

Revised Area B Master Plan
Draft Finding of No Significant Impact
Fort Detrick, Maryland

The U.S. Army Garrison at Fort Detrick, Maryland has conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA) to determine the environmental and socioeconomic effects associated with changing the master plan for Area B by implementing six proposed projects. The six projects include: an 18-Hole Golf Course, Paintball Fields, Recreational Vehicle (RV) Park, Indoor Shooting Range, Relocation of Seven High-Frequency Antennas from Area A to Area B, and Modification to the Existing Perimeter Fence at Area B.

The EA was conducted pursuant to the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR]1500 et seq.) for implementing the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code 4321 et seq.) and the Department of the Army (DA) Regulations: Army Regulations (AR) 200-1 and 32 CFR 650, *Environmental Protection and Enhancement*, and AR-200-2 and 32 CFR 651, *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions* (dated March 29, 2002).

Purpose and Need

The *purpose* of the proposed action is to achieve the following four goals:

- To provide improved and increased community services in a quality Army community that is convenient to duty and work stations, to provide mission responsiveness, and to add to the soldiers' quality of life.
- To provide a facility where the Fort Detrick Police Department and military personnel can train and perform their annual small arms recertification.
- To create open space within Area A that could be used in the future to support Fort Detrick and/or tenant operations.
- To provide security enhancements to ensure adequate force protection, land security, and safety measures for Area B at Fort Detrick.

The *need* for the proposed action results from the mission and objectives established by the Directorate of Community Services at Fort Detrick and the fact that the proposed recreational activities are not currently provided at Fort Detrick. The installation community is currently going outside Fort Detrick to use privately-owned golf courses, paintball fields, and indoor/outdoor shooting and skeet ranges, which incurs higher costs and requires transportation. Military personnel that are stationed at Fort Detrick for a short period of time do not have the knowledge of, and in some instances, the transportation to recreational facilities located outside of Fort Detrick. This inconvenience can adversely affect the morale and overall quality of life for these individuals. The indoor shooting range will provide a multi-purpose range that will allow soldiers, police, and guards to practice marksmanship proficiency and complete annual small arms recertification requirements, as required under AR-190-14 – *Carrying of Firearms and Use of Force for Law Enforcement and Security Duties*. The range will also eliminate required travel to other indoor or outdoor shooting ranges within the northern Maryland and southern Pennsylvania regions and concerns regarding the use outdoor ranges during inclement weather. The four closest RV parks in the Army network are located between 60 and 85 miles from Fort Detrick. These locations are inconvenient for military personnel and other authorized users to utilize current and proposed recreation activities at Fort Detrick, or to visit local area attractions within Frederick County, Maryland. Relocation of the seven

high-frequency antennas from Area A to Area B is necessary as a result of projects and land use changes identified in the *EA for the Installation Master Plan for Fort Detrick, Maryland*. The perimeter fence enhancements are needed to comply with AR 325-13, which states that “commanders will ensure that [antiterrorism] specific security procedural and physical measures are employed to protect personnel, information, and material resources from terrorist threats.”

Proposed Action

The proposed action (Alternative I, the preferred alternative) and subject of this EA is to construct and operate the six following proposed projects on Area B at Fort Detrick, Maryland:

- 18-Hole Golf Course,
- Indoor Shooting Range,
- Paintball Fields,
- Recreational Vehicle (RV) Park,
- Relocation of seven antenna towers from Area A to Area B, and
- Area B Perimeter Fence.

Fort Detrick is considering the use of approximately 150 acres of Area B for these facilities. Additionally, the implementation of the six proposed projects would require the modification of the recently approved master plan for Area B.

Alternative Considered

Two alternatives to the proposed action were identified:

- Implement the six proposed projects in Area B with exception of the Indoor Shooting Range. The Indoor Shooting Range under this alternative would be located directly west of the Nallin Farm Park in Area A; and
- Do not implement the six proposed projects in Area B at Fort Detrick, Maryland (No Action Alternative as required by CEQ regulations).

