NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

Environmental Assessment
FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF AN
INFANTRY PLATOON BATTLE COURSE AT
Fort Benning, Georgia

To Whom It May Concern:

The United States Army Infantry Center, Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Management Division, Fort Benning, Georgia, hereby announces the completion and public availability of an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) concerning the construction, maintenance, and use of an Infantry Platoon Battle Course (IPBC) that would provide Soldiers the skills necessary to detect, identify, engage, and defeat stationary and moving infantry and armor targets in a tactical array at Fort Benning, Georgia. These documents were prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

The Army intends to construct a permanent IPBC on Fort Benning. An IPBC will allow infantry platoons to maneuver on foot through a series of targets and missions in an obstacle course setting. Moving and stationary targets, bunkers, landing zones, mortar simulation devices and buildings would provide a realistic training environment that allows for multiple advances, defend, and threat scenarios. An IPBC is necessary to sustain and improve the combat readiness of Infantry Soldiers in the Army, Army Reserve, and National Guard infantry units by training to the most current platoon level operational tactics, techniques, and equipment.

Four alternatives were considered in the EA. Alternative I would consist of constructing a permanent IPBC on Fort Benning. The size of the IPBC will be approximately 1,217 acres. The configuration of the IPBC will be in accordance with US Army Corps of Engineers standards and site adapted to Fort Benning's location. Range objectives were moved and reoriented to better fit the topographical conditions, to avoid ordnance impact areas and wetlands, and to minimize encroachment on RCW habitat.

Alternative II would consist of conducting training at an offsite IPBC on Fort Stewart, Georgia, and was considered as an alternative to constructing a new IPBC on Fort Benning. This option would have entailed transporting Soldiers between Fort Benning and Fort Stewart for IPBC training. The Army determined that this option would be logistically difficult and cost prohibitive and eliminated it from further consideration.

Alternative III would consist of upgrading, expanding, or converting three existing ranges on Fort Benning to an IPBC. It was determined, however, that these ranges were best slated to accommodate upgrades to heavier weapons training ranges. No other ranges at Fort Benning were available for upgrades or conversions to an IPBC. Therefore, the alternative of upgrading, expanding, or converting a current range facility was determined to be not reasonable and was eliminated from further consideration.

Alternative IV is the no-action alternative. The no action alternative would consist of maintaining the status quo—not building the IPBC and continuing to conduct training utilizing portable facilities at multiple locations, particularly at the Griswold and Cactus Range areas. No

new construction or activities would occur, and the current environmental conditions would remain as is. The no action alternative does not meet the need for training infantry platoon-level units on Fort Benning but was assessed to establish a baseline of environmental conditions. Two additional alternatives were also given a preliminary analysis, but determined to be not reasonable and were eliminated from detailed analysis.

The EA evaluates the effects associated with each of the alternatives on soils/topography, vegetation, surface water, wetlands, wildlife and migratory birds, protected species, solid waste, hazardous materials and waste, air quality, cultural resources, noise, unexploded ordnance, transportation infrastructure, socioeconomics, land use, and environmental justice.

The EA and Draft FNSI for the proposed action will be available to the public for a review period of 30 days starting from the first day of publication in The Columbus Ledger-Enquirer, in accordance with Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1501.4(e)(1) and Army Regulation 200-2, "Environmental Effects of Army Actions." These documents are available at the following locations, as well as the following website: http://www.benning.army.mil/EMd/_program_mgt/legal/index.htm.

- W.C. Bradley Memorial Library, located at 1120 Bradley Drive, Columbus, Georgia.
- South Lumpkin Library, located at 2034 South Lumpkin Road, Columbus, Georgia.
- Fort Benning Main Post Library, located in Building 93, Fort Benning, Georgia.

Anyone wishing to comment on the proposed action or request additional information must write to the U.S. Army Infantry Center, Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Programs Management Branch (Attention: Mr. John E. Brown), Building 6 (Meloy Hall) Room 310, Fort Benning, Georgia 31905-5122, or call (706) 545-7549.

Sincerely

Craig Taylor
Acting Director of Public Works

FINAL

Environmental Assessment for the Construction of the

Infantry Platoon Battle Course

Fort Benning, Georgia and Alabama

August 2005

Environmental Assessment for the Construction and Operation of an Infantry Platoon Battle Course Fort Benning, Georgia and Alabama

SUBMITTED BY: Date: 25 Aug 05

FREDERICK E. WEEKLEY, JR.
Installation Range Management Officer
Fort Benning

REVIEWED BY: Date: 25 AUG 05

JOHN E. BROWN
NEPA Program Manager
Fort Benning

TECHNICAL REVIEW BY: Date: 25 Aug 05

PATRICK CHAUVEY
Chief, Environmental Programs
Environmental Management Division
Fort Benning

RECOMMENDED BY: Date: 25 Aug 05

JOHN J. BRENT
Chief
Environmental Management Division
Fort Benning

APPROVED BY: Date: 25 Aug 05

CRAIG TAYLOR
Acting Director of Public Works
Fort Benning

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Environmental Assessment for the Construction of the Infantry Platoon Battle Course, Fort Benning, Georgia and Alabama
August 2005

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Fort Benning is the Home of the Infantry and the U. S. Army Infantry Center and School (USAIC/USAIS). Its mission is to (1) provide the nation with the world's best Infantry Soldiers and trained units; (2) to provide the nation with a power projection platform capable of deploying Soldiers and units anywhere in the world on short notice; and (3) to provide the nation with the Army's premier Installation and home for Soldiers and their families, civilian employees, and military retirees. Fort Benning's training mission is three-fold: (1) to conduct basic training for new infantry and non-branch specific recruits, conduct infantry, airborne, and ranger training for officers and enlisted personnel, and operate a non-branch specific Officer Candidate School; (2) to study the doctrine, rationale, equipment, and future of infantry combat; and (3) to provide a home station and deployment Installation for Forces Command (FORSCOM) and Special Operations Command (SOCOM) units.

In order to meet current training requirements, the Army is proposing to construct an Infantry Platoon Battle Course (IPBC). This document is an Environmental Assessment (EA) that describes the Army's evaluation of potential environmental impacts and alternatives associated with the proposal to construct and operate an IPBC. This EA also evaluates mitigation measures designed to reduce the adverse environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives. This EA was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 USC §§4321-4370c), its implementing regulations published by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR §§1500-1508), and Army NEPA Regulations (32 CFR Part 651).

1.1 Description of the Proposed Action

The Army proposes to construct, operate, and maintain an IPBC at the site of the Garnsey Range at Fort Benning. The IPBC is required to provide Army, Reserve, and National Guard units with a permanent training range for dismounted maneuver and small arms live fire training to improve combat readiness.

The proposed construction of the IPBC is in conformance with the Fort Benning Installation Master Plan and Range Development Plan (RDP). An IPBC allows infantry platoons to maneuver on foot through a series of targets and missions in an obstacle course setting. Moving and stationary targets, bunkers, landing zones, mortar simulation devices and buildings provide a realistic training environment that allows for multiple advances, defend, and threat scenarios. The IPBC is necessary to sustain and improve the combat readiness of infantry Soldiers in the Army, Army Reserve, and National Guard infantry units by training to the most current platoon level operational tactics, techniques, and equipment.

1.2 Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of the proposed action is to construct, operate, and maintain an IPBC at Fort Benning that would provide Soldiers the skills necessary to detect, identify, engage, and defeat stationary and moving infantry and armor targets in a tactical array.

Fort Benning is currently conducting this training on temporary ranges. However, these temporary training ranges are often missing components that need to be available to provide the full spectrum capability on the range. Although current training meets minimal requirements, the training is segmented and does not allow for fully comprehensive training at one time and the synergistic impacts of the training on the Soldiers that would be provided by the IPBC. Further, the projected future average throughput is 7,946 Soldiers annually and current training capacity is insufficient to meet this expected requirement. [Tab C, Department of Defense (DD) Form 1391, 2004 and Final Corrected Charrette Report, IPBC, Fort Benning, 2004].

If the IPBC is not built, Soldiers will continue to conduct this training on multiple, separate, and non-standard ranges and locations utilizing portable facilities typically at the Griswold and Cactus Ranges. Conducting training in this manner limits the Soldier's ability to utilize all skills in a single training activity that enhances the synergistic nature of the training that would come with the construction of the IPBC. Due to a requirements increase in the future, Fort Benning will not have sufficient capacity to meet these training requirements.

1.3 Location of the Proposed Action

Fort Benning is located in western Georgia along the Chattahoochee River near Columbus, Georgia. The Installation extends westward into Alabama south of Phenix City, Alabama. Fort Benning is situated on approximately 180,000 acres and includes parts of Muscogee and Chattahoochee Counties in Georgia and Russell County in Alabama. The location for the preferred alternative is west of Jamestown road and north of Sunshine Road near Garnsey Range on undisturbed land. [Tab C, DD Form 1391, 2004]

2.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Planning for the IPBC began with an IPBC Planning Charrette that defined the project scope and timetable, and identified and resolved issues pertaining to logistics, standardization, functionality, location, scope, and cost. During the Planning Charrette, four alternatives were identified and considered:

- Constructing the IPBC at the proposed location on Ft. Benning (Alternative I);
- Use of an off-site training facility (Alternative II);
- Conversion of existing range facilities on Fort Benning (Alternative III), and
- No action alternative (Alternative IV).

