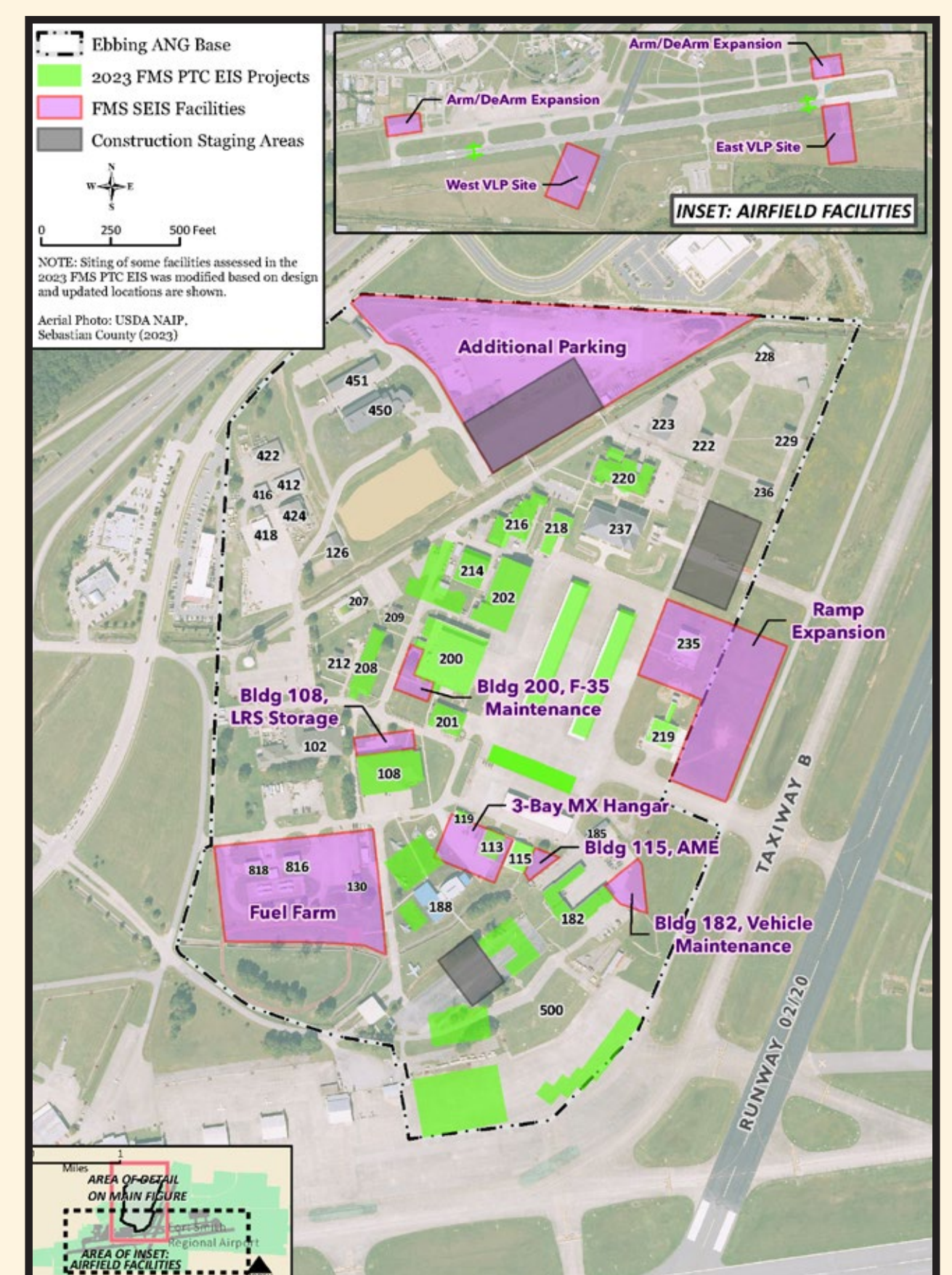
- Update flight tracks in the airspace based on updated training syllabus
- Increase munitions and countermeasure use

Under the Airspace and Ranges:

- Utilize the same airspace and ranges that were included in the 2023 FMS PTC EIS
- No change in the number of airspace events
- Update flight tracks in the airspace based on updated training syllabus
- No change in munitions and countermeasure use

No Action Alternative

- The DAF would not expand the FMS PTC mission at Ebbing ANG Base
- Continue to implement the 2023 FMS PTC EIS ROD signed on March 11, 2023
- Would not meet national security agreements with FMS nation customers





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What are the Potential Environmental Effects?