After further consideration it was determined that locating the Indoor Shooting Range in Area A was not a feasible alternative due to land limitations and security concerns. As a result, the alternatives evaluated in the EA include: Alternative I – The Proposed Projects and Alternative II – The No Action Alternative.

Factors Considered in Determining That No Environmental Impact Statement is Required

The EA, which is attached and incorporated by reference into this Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI), examined the potential impacts of the proposed action and the no action alternative on 12 resource areas and areas of environmental and socioeconomic concern: geology, topography, and soils; water resources; biological resources; air quality; cultural resources; hazardous material and waste; land use; traffic, roadways, and transportation systems; environmental justice and protection of children; noise; and human health and safety.

Implementation of the proposed action at Fort Detrick would result in a combination of short-term and long-term minor adverse and beneficial effects. There would be short-term minor adverse effects on air quality, topography, soils, geology, water resources, biological resources, roadways and traffic, infrastructure, noise, human health and safety, and hazardous material and waste, primarily associated with construction of the proposed projects on Area B. Long-term minor adverse effects would occur by transforming Area B from agricultural dominated land use to primarily recreational land use. Additionally, there would long-term minor adverse effects on biological resources, roadways and traffic,

infrastructure, noise, human health and safety, and hazardous material and waste. Long-term minor adverse effects on topography, soils, geology, and water resources could occur from an increase in impervious surfaces, resulting in increased runoff and sediment loads. Long-term beneficial effects would be realized on land use as related to the missions and needs of the Fort Detrick Morale, Welfare, Recreation Program; the Security, Plans, Operations, and Force Protection Office; and the Provost Marshal Office. Also, improved landscaping and improved and regular maintenance programs associated with the proposed action would be expected to result in a long-term beneficial effect on Area B. No adverse effects on cultural resources, environmental justice and protection of children would be expected.

Cumulative effects of the proposed action and concurrent activities would be expected to be short-term and minor. In addition to the six proposed projects on Area B, numerous construction activities are planned on and adjacent (e.g., residential development) to the installation over the next several years. During this period there could be short-term, intermittent minor adverse cumulative impacts on air quality, noise, and traffic at Fort Detrick and the surrounding communities if the construction were to occur simultaneously with the six proposed projects for Area B. As additional projects on Fort Detrick and foreseeable adjacent residential development occurs, long-term minor adverse cumulative impacts to local air quality, noise, traffic, and water resources could develop. Long-term minor adverse cumulative impacts to water resources could occur due to increase impervious surfaces, such as parking lots, roads, roofs, and sidewalks.

Mitigation actions on Area B at Fort Detrick would pertain to soils, surface waters, and groundwater protection through the use of appropriate best management practices and development of a golf course management plan, afforestation (if required), control of hazardous material and waste during construction and operation, protection of children measures during construction, and noise mitigation measures associated with the Indoor Shooting Range.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the EA, it has been determined that implementation of the six proposed projects would have no significant direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse impacts on the quality of the natural or human environment. Because no significant environmental impacts would result from implementation of the proposed action, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required and will not be prepared.

Public Comment

The EA and Draft FNSI are available for review and comment for 30 days, beginning May 17, 2004, through June 15, 2004. Copies of the EA and Draft FNSI can be obtained by contacting Headquarters, USA, MRMC, ATTN: MCMR-PA (Charles Dasey), 504 Scott Street, Fort Detrick, MD 210702-5012; by e-mail request to chuck.dasey@det.amedd.army.mil; or by phone to (301) 619-2736. Copies are also at the Post Library on Fort Detrick and the Frederick County Library at 110 East Patrick Street, Frederick, MD 21701 for review. The EA will also be available for review on Fort Detrick's website (<http://www.detrick.army.mil/usag/ipo/em/index.cfm>). Comments on the EA and Draft FNSI should be submitted to the Fort Detrick Public Affairs Office to the attention of Charles Dasey no later than June 15, 2004.

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Commander