Six criteria were applied during the IPBC Planning Charrette to evaluate the reasonableness and feasibility of alternatives: earth-moving requirements, noise levels, cultural resource sites, proximity to red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*) (RCW) habitat, conflicts with other training missions and ranges on Fort Benning, and the expense/logistics of transporting Soldier to and from an offsite training facility. The Planning Charrette concluded that the construction of a new IPBC on the preferred location on Fort Benning was the only feasible way to meet training requirements. [Tab A, DD Form 1391, 2004 and Final Corrected Charrette Report, IPBC, Fort Benning, 2004]

2.1 Alternative I: Construction of a Permanent IPBC on Fort Benning between, and including portions of, the Flint and Garnsey Training Ranges (the Preferred Alternative)

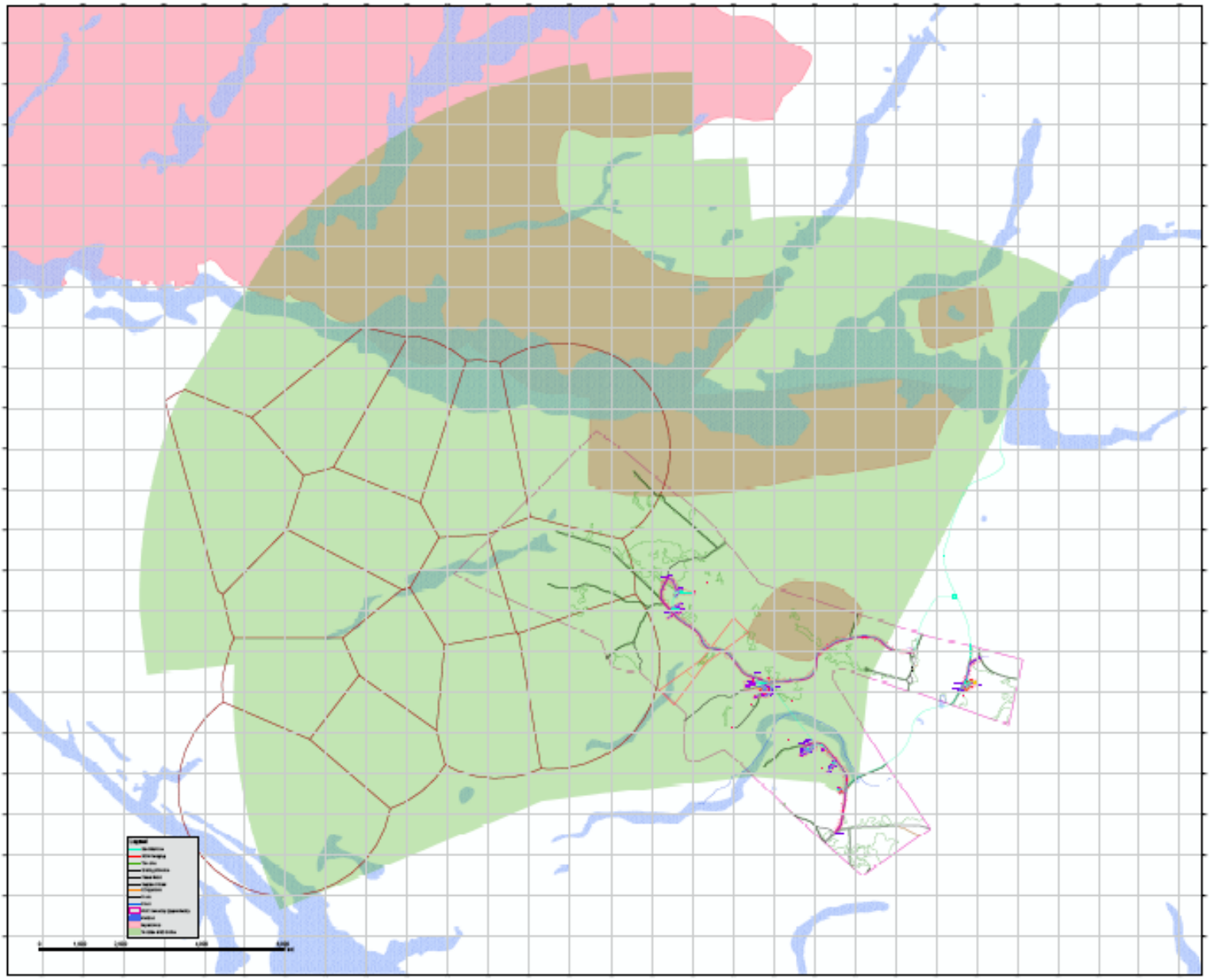
The preferred alternative is to construct a permanent IPBC on Fort Benning between, and including portions of, the Flint and Garnsey Training Ranges. Figure 1 shows the location of the surface danger zones (SDZ), access roads, helicopter landing zone (LZ), major target locations, access roads, and utility lines (electrical etc.) for the preferred alternative. The SDZ is an area that surrounds the firing and ordnance impact portions of a range that provides a buffer zone to contain projectiles, fragments, debris, and ordnance resulting from the firing of weapon systems, and to protect personnel outside the range area from rounds that ricochet during training exercises. The SDZ is closed to all personnel not directly utilizing the range complex during currently ongoing exercises.

The size of the IPBC will be approximately 1,217 acres (Army Training Circular 25-8). The generic Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville (USAESCH) IPBC plan was overlaid and oriented on a plan of the Flint and Garnsey Ranges forming the preliminary IPBC layout. Range objectives were moved and reoriented to better fit the topographical conditions across the Flint and Garnsey Ranges to avoid ordnance impact areas and wetlands, and to minimize encroachment on RCW habitat.

The proposed IPBC would consist of the following training devices:

- 31 Stationary Infantry Targets
- 1 Moving Armor Target (with 1 backstop)
- 9 Moving Infantry Targets
- 4 Stationary Armor Targets
- 5 Machine Gun Bunkers
- 1 Observation Bunker
- 15 Hostile Fire Simulations
- 5 Mortar Simulations
- 1 Helicopter Assault Zones
- 1 Trench (400 ft length, 1 ft deep)
- 1 Assault/Defend House
- 12 Limit Markers

Figure 1: Infantry Platoon Battle Course
Range Layout



(This Page Left Intentionally Blank)

Figure 2. Proposed Primary Support Facilities and Structures Constructed for IPBC Complex.

Building	Area (Square Feet)	Specialized Equipment	Special Requirements
Range Operations Center Bldg. (small)	800	5-ton (approx) heating & cooling unit	Fire alarm system
Operations & Storage Bldg.	800	Operations side: 1.5 ton (approx) heating & cooling unit. Storage Side Standard USAESCH	Fire alarm system
General Instruction Bldg.	800	4-ton (approx.) heating & cooling unit	Fire alarm system
Latrine	200	Heating & cooling unit.	Pump-out aerated vault
Bleachers (covered)	600	None	None
Mess (covered)	800	None	None
Ammo Breakdown	120	None	Surface Danger Zone 75 ft to Sunshine Road. Access to site discussed in transportation analysis.

The construction of an IPBC may also require (1) the installation and use of a staging area for the storage of contractor equipment and materials during the construction of the range and associated support facilities; (2) deposition of fill materials (if needed) for construction of the range/support facilities or maintenance of access roads and training lanes; and/or (3) the construction of a temporary haul route for fill material and concrete during construction of the support facilities and tank trail turn-around points.

New electrical service would be brought onto the Garnsey site to provide power for all support buildings and downrange target emplacements. Power lines from existing points of service to the IPBC would be pole mounted leading up to the IPBC and then buried under the range. The nearest three-phase primary circuit is approximately 18,000 feet from the proposed starting point of the IPBC. Target emplacements will be connected to the Range Operations Center (ROC) facility by buried fiber optic cable (5 feet down and with concrete when under streams), and underground four-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe conduits with caps and pull strings will be buried under the IPBC for the future installation of data and communications lines.

Roads for the IPBC are necessary to provide access to targets and provide a means of ingress and egress of emergency equipment to retrieve and transport wounded personnel in case of accidents. Roads used to service and replace targets would be one 10-foot wide lane capable of handing 1-ton trucks, particularly on Lumpkin Trail and Garnsey Road. The IPBC would use existing range roads that will be improved with extensions to the targets constructed as necessary. A 20-foot long parking/turning space perpendicular to the service road will be provided at each emplacement. It is anticipated that parking space for four buses, one ambulance, and 15 other vehicles including Hummers and non-tactical vehicles would be needed.

Department of Defense Explosive Board (DDESB) siting approval will be required for the ammunition breakdown building.