Noise

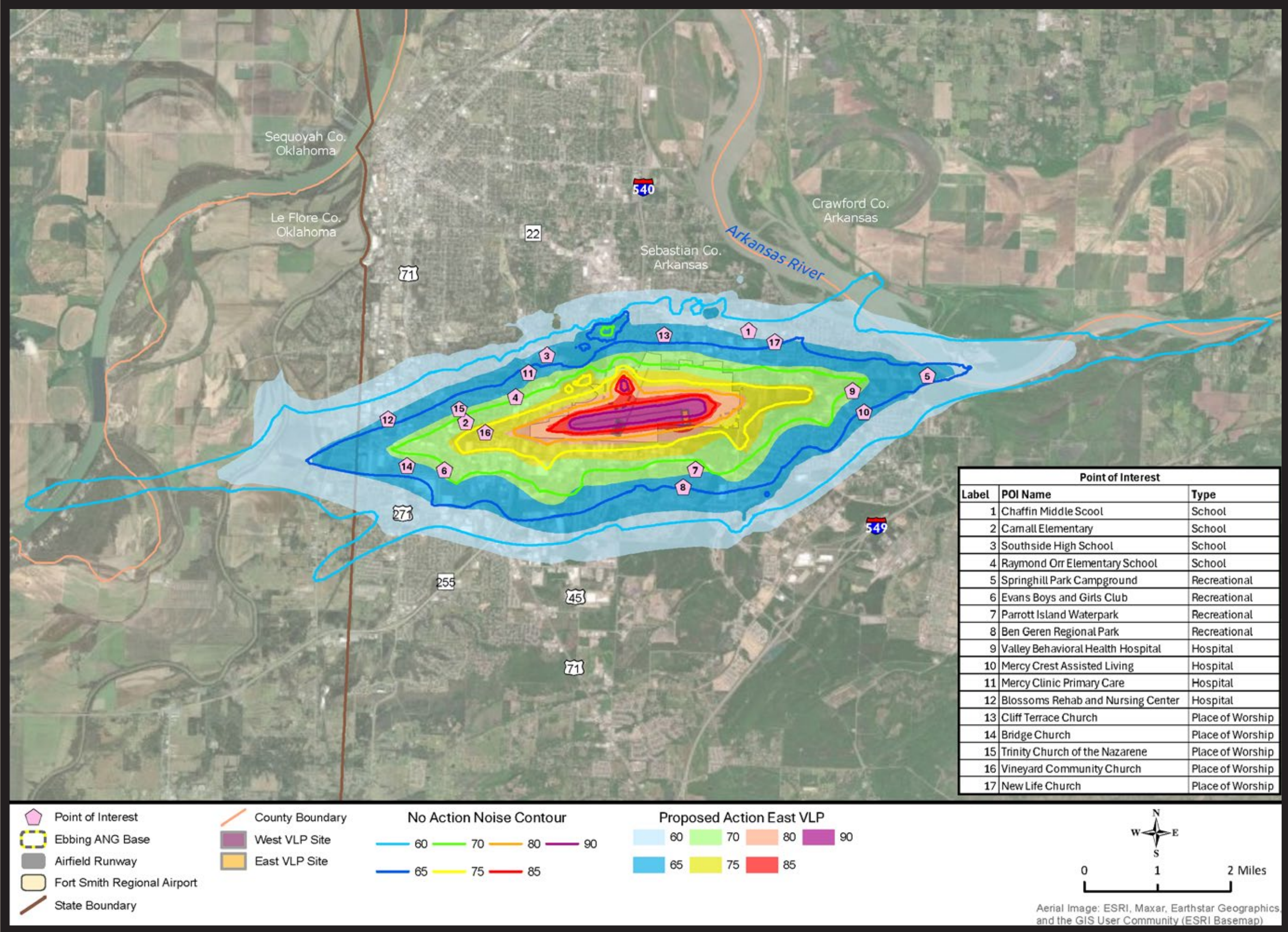
Proposed Action

Around the Installation and FSRA:

