

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FNSI)

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) - REAL PROPERTY MASTER PLAN (RPMP) FOR ARMY-CONTROLLED LAND AT AREAS A AND C OF FORT DETRICK IN FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

AGENCY: U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Detrick, Frederick, MD

PROPOSED ACTION: The Proposed Action (Alternative I, preferred alternative) and subject of this Environmental Assessment is the Implementation of the RPMP, including Proposed Projects and associated buildings to be demolished and the resulting changes in the land use, for Army-controlled land at Areas A and C of Fort Detrick in Frederick County, Maryland. The Proposed Action is viewed as a mission-enhancing project. Implementing Alternative I will enhance US Army Garrison's (USAG) mission performance by providing the necessary infrastructure to sustain Department of Defense (DoD) and non-DoD customers current and future mission needs.

The Proposed Action is comprised of a number of projects for the construction and operation of new facilities for USAG and its Mission Partners as well as other projects that will support these facilities. These support projects include the following:

- Construction of new, energy efficient buildings and renovation of existing buildings to house new and expanded Mission Partner activities;
- Demolition of some buildings associated with Proposed Projects;
- Combined size of the new and renovated buildings will be approximately 250,000 gross square feet (gsf);
- Approximately 60 new personnel will be employed at Fort Detrick due to all Proposed Projects;
- Infrastructural improvements to Fort Detrick including a new boundary gate and truck inspection station on Opossumtown Pike located on the northern portion of Area A and road to the National Interagency Biodefense Campus (NIBC), extension of Veteran's Drive to the Nallin Farm area, construction of the NIBC truck inspection station and other internal roads. Additional parking lots and reconfiguration of some existing parking lots are included. These improvements to the gates and roadways will mitigate traffic congestion while providing improved security for the Installation workforce and residents of Fort Detrick;
- Additional infrastructure improvements to Fort Detrick including water main improvements, water storage and general infrastructure improvements to the Installation as a whole, including to the NIBC;
- Increased recreational opportunities for the workforce and residents of Fort Detrick;
- Enhancement of educational opportunities for children of Fort Detrick residents;
- Expansion of wetlands and increased reforestation; and the
- Redistribution of acreage in Land Use Classifications.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: During the preparation of this EA, one reasonable alternative to the Proposed Action was identified. The alternative to the Proposed Action is to not implement the RPMP, including Proposed Projects and associated buildings to be demolished and the resulting changes in the land use, for Army-controlled land at Areas A and C of Fort Detrick in Frederick County, Maryland (Alternative II). This EA characterizes the probable

environmental impacts, including impacts to human health, which might result from implementing the RPMP, including Proposed Projects and associated buildings to be demolished and the resulting changes in the land use, for Army-controlled land at Areas A and C of Fort Detrick in Frederick County, Maryland (Alternative I, the preferred alternative), or the No Action alternative considered.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND MITIGATION MEASURES: As discussed in the EA, the environmental impacts of Alternative I (the Proposed Action, Implementation of the RPMP, including Proposed Projects and associated buildings to be demolished and the resulting changes in the land use, for Army-controlled land at Areas A and C of Fort Detrick in Frederick County, Maryland) were evaluated in detail, and the potential adverse environmental, health, and socioeconomic impacts were found to be negligible to minor, and mitigable. During the preparation of this EA several potential environmental issues associated with implementation of the Proposed Action or the No Action alternative were identified, including impacts on stormwater during the construction and operational phases of the project, impacts to historical and cultural resources, impacts to traffic and impacts to water resources, wastewater, and solid wastes.

FACTORS CONSIDERED IN THE FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The EA systematically reviews the nature of the Proposed Action and associated risks and issues. Particular attention is given to protection of the workforce and surrounding community. Alternatives with regard to needs of the United States and the U.S. Army and potential adverse effects on the environment are evaluated.