2.2 Alternative II: Conduct Training at an Offsite IPBC

Training Soldiers stationed on Fort Benning at an IPBC on Fort Stewart, Georgia, was considered as an alternative to constructing a new IPBC on Fort Benning. This option would entail transporting Soldiers between Fort Benning and Fort Stewart for IPBC training. The Army determined that this option would be logistically difficult and cost prohibitive, and eliminated it from further consideration. [Tab D, DD Form 1391, 2004]

2.3 Alternative III: Upgrade, Expand, or Convert a Current Range Facility

Three existing ranges (i.e., Galloway, Hastings, and Ruth Ranges) on Fort Benning were considered for conversion to an IPBC. Galloway Range is currently an anti-armor tracking range slated for conversion to an Infantry Squad Battle Course (ISBC) in CY2005. The projected combined loads for ISBC and IPBC training require two separate and distinct training ranges. Two other under-utilized ranges at Fort Benning were evaluated for conversion to an IPBC. It was determined, however, that these ranges were best slated to accommodate upgrades to heavier weapons training ranges—Hastings range for a Digital Multipurpose Training Range, and Ruth Range for a MK-19 Qualification Range. No other ranges at Fort Benning are available for upgrade or conversion to an IPBC. Therefore, the alternative of upgrading, expanding, or converting a current range facility was determined to be not reasonable and was eliminated from further consideration. [Tab D, DD Form 1391, 2004]

2.4 No Action Alternative (Maintain the Status Quo)

Appropriate consideration of the no action alternative is required by 32 CFR 651, Environmental Analysis of Army Actions. The no action alternative is maintaining the status quo—not building the IPBC and continuing to conduct training utilizing portable facilities at multiple locations, particularly at the Griswold and Cactus Range areas. No new construction or activities would occur, and the current environmental conditions would remain as is. The IPBC is necessary for the Army to meet current and future training requirements and to standardize training to enhance the synergy that comes with employing all necessary training functions in a single location and activity. The no action alternative does not meet the need for training infantry platoon-level units on Fort Benning but will be assessed to establish a baseline of environmental conditions.

3.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

This section describes the existing natural and human environment on Fort Benning that may be potentially impacted by the proposed action. If implemented, the preferred alternative would have no discernable effect (adverse/positive or direct/indirect) on geological resources, groundwater/aquifers, or view shed/aesthetics. The preferred alternative would not have any disparate impacts specific to children. There are no Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance requirements associated the proposed IPBC. The proposed IPBC would not require the construction in a 100-year flood plain. [Final Corrected Charrette Report, IPBC, Fort Benning, 2004]

3.1 Soil/Topography

The soil surveys completed at this time by the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) for Fort Benning on the Georgia side are in the areas of Chattahoochee, Marion, and Muscogee County. There are two basic soil provinces on Fort Benning: the Georgia Sand Hills and the Southern Coastal Plains. The Georgia Sand Hills are a narrow belt of deep sandy soils with rolling to hilly topography. These soils are primarily derived from marine sands, loams, and clays that were deposited over acid crystalline and metamorphic rocks. South of the Sand Hills are the Southern Coastal Plain soils, which are divided into nearly level to rolling valleys and gently sloping to steep uplands. Southern Coastal Plain soils in this area have a loamy or sandy surface layer and loamy or clayey subsoil. [Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Digital Multi-Purpose Range Complex (DMPRC), Benning, 2004 and Environmental Assessment (EA), Brigade Combat Team (BCT), Benning 2005

Soils in the area of Fort Benning, including those in the areas for the preferred alternative are located in the Southern Coastal Plains soil province where the topography is generally rolling valleys to steep uplands. Most of Fort Benning's soils, including those in the area are identified as highly erodible, the degree of which is determined by factors including texture, structure, percent slope, drainage, and permeability.

Training conducted under the no action alternative will continue primarily in the Griswold and Cactus Range areas. Soils in the Griswold Range area of Fort Benning are predominantly clayey and range from acid to alkaline in reaction. The topography is generally smooth to gently rolling with low relief. Soils in the Cactus Range area are in the Sand Hills province and reflect the soil types described above.

3.2 Vegetation

Fort Benning is within the Longleaf Pine Ecosystem, which once covered over 90 million acres of the southeastern United States. Within this region the upland areas were historically dominated by longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) with a mixture of other pine species within the stands. Oaks and other less fire tolerant species dominated the drains and areas, which were not subject to natural wildfires. As a result of changes in agricultural and forestry practices and of land ownership through the past 150 years, the original vegetative cover has been modified to a predominantly coniferous/deciduous mixture. Vegetated acreage on Fort Benning consists of approximately 16,000 acres of lawn and grassed areas, approximately 4,000 acres of open land

and old fields (shrubs and herbaceous plants), and approximately 163,000 acres of woodland (includes the dudded areas and excludes the approximately 1,000 acres of water bodies). [EA, Pest Management, Benning, 2004]

There are more than 1,275 species of plants on Fort Benning. These include trees such as the longleaf pine and white oak (*Quercus alba*), shrubs such as wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), vines such as muscadine grape (*Vitis rotundifolia*) and poison ivy (*Rhus radicans*), and herbaceous groundcover such as grasses and legumes. Trees and other plants are important for many reasons, including shade, erosion control, wildlife habitat, timber products, medicinal products, and realistic training scenarios. Various controls are in place to protect plant life, but some use is authorized. For example, underbrush and grass may be cut and used for camouflage during training exercises, but no vegetation may be disturbed inside RCW clusters. [EA, Pest Management, Benning, 2004]

Loblolly (*Pinus taeda*) and longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) are the principal conifers on Fort Benning. Conifers comprise approximately 54,000 acres of the woodlands on Fort Benning. The remaining 109,000 acres of woodland are comprised of approximately 55,000 acres of mixed pine and hardwoods and 54,000 acres of hardwood forest. [EA, Pest Management, Benning, 2004]

Fort Benning has an Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan (INRMP) that implements landscape-level management of Fort Benning's natural resources in coordination with the various Fort Benning stakeholders to ensure that military operations and natural resources conservation are integrated and consistent with good stewardship practices and legal requirements

The sites for the preferred alternative as well as the no action alternative incorporate representative aspects of the vegetative nature described above.

3.3 Surface Water

The Chattahoochee River is the primary surface water body at Fort Benning. The Chattahoochee River, along with the Flint River to the east, is a major component of the Apalachicola River drainage basin of eastern Alabama, western Georgia, and the Florida panhandle. The principal tributary on the Installation to the Chattahoochee is Upatoi Creek, which is the primary water supply for Fort Benning.

For the Chattahoochee River Basin, the State of Georgia has identified 31 stream segments as "water quality limited" [CWA, Section 303(d)] or impaired due to sedimentation and 79 stream segments as water quality limited due to fecal coli form. Of these, six segments are within Fort Benning, with five listed for sediment (primarily tributaries of Upatoi Creek, and of the Chattahoochee River) and one for fecal coli form (the Chattahoochee River from Upatoi Creek to the railroad at Omaha, Georgia). [Final EIS, DMPRC, Benning, 2004]

The area for the preferred alternative is located in watersheds for the Oswichee Creek, Red Mill Creek, and Shell Creek which are not characterized as impaired. However, these tributaries drain into the Chattahoochee River, which is impaired for fecal matter.
Training conducted under the no action alternative occurs primarily on the Griswold and Cactus Ranges. The Griswold Range area is contained in the Ochillee Creek watershed which drains to the Upatoi Creek. Neither of these is classified as impaired. The Cactus Range area is contained in the Pine Knot Creek watershed which is classified as impaired for sediment.

3.4 Wetlands

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps, aerial photographs, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service county soil surveys indicate the presence of wetlands throughout Fort Benning. Wetlands are located in the vicinity of the preferred alternative, which are located near and associated with Weems Pond and Oswichee Creek. Wetlands are also located in the vicinity of the ranges associated with the no action alternative. Wetlands associated with Ochillee Creek are located near Griswold Range and wetlands associated with Pine Knot Creek and Little Pine Knot Creek are located in the Cactus Range area.

3.5 Wildlife and Migratory Birds

Fort Benning is inhabited by approximately 345 animal species. These include 152 species of birds, 47 species of mammals, 47 species of reptiles, 24 species of amphibians, 67 species of fish, and 8 species of mussels (shellfish) (Fort Benning INRMP, 2001). Harvest of game species on Fort Benning is controlled through the issuance of hunting and fishing permits issued by Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR), outdoor recreation per US Army Infantry Center (USAIC) Regulation 200-3, Hunting and Fishing Regulation, 15 August 2004.

Except for some game species (wild turkey and bobwhite quail), most of the birds on Fort Benning are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Fort Benning procedures for managing and conserving migratory bird species are contained in the Installation's INRMP, and effects to migratory birds are considered in the NEPA process. There are approximately 150 species of birds protected under the MBTA present on Fort Benning either seasonally or year round. The location of the proposed IPBC as well as the sites currently used for no action alternative contain habitat for migratory birds. [Final EIS, DMPRC, Benning, 2004]

3.6 Protected Species

There are five federally listed, threatened (T) and/or endangered (E) species that reside on the grounds of Fort Benning. These are the RCW (E), wood stork (E), American alligator (T), bald eagle (T), and relict trillium (a perennial herb) (E). There are 10 state-listed species on the Installation. None occur within the area of the preferred alternative or Alternative IV. In addition, there are 75 species of conservation concern on the Installation. (Personal conversation with Mark Thornton, 9 July 2005)

Federally Protected Species: Fort Benning has one of the largest RCW populations in the southeastern United States. The RCWs are well dispersed over the entire Installation, except that no active clusters are located on the Alabama portion of the Installation. On September 27, 2002, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) approved Fort Benning's Endangered Species Management Plan (ESMP) for the RCW and issued a Biological Opinion (BO) that included specific management activities. Fort Benning is also one of 13 primary core locations selected by the USFWS to manage for a RCW recovery population (451 clusters for Fort Benning). Presently, Fort Benning has a total of 311 manageable RCW clusters (251 active and 60 inactive, as of 2003). There is an additional estimate of 43 active and 1 inactive clusters in dudded areas A20 (which are located in the vicinity of the preferred alternative) and K15 (which is in the vicinity of Cactus Range. [Final EIS, DMPRC, Benning, 2004]

Two Bald eagle nests (used by one pair of eagles) are located downstream of the preferred alternative site. The nests are located on the southern edge of Fort Benning near the Chattahoochee River and Shell Creek. The eagles have successfully produced at least one fledgling since the first nest was discovered in 1992; therefore, the training compartment where their nest is located is closed during their nesting season. Management strategy on Fort Benning for the bald eagle is detailed in an ESMP and consists of maintaining the integrity of their habitat and feeding sources in order to eventually increase the number of nesting pairs from one to two. [Final EIS, DMPRC, Benning, 2004]

3.7 Solid Waste

Fort Benning generates approximately 1,200 to 1,500 tons per month of uncompacted solid waste. The Installation does not have a permitted sanitary landfill, so all solid and sanitary waste is transported to a state permitted facility located off-post. There are three approved inert landfills on the Installation; however, only one is currently in operation. This active landfill is located approximately 10 miles northeast of the proposed action site and accepts only inert materials such as fallen limbs and trees, concrete (free of lead base paint), and cured asphalt. If during the construction of the preferred alternative, concrete, asphalt, or other construction materials are accumulated that can be recycled, the materials will be incorporated into the Fort Benning Recycling Program for re-use or recycling of applicable materials on the Installation.