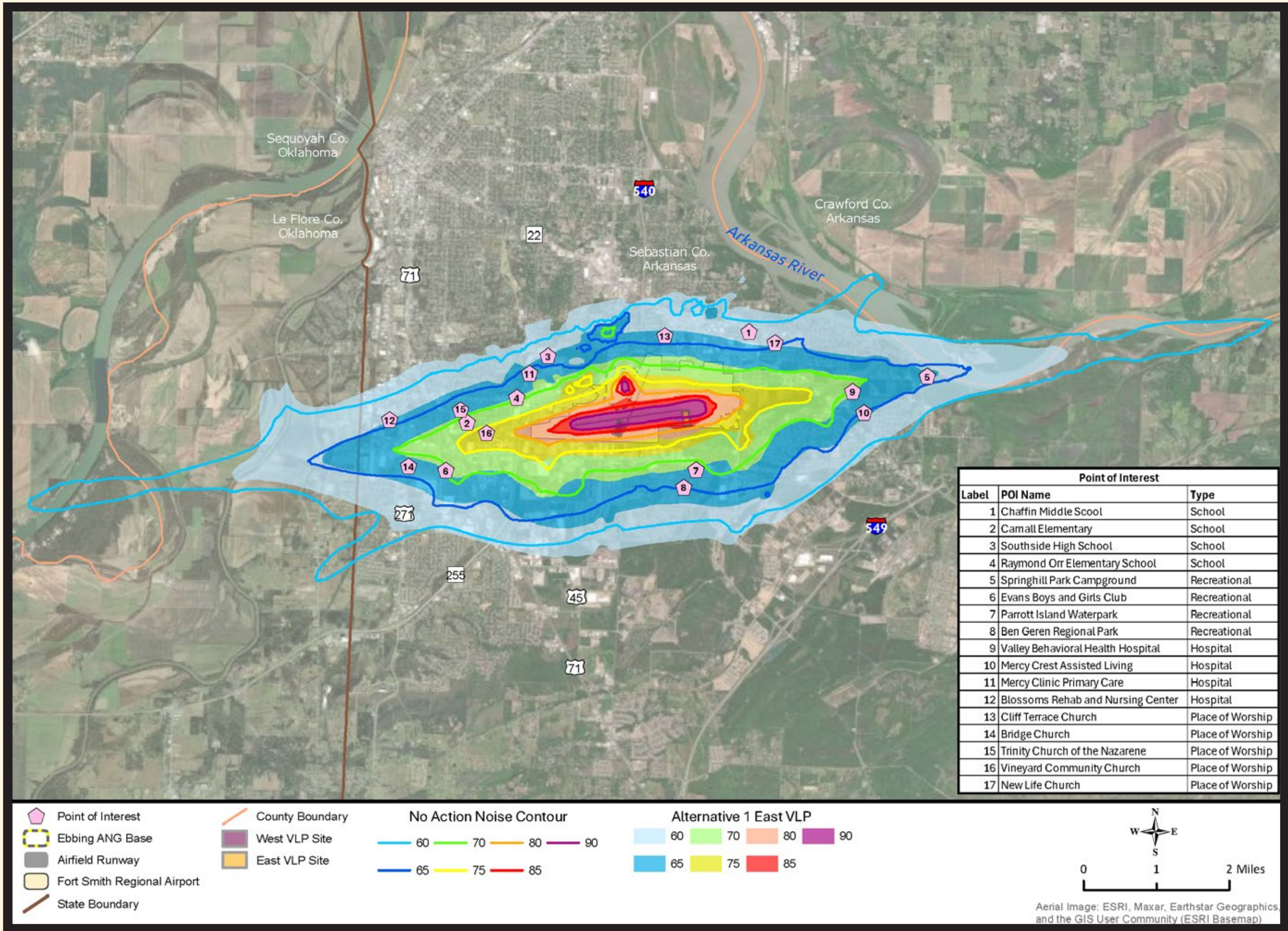
- Up to an additional 1,788 acres of land and 6,493 people would be affected by DNL 65 dBA or greater