During the construction phase, the following impacts are anticipated: negligible impacts to the local climate, potential minor impacts to geology, potential minor impacts to soils, minor impacts to water resources, minor impacts to wetlands and floodplains, minor impacts to plants and animals, minor impacts to air quality, negligible impacts to historical and cultural resources, positive impacts to the local socioeconomic environment, minor impacts from noise and lighting, negligible to minor impacts from odors, minor impacts to traffic, negligible impacts to energy resources, negligible impacts to waste streams, minor impacts to hazardous materials management, negligible impacts to human health and safety, and minor cumulative impacts.

During the operational phase, the following impacts are anticipated: minor positive impacts to land use, negligible impacts to the local climate, potential minor impacts to geology, negligible impacts to soils, minor impacts to water resources, minor impacts to wetlands and floodplains, positive impacts to plants and animals, negligible impacts to air quality, negligible impacts to historical and cultural resources, positive impacts to the local socioeconomic environment, negligible impacts from noise, minor impacts from lighting, negligible impacts from odors, minor impacts to traffic, positive impacts to security, minor impacts to energy resources, negligible impacts to waste streams, minor impacts to hazardous materials management, negligible impacts to human health and safety, and minor cumulative impacts.

All of the potential adverse impacts were deemed to be negligible to minor and mitigatable, provided that BMPs are strictly adhered to during construction/demolition and operation of the proposed facilities.

COMMENTS RECEIVED: Comments received during the public review period were evaluated and all relevant issues were addressed. The comments received on the EA were included in letters from the Frederick County Division of Utilities and Solid Waste Management (DUSWM),

the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). The DUSWM letter commented on: historic drought conditions, Fort Detrick's Water Appropriation and Use Permit FR 43S001 (02) flow requirements, Fort Detrick's interconnection with the City of Frederick's water system, and the Potomac Pipeline interconnection. The MHT letter commented on the individual project consultation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The MDE letter commented on permits and regulations regarding: petroleum storage, solid waste, hazardous waste, lead paint abatement, water quality, and stormwater management. The comments from the DUSWM, the MHT, and the MDE were fully addressed in the original text of the EA and no changes to the EA were required.

Concurrent with the National Environmental Policy Act process, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) reviewed the RPMP projects and determined that the Nallin Farm Gate has the potential for adverse effects to the surrounding historic resources. SHPO requested additional information including: detailed site plans, landscaping plans, building elevations, 3-D perspective drawings, current photos, and tree planting methodology. As stated in the original text of the EA, Fort Detrick will continue to work with SHPO to ensure potential adverse effects to these historic resources will be mitigated.

CONCLUSIONS: The principal conclusions of this EA are: (1) implementing Alternative I (the preferred alternative) would not result in significant adverse environmental impacts, provided that best management practices (BMPs) to mitigate these potential environmental impacts are adhered to during construction and operation of the Proposed Projects; (2) implementing the Proposed Action will provide Fort Detrick with much-needed infrastructural improvements which will increase efficiency and allow USAG and its Mission Partners to achieve their respective mission requirements; (3) implementing the RPMP for Army-controlled Land of Areas A and C of Fort Detrick (the Proposed Action) will increase recreational opportunities and security for the workforce and residents of Fort Detrick; (4) implementing Alternative I will increase employment by a total of 60 due to all Proposed Projects at Fort Detrick; (5) implementing Alternative I will expand and enhance the natural resources areas of the Installation; (6) implementing Alternative I is consistent with the land use planning objectives for Fort Detrick; (7) implementing Alternative II (No Action) would not provide Fort Detrick with much-needed infrastructure and facilities and would hamper the ability of USAG and its Mission Partners to meet their respective mission requirements; (8) implementing Alternative II (No Action) is not consistent with land use planning objectives for Fort Detrick; and (9) implementing the No Action alternative would eliminate the negligible to minor environmental impacts associated with the implementation of Alternative I, but would also eliminate the beneficial impacts of the Proposed Action.



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