3.8 Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Wastes

Fort Benning's Hazardous and Toxic Materials/Waste Management program has three major functions: (1) storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous waste; (2) waste minimization; and (3) remediation of environmental contamination. A detailed discussion of these programs is presented in the Installation Hazardous Waste Remedial Actions Program (HAZWRAP). Fort Benning operates under Hazardous Waste Facility Permit No. HW-021 (S)-2, Facility I.D. No. GA3210020084. These documents are available for review at the offices of the Fort Benning Environmental Management Division (EMD). There are no known Solid Waste Management Units in or near the location of the proposed IPBC.

Fort Benning has in place a Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan in order to respond to any spills or releases that occur from handling and transporting hazardous materials.

3.9 Air Quality

Fort Benning is located in the Columbus-Phenix City Interstate Air Quality Control Region (AQCR), an area classified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as attainment/unclassifiable for all national ambient air quality standards for criteria pollutants with the exception of lead (40 CFR §81.311). Fort Benning is currently in attainment for the six criteria pollutants. Construction activities can result in the generation of fugitive dust emissions that can affect levels of particulate matter in the air.

3.10 Cultural Resources

The Cultural Resources Management (CRM) Program at Fort Benning includes the conservation of cultural sites and historic structures on Fort Benning consistent with and in support of the training mission of the U.S. Army Infantry School and other units. The CRM program is designed to ensure Army compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, the Archeological Resources Preservation Act, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and other historic preservation laws, regulations, and guidelines.

A survey of cultural and historic properties and resources on Fort Benning was completed in 2002. This survey found over 4,000 archeological sites on post. There are no eligible or potentially eligible cultural resources within the current footprint if the IPBC near Garnsey Range. [Intensive Survey of Compartments A-12, CC-1 and Q-7, Fort Benning, Chattahoochee County, Georgia, August 1997]

According to Fort Benning GIS maps, there are no cultural resources in the footprint of Cactus Range area. There are 4 recommended (or potentially eligible) sites within or partially within Griswold Range. These four sites have been identified through a Phase 1 survey [Intensive Survey of Training Areas A13, A15, A16, and A17 on Fort Benning, Chattahoochee County, Georgia, May 2005] The sites have been recommended as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places upon further testing (aka Phase 2). To date, Fort Benning has not been directed to pursue Phase 2 testing in this area for these sites. [Communication with Ruth Ballard, August 2005].

3.11 Noise

Noise is the term used to identify disagreeable, unwanted sound that interferes with normal activities or diminishes the quality of the environment. Military and non-military activity on and around Fort Benning produce both intermittent, pulse sounds--such as tank and artillery fire, and also continuous sounds, such as the sound of vehicles moving along state highways and roadways or aircraft moving across the sky. Loud sounds are produced in Fort Benning's training areas and ranges by the activities of the Soldiers training with their vehicles and equipment.

Fort Benning's Installation Operation Noise Management Plan (IONMP) is being prepared to describe and assess the Installation's existing noise environment. Noise contour lines surrounding and emanating from weapons are produced on a map to illustrate noise impacts on Fort Benning and the surrounding communities. The contours identify different noise zones that vary according to noise intensity or level: Zone I areas where the noise level is compatible with noise sensitive receptors (e.g. residential communities, schools, churches, etc.), Zone II areas where the noise level is normally incompatible with those receptors, and Zone III areas where the noise level is incompatible with noise sensitive receptors. The three zones are evaluated using two weighting systems. The A-weighting frequency de-emphasizes the lower and higher frequency portion of the noise spectrum to approximate the human ear's response (dBA). The C-weighting network is used to evaluate impulsive noise. The sound pressure levels measured using the C-weighting are expressed as dBC. The standards are as follows:

- Zone I “Compatible” < 65dBA or < 62 dBC
- Zone II “Normally Incompatible” 65 to 75 dBA or 62 to 70 dBC
- Zone III “Incompatible” > 75 dBA or > 70 dBC

Based upon the contours shown in Figure 3, there is no noise issues associated with this action.

3.12 Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)

The area of the preferred alternative is training range area. Ground surface surveys were performed after each series of training exercises and the areas were cleared of surface contamination. The Fort Benning Range Division will conduct additional surveys as required. The areas where current IPBC-type training is being conducted (Cactus and Griswold Ranges) are also training ranges and have the potential for UXO to exist there. If UXO are discovered during a training activity, the Fort Benning Directorate of Training is responsible for the disposition of the UXO.

3.13 Transportation Infrastructure

Fort Benning has some level of construction activities and training activities on-going on the Installation at any one time that influences traffic flow and the transportation infrastructure. The traffic related to the IPBC construction efforts and training activities take place in the range area of Fort Benning, but will not differ from the normal construction activities on the Installation. There are no public routes into the proposed IPBC. All public or non-military traffic would only be able to access the proposed action site through guarded gates with road guard requirements added to the security plan for those days the range will be in operation. Emergency evacuation is always a part of the Risk Management Process and includes the most trafficable routes as well as any aerial evacuation capability. The preferred alternative proposes to improve Lumpkin Trail to increase capability for traffic load. Lumpkin Trail is currently restricted in the SDZ for training activities. [Communication with Fred Weekley, 2 August 2005]

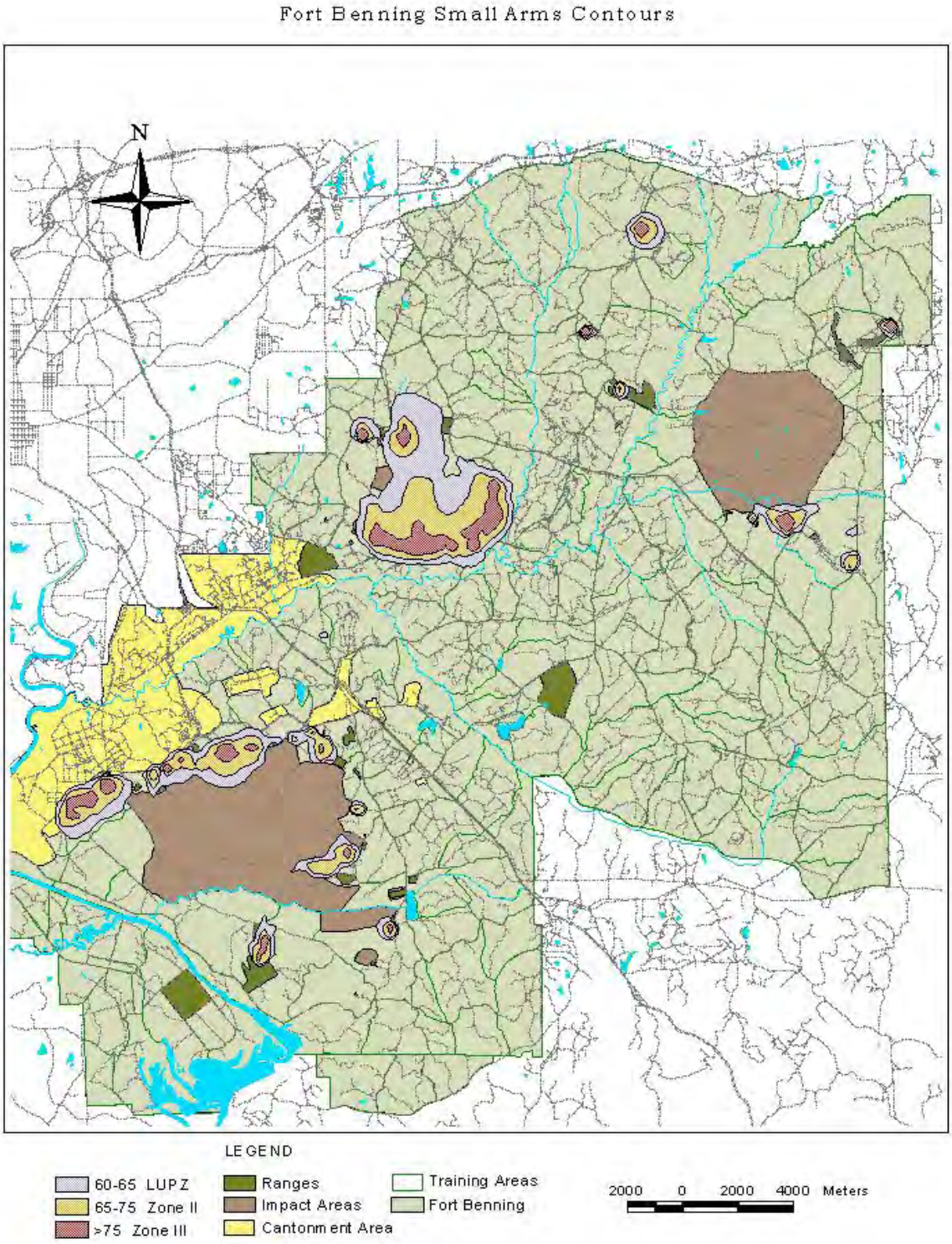
3.14 Socioeconomics

The Columbus, Georgia, Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which consists of Muscogee, Harris, and Chattahoochee Counties, Georgia and Russell County, Alabama, encompasses approximately 4,125 square miles. The majority of the social and economic effects of Fort Benning are felt in the Columbus MSA.