Underneath the Airspace and Ranges:

- Time-averaged noise levels would remain below L_{dnmr} 65 dBA



Proposed Action Noise Contours



Alternative 1 Noise Contours

No Action Alternative

- No additional noise effects would occur above those described in the 2023 FMS PTC EIS

Alternative 1

Around the Installation and FSRA:

- Up to an additional 870 acres of land and 4,426 people would be affected by DNL 65 dBA or greater

Underneath the Airspace and Ranges:

- Time-averaged noise levels would remain below L_{dnmr} 65 dBA



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What are the Potential Environmental Effects?



Land Use

Proposed Action

Around the Installation and FSRA:

- Up to 561 additional acres of residential land use exposed to noise levels of DNL 65 dBA and greater
- Adverse and significant effects

Underneath the Airspace and Ranges:

- Some noise-sensitive land uses would experience small noise level increases
- Not considered significant based on Department of Defense (DoD) and FAA guidelines for outdoor recreational uses

Alternative 1

Around the Installation and FSRA:

- Residential land use areas exposed to DNL 65 dBA and greater would increase by up to 323 acres
- Adverse and significant effects

Underneath the Airspace and Ranges:

- Some noise-sensitive land uses would experience small noise level increases
- Not considered significant based on DoD and FAA guidelines for outdoor recreational uses



No Action Alternative

Around the Installation and FSRA:

- Would continue as described in the 2023 FMS PTC EIS
- Significant adverse effects to residential land use surrounding the installation

Underneath the Airspace and Ranges:

- Noise levels would remain below L_{dnmr} 65 dBA, which is compatible with all land use categories in developed areas



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What are the Potential Environmental Effects?

Socioeconomics

Proposed Action

Additional 596 personnel would result in:

- 5% increase in Sebastian County's total population
 - Need for 271 additional housing units
 - 204 additional school-aged children, but no significant effects to educational services
- Potential beneficial effects to employment and income from incoming personnel and construction activities



Alternative 1

- No additional personnel over the No Action Alternative
- Temporary and minor beneficial effects to employment and income may occur during vertical landing pad construction activities

No Action Alternative

- No new personnel above those authorized in the 2023 FMS PTC EIS and ROD
- Socioeconomics conditions would continue under existing trends

Cultural Resources

All Alternatives

- No effects to archaeological or traditional cultural properties
- No adverse effects to architectural resources
- The DAF is conducting consultations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

The results of cultural resources consultation efforts will be presented in the Final SEIS.



Biological Resources

All Alternatives

- Airfield operations at FSRA may affect but are not likely to adversely affect 4 federally-listed bat species
- Aircraft operations in the airspace may affect but are not likely to adversely affect 5 federally-listed bat species and 5 federally-listed bird species
- The DAF has completed informal consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act



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What are the Potential Environmental Effects?



Physical Resources

Around the Installation and FSRA

All Alternatives

- No significant effects to topography, soils, or surface waters from construction activities
- No effects to groundwater, wetlands, or floodplains from construction activities
- 2025 surveys identified several aquatic features within the eastern arm/de-arm expansion area under the Proposed Action and the West VLP site for the Proposed Action and Alternative 1

- None of these features fit the definition of waters of the U.S. (WOTUS)
- If jurisdictional WOTUS are designated and cannot be avoided, the DAF would apply for Clean Water Action Section 404 permits, as necessary

Underneath the Airspace and Ranges:

Proposed Action

- Increased use of chaff and flare within the airspace would not result in discernible changes to soil or water quality
- No adverse effects to physical resources beneath the airspace

Alternative 1 and No Action Alternative

- No effects to physical resources under the airspace