3.15 Land Use

The current land use at Garnsey range is currently used for training of infantry training. The location of the preferred alternative is west of Jamestown road and north of Sunshine Road near Garnsey Range on undisturbed land. The current land use of this area is for training ranges. [Tab C, DD Form 1391, 2004]. Cactus and Griswold Ranges, where current IPBC-type training takes place will continue to be utilized after IPBC-type training is moved to Garnsey Range. Training will continue on Cactus and Griswold to meet other training in support of the Infantry School as well as training requirement resulting from the Modularity Program.

Figure 3: Current Small Arms Noise Contours for Fort Benning



3.16 Environmental Justice

Under Executive Order (EO) 12898, issued February 11, 1994, federal agencies are required to identify and address, as appropriate, any disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations in the United States. Because the training areas for the preferred alternative and the no action alternative are isolated from residences and commercial businesses, and the type of activities being proposed (i.e. construction and operation of an IPBC) is isolated, minority and low-income populations are not expected to be disproportionately affected. This is consistent with the goals of EO 12898.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

This section discusses impacts to the natural and human environment that may occur as a result of implementing the proposed action and compares impacts of the preferred alternative to the no action alternative. Where appropriate, mitigation measures are also discussed. This section uses the term "threshold of significance" to describe the point at which an effect is not sufficiently intense to require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). An EIS is a much more comprehensive analysis (resulting in a much larger document) that is required for "major federal actions significantly affecting the environment." If environmental effects occur as a result of the proposed action, but none of the effects rise to the level of significance, then a finding of no significant impact (FNSI) will be issued by the Army. Where the environmental effects of the preferred alternative could be significant, mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure that any impact to the environment do not become significant.

The environmental parameters discussed below are those that will likely be affected by the implementation of the preferred alternative. Mitigation measures identified in this EA are required to ensure compliance with environmental regulations and are the responsibility of the Savannah District, US Army Corps of Engineers, during construction of the range. Mitigation measures and compliance responsibilities during on-going training operations are the responsibility of the Directorate of Training.

Because a minor portion of the IPBC-type training was conducted at the Cactus and Griswold Ranges and training will continue at these ranges, there is no impact from these losing ranges. Therefore, an evaluation of these ranges for the no action alternative will not be conducted.

4.1 Soils/Topography

Short term impacts on soils from the preferred action would occur from ground disturbance during construction of roads, buildings, targetry, and trenching for laying wire leading to soil erosion, fugitive dust propagation, and sedimentation. There is also a potential for spillage of hazardous materials which could contaminate soils requiring remediation, probably excavation and removal of the soils. Effects to soils are most likely to occur from construction activities, although effects due to post-construction training activities could have some potential impacts on soils.

The threshold level of significance for soils is any ground disturbance or other activities that would violate a federal or state law or regulation, or violate the terms and conditions of a permit issued under a federal or state law or regulation. Impacts to soils would be considered significant if ground disturbance or other activities would violate applicable federal or state laws and regulations, such as the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act (ESCA), and the potential for Notices of Violation (NOV) for the failure to receive applicable state permits, such as a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) construction permit under the ESCA, prior to initiating a proposed action.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

Construction of the IPBC would result in the displacement of 40,867 cubic yards of soil as part of the earthmoving for construction of the facilities (to include grubbing for roads and buildings), and minor earth-moving operations for target line-of-sight (LOS) so Soldiers can see the targets.

Potential impacts would be mitigated through implementation of an Erosion, Sedimentation, and Pollution Control Plan (ESPCP) in accordance with the Manual for Erosion and Sediment Control in Georgia. Best management practices (BMP) for the ESPCP could include erosion control matting, channel stabilization, silt fencing, brush barriers, construction exits, temporary and permanent seeding, and application of mulch. Construction vehicles have the potential to leak or spill petroleum, oils, and lubricants (POL) onto the soil, resulting in soil contamination concerns. Contractors will be required to conform to practices to minimize POL spills which could include secondary containment of vehicles and stored POL products /hazardous materials.

Post construction activities would primarily include dismounted training exercises and transporting Soldiers to and from the training sites which would result in minimal potential for adverse effects to soils. Maintenance on trails and vehicles would potentially result in additional ground disturbance. Travel to and from the range would potentially result in vehicles disturbing soils on the side of paved or unpaved roads.

Overall, potential effects from this alternative would result in a minor potential for adverse effects for soils. Implementation of appropriate BMPs and control measures during and after construction for soil erosion would likely reduce effects of construction and training activity on this range to minor and potentially no adverse affects. Training activities would include foot traffic through the training range that would also result in no adverse impact.

Alternative IV: No Action

The no action alternative would have no construction impacts on soil resources because no new construction would occur. No effects to soils from training operations and maintenance would occur at Garnsey Range, but would continue at the current ranges where infantry training is currently conducted. Therefore, this alternative would have no adverse effects.

4.2 Vegetation

Impacts on vegetation from the preferred action would occur from ground disturbance during construction of roads, buildings, targetry, and trenching for laying wire ranging from grubbing and other vegetation-clearing related to the construction process. Effects will come primarily from construction activities, although effects due to post-construction training activities on vegetation were also considered for impacts.

The threshold level of significance for vegetation is loss of vegetation at a level that would substantially reduce the occurrence of a plant species or degrade the habitat of a dependent animal species at a population level on the Installation. Vegetation discussed below refers both to under-story or ground cover, such as grasses, and over-story cover, such as mature pines and hardwoods.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

During evaluation of the optimal standard design, the orientation (direction) of the IPBC was adjusted to avoid, to the greatest extent practicable, potential environmental impacts due to tree/vegetation removal. As a result, sixty (60) acres will be disturbed as part of construction operations. Of that, approximately 40 acres will be for grub and clear and approximately 20 acres will be cleared. Clearing of trees will support the construction of targetry, assault/defend house, helicopter assault area, and the observation bunker. Clearing of trees will be limited to trees 4-8 inched in diameter for construction of the landing zone, pickup zone, and parking areas. Grubbing will be conducted to ensure adequate visibility of targetry. After completion of construction, much of the vegetation will be re-growth to encourage a natural environment for training the Soldiers. For training at the range, various controls are in place to protect plant life, but some use is authorized. For example, underbrush and grass may be cut and used for camouflage during training exercises. Therefore, impacts to vegetation will be minor for the preferred alternative in the short-term and with no adverse impact for the long-term.

Alternative IV: No Action

The no action alternative would have no impact on current vegetation because no new construction would occur. Potential for effects to all vegetation from activities would not exist at the Garnsey Range area, but would continue at the current ranges where infantry training is currently conducted. As with the preferred alternative, underbrush and grass may be cut and used for camouflage but controls are in place to ensure a natural environment for training the Soldiers. Therefore, this alternative would have no adverse effects.

4.3 Surface Water

Waterways that could be affected by this proposal include Shell Creek, Red Mill Creek, Oswichee Creek, and portion of the Chattahoochee River where these tributaries connect. Adverse effects to surface water could result from erosion, runoff, and surface contamination from pollutants such as hazardous materials and/or waste. Effects to water are most likely to occur from construction activities although potential impacts could occur from post-construction activities.

The threshold level of significance for surface water quality is any degradation to the quality of a stream, river, or lake resulting in the violation of a federal or state law or regulation, or violation of the terms and conditions of a permit issued under a federal or state law or regulation. Laws and regulations that are applicable to the proposed action include the Georgia Water Quality Control Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (aka, the Clean Water Act), and NPDES permit requirements (required for all projects resulting in the disturbance of an area of one or more acres). Laws/regulations that are applicable to the proposed action include the ESCA, and the implementation of an ESPCP to meet permit requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

Construction of utilities for the IPBC facilities under the streams could create temporary minor adverse effects on surface water at Shell Creek, Red Mill Creek, Oswichee Creek, and portion of the Chattahoochee River. The implementation of the preferred alternative will be done in full compliance with applicable federal or state laws or regulations. A hazardous substance Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasures Plan (SPCCP) will be developed and adhered to during

the construction of the IPBC by the contractor, and developed and adhered to during the operation of the facility. Appropriate BMPs will be implemented in accordance with the regulations at 40 CFR Part 122, GA Reg. 391-3-6-16, Fort Benning General Permit, and the IPBC ESPCP during construction of the IPBC and during the operation of the range as well.

Placement of the utility lines would require a NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges under the ESCA. A Notice of Intent (NOI) for construction-related storm water discharge would be submitted to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) to meet these requirements. If construction is required within the 25 feet stream buffer, Fort Benning will request a Stream Buffer Variance from GA EPD. As standard practice, Savannah District, Corps of Engineers, as managing activity of this project, would prepare and implement an ESPCP during construction activities to prevent and/or minimize spill/release from hazardous materials into these surface water bodies. BMPs for erosion control would be applied as necessary and practicable to minimize sedimentation from disturbed areas to surface water. In addition, water samples will be collected to document turbidity levels during construction. If turbidity increases, additional BMPs will be applied as appropriate.

Because the level of potential erosion from the relatively small construction projects exists, this alternative would have a potential minor adverse effect on Garnsey Range area, however, with mitigation measures in place, the impact would result in an essentially negligible adverse effect In addition, because current training on Cactus Range area occurs in a watershed for an impaired stream, Pine Knot Creek, there is a potential positive impact, although small, from moving this training out of this watershed. Therefore, the net impact in this media would result in no adverse impact.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no new construction would occur. Potential impacts to water quality would be limited to existing training activities currently conducted primarily at the Griswold and Cactus range areas. Training in the Cactus Range area occurs in the watershed of an impaired stream for sedimentation; however, dismounted training practices would have no adverse effects on this stream.

4.4 Wetlands

Wetlands occur in the vicinity of the proposed action and would be evaluated and avoided in the design and construction process for this alternative. Adverse effects to wetlands could result from erosion, runoff, and surface contamination from earth-moving activities and from pollutants such as hazardous materials and/or waste. Effects to wetlands are most likely to occur from construction activities although potential impacts could occur from post-construction activities.

The threshold level of significance for wetlands is a change from one wetland type or function to another, drainage of an existing wetland, or filling an existing wetland that would result in the violation of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act or violation of the terms and condition of any permit issued under Section 404.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

Placement of utilities, particularly electrical lines, for the IPBC facilities will create temporary moderate adverse effects on a small area of wetlands in the vicinity of the proposed action for the preferred alternative. Implementation of the preferred alternative does not require the alteration of or filling in of any wetlands; however, it will be necessary to run new utility to the IPBC, which may require trenching through wetlands and impact approximately 0.12 acres of wetlands. Trenching through wetlands will be covered under the Nationwide Permit (NWP) since the acreage impacted is expected to exceed ½ acres. The Corps of Engineers requires a Pre-Construction Notification (PCN) be sent to them. The PCN form is available on the web at www.sas.usace.army.mil. All trenching and work within wetlands will be conducted in compliance with all terms and conditions of the permit. Due to the mitigation measures that will be instituted, the adverse effects will be minor.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no new construction would occur. Potential impacts to wetlands would be limited to existing training activities currently conducted primarily at the Griswold and Cactus Range areas. Therefore, this alternative would have no potential for adverse effects on this stream.

4.5 Wildlife and Migratory Birds

The threshold of significance for wildlife and migratory birds is the disruption of normal behavioral patterns or disturbance of habitat significant enough to substantially impede the species' ability to thrive and reproduce within its normally inhabited range.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

The proposed action would take place in an area that is a formally utilized range area. Animal species in the area have either grown accustomed to and accommodate training activities, or have relocated to areas that are not used for training. Although construction activities may have some impact on foraging areas, it will be temporary as the vegetation will be re-grown. It is anticipated that training on the proposed IPBC would not be different from previous training activities that have taken place in the same general area. Therefore, it is expected that animal species have learned to accommodate such training activities and they would be impacted to the extent that the threshold of significance would not be exceeded. This alternative would have no potential for adverse effects.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no new construction would occur and current training activities would continue. Potential impacts to wildlife and migratory birds would be limited to existing training activities currently conducted primarily at the Griswold and Cactus Range areas. Because wildlife have already adapted to the training activities of these ranges, this alternative would have no potential for adverse effects.

4.6 Protected Species

The threshold of significance for threatened and endangered (T&E) species (plant and animal) is the degradation of Fort Benning's ability to manage the T&E species to conserve and recover the species, or the placement of a T&E species in jeopardy, or the violation of any provision of the Endangered Species Act. Although there are several T&E species located on Fort Benning, the only T&E species near the site of the proposed action is the RCW.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

RCWs populate a very specific type of habitat (open stands of discrete clusters of mature pine trees with a scarce to moderate midstory, surrounded by contiguous foraging habitat). By design manipulation, the proposed action stops short of encroaching on any habitat. The impact potential exists as Soldiers will be conducting dismounted maneuvers in approximately 350 acres of RCW foraging areas. By the nature of these maneuvers, the vegetation will not be significantly modified. Further, dismounted training including live fire has not been shown to have any impact on RCW foraging areas. [Personal conversation with Dr. Albert Bivings, August 2005].

Bald eagle nests occur downstream of the construction site. This site could be potentially impacted if pollutants from the construction site are released to the environment and migrate to the nesting area. In order to prevent this occurrence, a hazardous substance SPCCP will be developed and adhered to during the construction of the IPBC by the contractor and developed and adhered to during the operation of the range. Appropriate BMPs will also be implemented in accordance with the regulations at 40 CFR Part 122, Georgia Reg. 391-3-6-16, and Fort Benning General Permit and the IPBC ESPCP during construction of the IPBC and adhered to during the operation of the range.

Therefore, this alternative could have potential for minor adverse effects with the current mitigation measures in place.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no new construction would occur. Potential impacts to T&E would be limited to existing training activities currently conducted primarily at the Griswold and Cactus Range areas. These areas and other training areas at Fort Benning currently contain habitat for the RCW. Soldiers training at Fort Benning are made aware of limitation of training in areas of RCW habitat. Therefore, this alternative would have no potential for adverse effects with the current mitigation measures in place.

4.7 Solid Waste

The threshold level of significance for solid waste is the improper storage or release of a solid waste into the environment in an uncontrolled manner or the violation of any state or local regulation pertaining to solid waste or municipal waste.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

The construction of the IPBC will result in the creation of solid waste and construction debris, such as concrete and asphalt, all of which will be handled in accordance with the Installation Solid Waste Management Plan, which includes management, containerization, transportation, and disposal in state-approved and properly licensed disposal facilities. To the extent possible, this construction waste will be incorporated into the Fort Benning recycling program for re-use or recycling as appropriate. Because this generation of waste is not significant and available wastes would be recycled or transported off-site, this alternative would have no potential for adverse effects on landfill capacity and the environment and potential positive effects due to encouraging recycling of construction waste. This alternative would have no adverse effects.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no new construction would occur and no construction debris would be generated. However, training and associated range maintenance would occur at the separate sites currently used; therefore, there is potential for hazardous waste generation. Therefore, this alternative has no adverse effect.

4.8 Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Wastes

The threshold level of significance for hazardous materials and wastes is the improper storage or release of a hazardous material or waste into the environment in violation of a federal or state law or regulation, or violation of the terms and conditions of Fort Benning's application hazardous waste permit and the SPCCP.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

The construction, operation, and maintenance of an IPBC on Fort Benning would likely result in the generation of small quantities of hazardous wastes, primarily surface coatings and lubricants. All hazardous materials and hazardous wastes would be managed, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal, state regulations, and Fort Benning SPCCP regulations. Flammable liquid storage would be in accordance with applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards or equivalent Army standard. Hazardous materials spills/releases would be cleaned up in accordance with the Fort Benning contingency plan. Hazardous waste generation will also occur as a result of training and associated maintenance of range mechanical devices (pop-up targets, etc.) but the amount would be insignificant and also mitigated by current hazardous waste procedures on the Installation. Because the generation of hazardous waste is expected to be small during construction of the range and mitigation measures are in place to offset most impacts, this alternative would have no adverse effects in the short-term and no adverse impacts in the long-term.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no new construction would occur and no hazardous materials or waste would be generated. Training and associated range maintenance of pop-up targetry would occur at the ranges currently used so there is a potential for very small amounts of hazardous waste generation to occur. However, the amount of waste generation would be very small and the Installation's maintenance practices would mitigate any potential releases. Therefore, this alternative would have no adverse effect.

4.9 Air Quality

The threshold of significance to air quality would be a failure to comply with federal and state air quality regulations, such as the Clean Air Act (CAA) and amendments, and the potential for notices of violation (NOV) for failure to receive applicable state permits (such as those required for construction projects) prior to initiating a proposed action or failure to follow permit requirements.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

The construction, operation, and maintenance of an IPBC on Fort Benning would likely result in air emissions from earthmoving activities and small amounts of volatile releases from surface coatings and bonding materials during building construction and lubricants. Contractors will submit an Environmental Protection Plan prior to beginning earthmoving operations. This plan describes mitigation actions the Earthmoving operations will implement to control fugitive dust emissions if environmental conditions make it likely for excessive dust generation (dry conditions, soils conducive to fugitive dust, etc.). Monitoring of these mitigation actions will be conducted by the Savannah District, Corps of Engineers. Painting and other building operations that employ materials that will release volatile vapors into the air will be monitored by the Savannah Corps to ensure practices are used that minimize emissions. Overall, with mitigation measures the effects from this alternative would result in a minor potential for adverse effects to air quality.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no new construction would occur and therefore no new air pollution would be generated from construction activities. Therefore, this alternative would have no adverse effects.

4.10 Cultural Resources

For cultural resources the threshold for significant impacts include any disturbance that may affect the integrity of a historic property or a cultural resource that has not yet been evaluated to determine its eligibility to the National Register or violate applicable cultural resource laws or regulations.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

As there are no eligible or potentially eligible cultural resources within the current footprint of the IPBC near Garnsey Range [Intensive Survey of Compartments A-12, CC-1 and Q-7, Fort Benning, Chattahoochee County, Georgia, August 1997]. Therefore, effects from this alternative on cultural artifacts would result in a no adverse effects on cultural resources, since none have been discovered from surveys of the area.

Alternative IV: No Action

According to Fort Benning's Geographic Information System (GIS) maps, there are no cultural resources in the footprint of Cactus Range area. There are 4 recommended (or potentially eligible) sites within or partially within Griswold Range. These four sites have been identified

through a Phase 1 survey [Intensive Survey of Training Areas A13, A15, A16, and A17 in Fort Benning, Chattahoochee County, Georgia, May 2005] The sites have been recommended as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places upon further testing (Phase 2). To date, Fort Benning has not been directed to pursue Phase 2 testing in this area for these sites. [Communication with Ruth Ballard, August 2005]. The sites are marked and entry into these areas is restricted during training exercises. Under the no action alternative, identified cultural resources are preserved and this alternative would have no adverse effects.

4.11 Noise

The threshold of significance for noise would be a significant increase in the area classified as Zone II and III, which could extend over the Installation's border or into housing areas on Fort Benning.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

Operations of the proposed IPBC would include only live fire from small arms and training pyrotechnics. Garnsey Range is already utilized periodically as a training area with small arms fire and pyrotechnics. Although the number of days of training for the area would increase, it is unlikely to generate noise levels in sufficient amounts to enlarge the noise contours because the same types of weapons will be utilized (small arms). Therefore, noise generation is not expected to differ significantly from the current noise level currently at Fort Benning. Overall, effects from this alternative on noise would result in no adverse effects for noise.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action, no new construction would occur and no additional noise would be generated. Therefore, this alternative would have no adverse effects for noise.

4.12 Unexploded Ordnance

The threshold level of significance for unexploded ordnance (UXO) includes the threat to safety that would exceed the capacity for police, fire, and health services at Fort Benning to provide within an area of a UXO. Although the probability of finding UXO at this site is extremely low, if any are found during construction, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would follow established procedures to address the situation and would contact Fort Benning Explosive Division. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) personnel would make determinations if emergency treatment of munitions is required, and then recover, destroy, or otherwise manage waste munitions as necessary to protect human health, safety, and the environment. [EA, BCT, Benning 2005]

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

Surface surveys for UXO were conducted for the proposed IPBC range area and none were discovered (Personal communication, Allan, 2005). However, UXO could still exist below the surface. The construction of new buildings will require the installation of foundations approximately three feet below finish grade and UXO could be encountered during construction operations. To mitigate this concern, only authorized personnel would be allowed within the footprint of construction. In addition, all workers must adhere to safety standards established

under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Safety and Health Requirements Manual EM 385-1-1, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The Savannah District, Corps of Engineers, will ensure these standards are complied with during construction. UXO discovered during these surveys, as well as any waste munitions generated during operation, would be disposed of consistent with the Military Munitions Rule (Title 40, CFR, Part 260). The amount of UXO discovered is not anticipated to be significant at the site; therefore, the amount of waste munitions disposal would be minor. Training at this range would include only small arms munitions and Soldiers would be prohibited from any digging activities in order to mitigate the potential for encountering UXO during a training exercise. Waste munitions during training activities would only be generated if the small arms cartridge continually misfires (fails to fire) and cannot be corrected during the training operation. This occurs rarely in small arms and, therefore, the amount of waste munitions expected to be generated from this range would be minimal. Overall, UXO is not expected to be found at the site during construction and mitigation measures are in effect for this unlikely event thus no adverse effects from UXO from construction is expected. Further, UXO would not result from training since Soldiers are prohibited from digging and will train only with small arms There is no potential for adverse effects from UXO under this alternative.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no construction will occur to potentially uncover UXO. IPBC-type training at Cactus and Griswold Ranges include only small arms munitions and Soldiers are prohibited from any digging activities in order to mitigate the potential for encountering UXO during a training exercise. Waste munitions during training activities are only generated if the small arms cartridge continually misfires (fails to fire) and cannot be corrected during the training operation. This occurs rarely in small arms and therefore the amount of waste munitions expected to be generated from this range would be minimal. Therefore, this alternative would have no adverse effects.

4.13 Transportation Infrastructure

Access to the range areas is not open to the public since entry to the Installation is restricted. The primary method for accessing the training ranges would be roads from the cantonment area to the range area. Although helicopters are available to these ranges for serious medical emergencies, these roads to the range areas would be the primary method for transporting Soldiers to the training area, responding to medical and other emergencies, and to conduct construction and maintenance operations at the ranges. The threshold level of significance for transportation is impairment of these roads to a degree that would impact the Installation's ability to conduct necessary activities supporting the training and security mission.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

The preferred alternative proposes to improve Lumpkin Trail to increase capability for traffic load. Lumpkin Trail is currently restricted in the SDZ for training activities and will therefore not impact traffic flow on the Installation. (Personal conversation with Weekley, July 2005). The site for the proposed action can also be accessed by way of Dixie Road and Jamestown Road if a situation requires access to the site and Lumpkin Trail is not accessible for security or other reasons. All these routes into the range area will be controlled during live fire exercises by Installation security personnel to ensure safety of personnel. The impact on traffic load into, through, and out of the range area is not expected to change. Fort Benning has some level of

construction activities on-going on the Installation at any one time. This construction effort takes place in the range area of Fort Benning, but will not differ from the normal construction activities on the Installation. In the long run, construction of this range and upgrade of Lumpkin Trail will decrease movement of Soldiers around the Installation to meet training requirements and enhance the transportation infrastructure of the Installation as IPBC training will be consolidated to one training area. This would result in a positive affect on traffic infrastructure but would be minimal in impact. Overall, effects from this alternative would result in no adverse effects for the transportation infrastructure.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no construction will occur to potentially impact the transportation infrastructure. Training would require continued use of existing roads to access training ranges, such as Cactus and Griswold Ranges. The transportation infrastructure is currently sufficient to meet the current training needs. Therefore, this alternative would have no adverse effects on the transportation infrastructure.

4.14 Socioeconomics

The threshold level of significance for socioeconomics consists of a combination of several factors, to include unusual population growth or reduction, unusual increase/decrease in housing demands, substantial increase/decrease in demands on public services, and the potential to substantially increase/decrease employment opportunities.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

The construction of the new IPBC could temporarily increase job opportunities for individuals living and/or working in the Columbus-Phenix City MSA, resulting in potential temporary minor positive effects on socioeconomics. The impact from the preferred alternative on the socioeconomics of Columbus MSA would be a temporary positive impact due to employment for the construction activities on Fort Benning. However, once the construction activities are completed, no permanent long-term employment or other socio-economic impact is anticipated from the proposed action. The construction of the IPBC is not a large enough project that it would cause increase demands on housing as a result of an influx of temporary workers. The IPBC would be operated by existing Army staff and not require any significant increase in the Fort Benning workforce. Therefore, the impacts would be positive but negligible in nature. Therefore, this alternative would have no adverse impacts on socioeconomics.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no construction will occur to potentially impact the socioeconomics of the area. Therefore, this alternative would have no adverse effects.

4.15 Land Use

The threshold level of significance for land use is altering the existing land use category of the training ranges in such a manner as to cause incompatibility with adjacent land uses. The threshold level of significance relating to range containment is encroachment sufficient to interfere with the Installation's mission so that mission-essential training is degraded or the

failure to meet the required sustainable design per the Sustainable Project Rating Tool (SPiRiT) rating for the buildings.

Alternative I: Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area

The proposed action to construct an IPBC would be on land that has been primarily used as training ranges. The proposed land use is therefore essentially the same as the land use that currently exists. Therefore, the preferred alternative would have no adverse impact on the land use.

Alternative IV: No Action

Under the no action alternative, no construction will occur to potentially impact the land use of the area and the land would continue to be used for training lands. This would result in no change of these training lands. Therefore, this alternative would have no adverse effects on the land use.

4.16 Environmental Justice

As stated in section 3.16, the training areas for both the preferred alternative and the no action alternative is isolated from residences and commercial businesses and the type of activities being proposed (i.e. construction and operation of a IPBC), minority and low-income populations are not expected to be disproportionately affected. Therefore, there are no adverse impacts for environmental justice.

5.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The CEQ defines cumulative impacts as those impacts that result from the incremental effects of an action added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions (40 CFR §1508.7). Actions with the potential to result in incremental impacts are evaluated within a well-defined and specific geographical (spatial) region of influence (ROI). Projects are also limited on a temporal basis, since they all have the potential to be implemented within a 20-year period, as indicated by the planning documents obtained for Fort Benning, Columbus, and Phenix City. Actions with the potential to result in incremental impacts, when added to the construction of an IPBC and alternatives, are described below.

5.1 Region of Influence

The overall ROI for this proposed action consists of Chattahoochee and Muscogee Counties, Georgia, and Russell County, Alabama; this ROI includes the cities of Columbus, Georgia; Phenix City, Alabama; and the Fort Benning Military Installation. Individual ROIs have also been established with specific environmental media that differ in areas of coverage from the overall ROI. Where this is the case, the media-specific ROI is indicated and defined.

5.2 Ongoing Actions in the ROI

The installation of Anti-Terrorist/Force Protection Measures is an ongoing project on Fort Benning. This consists of the construction and installation of an enhanced physical security perimeter barrier around the Installation's four cantonment areas using fences, guard rails, or existing natural barriers, such as streams and steep ridges. Permanent access control points (ACPs) are being constructed at all of the Installation's seven entry points. Drainage for perimeter roads and erosion control measures will be installed, and each ACP will have protective lighting. An EA and FNSI were prepared for this project and are available for review at the EMD. The approximate size of the overall project area is 20 to25 acres.

An Infantry Squad Battle Course is being constructed via the conversion of an existing Fort Benning range, Galloway Range, and includes the removal/replacement and upgrading of existing targetry, the construction of associated support facilities, the demolition of currently existing temporary buildings on site, and associated utility placement. The approximate size of the overall project area is 180 to 190 acres. A DMPRC is being built in the northeastern portion of the Installation to accommodate advanced gunnery (mechanized) training requirements. The work consists of tree clearing, grading, and cut-and-fill operations to support the construction of tank trails, access/support roads, targetry, support facilities, and utility emplacements. The approximate size of the overall project area is 2000 acres. An EIS and Record of Decision (ROD) were prepared for this project and are available for review at the EMD.

A new National Infantry Museum is currently being constructed on the land lying between South Lumpkin and Fort Benning roads on the Installation's border with the City of Columbus. The existing museum, located on Baltzell Avenue, Main Post, Fort Benning, will be reutilized in another manner, but will not be demolished. The approximate size of the overall project area is 20 to 30 acres. An EA and FNSI were prepared for this project and are available for review at the EMD. In Columbus, safety improvements are underway for the highway interchange at I-185/US

280 (to the north of Fort Benning) consisting of a redesign of interchange 105 at I-185 and US 280. Safety improvements also include removing and replacing guardrails and possibly installing medians along 10.5 miles of US 280. The approximate size of the overall project area is 5 to10 acres.

A new DMPRC is being constructed in Training Compartment D13. The range dimensions will be approximately 1,500 meters by 4,500 meters and cover about 1,800 acres plus support facilities. The DMRPC includes a firing and target area with 3 course lanes, numerous stationary and moving targets, trenches and berms, maintenance roads; a helipad; utilities and communication systems; and support facilities on about 25 acres including control and instruction buildings, maintenance and storage buildings. The DMPRC includes a safety zone that is inaccessible during operation of the range. (Assume that this is not the same DMPRC mentioned above.)

5.3 Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions at Fort Benning Community

There are several construction projects planned for implementation on Fort Benning during the same time frame as the proposed action. Some of the projects are identified and described in the Fort Benning Installation Master Plan. They have been preliminarily assessed for environmental impacts via the Record of Environmental Consideration (REC) process (the REC process verifies that actions categorically excluded from NEPA are not subject to any extraordinary circumstances that would trigger the requirement to prepare an EA or EIS). Each project described below is pending final approval and subsequent compliance with NEPA, except as otherwise noted. The projects determined to have the potential to impact the ROIs are listed below. Fiscal Year (FY) refers to the period between 1 October and 30 September of each year and is the time period the Army uses for budget phases.

Barracks Replacement, Kelley Hill, Phase III (FY05). Work would consist of the demolition of existing buildings (9043, 9046, 9047, 9053, 9054, 9055, 9057, 9058, and 9074), the construction of new facilities, and landscaping around the new facilities in the Kelley Hill area of Fort Benning. The approximate size of the overall project area is 10 to 15 acres.

Modularity Program (FY04 or 05). Work will consist of the development of a Unit Action Complex on Fort Benning for the placement of modular buildings in support of additional personnel to be tentatively placed within the Harmony Church cantonment area. The complex would include site development, construction, and utility connections and distribution. It is not known at this time if this complex will be built at either Fort Benning or another Army Installation. However, preliminary analysis and siting is occurring in readiness for if/when Fort Benning is chosen to receive this construction and additional personnel. The approximate size of the overall project area is 30 to 35 acres.

Barracks and Tactical Equipment Shop Projects (FY05-07). Work would consist of the construction of additional barracks and tactical equipment shops across from existing ranges (beyond Easley and McAndrews Ranges) along Dixie Road. These projects are currently in the design phase only. The approximate size of the overall project area is 15 to 20 acres.

Receptee Barracks (FY07). Work would consist of the demolition of the existing dining facility and construction of additional barracks, a dining facility, Soldier' community

center, and physical training building with a running track at Sand Hill. The approximate size of the overall project area is 10 to 15 acres.

Ammunition Supply Point (ASP) Expansion (FY05). Work would consist of the construction of two aboveground general storage facilities, 11 earth-mounded ammunition storage igloos with associated loading platforms, two small quantity ammunition huts, an ammunition surveillance building, and forklift storage/recharge facilities at the existing ASP on Fort Benning. Work would also include the demolition of 19 structures currently existing within the ASP compound. The approximate size of the overall project area is 10 to 15 acres.

Direct Support/General Support (DS/GS) Consolidated Maintenance Facility (FY07). Work would consist of constructing an approximately 112,000 square foot equipment maintenance complex for the Fort Benning Department of Public Works (DPW), a facility to be located in the southwest quadrant of US280/27 and First Division Road. The approximate size of the overall project area is 10 to 15 acres.

Rehabilitation of North/South Maneuver Corridors (FY undetermined – pending funding approval). Work will consist of the rehabilitation of two existing maneuver corridors in the north and three existing maneuver corridors in the south for training utilization by the 3rd Brigade/3rd Infantry of Fort Benning. The areas are contained within the Oscar 1 to 15 training compartments in the north and the D2-16, L3, E3-4, and J6-7 training compartments in the south. These existing maneuver areas will have erosion control and soil stabilization measures conducted, in addition to selective thinning, in order to more fully support maneuvers by the mechanized vehicles. The approximate size of the overall project area is 5,000 acres.

Combined Club Facility (FY undetermined – pending funding approval). Work would consist of the demolition of the existing Follow Me Golf Course Clubhouse for the construction of a new clubhouse that will contain the combined functions of the Golf Course Club and Officer's Club, and the redevelopment of the existing Follow Me Golf Course. The approximate size of the overall project area is 5 to 10 acres.

New Post Exchange, Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) (FY undetermined – pending final decision by AAFES). Work would consist of constructing a new AAFES on the land across the street from the existing AAFES on Custer Road, Main Post, and Fort Benning. The old AAFES would be abandoned and reutilized in another format; it is not scheduled for demolition at this time. Work would also consist of landscaping and the construction of a parking lot. The approximate size of the overall project area is 10 to15 acres.

Residential Communities Initiative (FY06 – pending funding approval). Work would consist of renovation of 464 units (192 non-historic units and 272 historic units), demolition of 3,220 units, and construction of 3,438 new units on Fort Benning. In addition to the housing units, construction will occur on four village centers, one neighborhood center, one welcome center, two pool cabanas and six outdoor pools (including one pool and cabana located at Porter Village), and 51 tot lots. At the end of the initial development period, Fort Benning's total on-post family housing inventory would number 4,200 units (4,123 Main Post units and 77 Porter Village units).

The projects listed above are only in their preliminary planning phases. These activities are routinely conducted without separate or ongoing evaluation of environmental effects, but may be reassessed for potential environmental impacts on a case-by-case basis when warranted by special circumstances or program changes.

5.4 Potential Cumulative Impacts

Preliminary analysis of the preferred alternative indicates that there is no potential for cumulative impacts to the following media because no adverse direct or indirect impacts would occur: surface water, wildlife and migratory birds, solid waste, hazardous materials and hazardous waste, cultural resources, noise, UXO, transportation infrastructure, socioeconomics, land use, and environmental justice. Therefore, these media are not evaluated further in this section. Minor impacts were found for soils/topography, vegetation, wetlands, protected species, and air quality and these media were evaluated for cumulative impacts in the next section.

Preliminary analysis of the no action alternative indicates that there is no potential for cumulative impacts because no direct or indirect adverse impacts would occur in any media. Therefore, cumulative impacts were not analyzed in detail for the no action alternative.

5.4.1 Soils/Topography and Vegetation

Soils/topography and vegetation were analyzed as a single media for cumulative impacts due to the closely related nature of the impacts made it redundant to analyzed them separately. The ROI for soils and vegetation were impacted similarly in the analysis and consists of the area described in Section 5.1. Past, present, and future actions in the ROI, such as construction and road/trail maintenance, have the potential to contribute to soil disturbance and erosion and the loss of vegetative cover; however, adherence to applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, such as erosion control BMPs and NPDES permits, would help minimize soil erosion. Minor soil contamination could also occur as a result of these actions, due to potential spills and accidents during construction and maintenance activities; however, legally required mitigation measures, such as secondary containments and equipment inspections, would help minimize the threat of accidents and subsequent soil contamination. In particular, the construction related to the Maneuver Corridors, Combined Club Facility, RCI, and the IPBC are the projects that have the potential for effects to soils and vegetation in the ROI. The DMPRC and Modularity are projects which could also produce incremental impacts to soils and vegetation in the ROI. It should be noted that the rehabilitation of the Maneuver Corridors has the potential for long-term positive effects due to the proposed erosion control and soil stabilization measures it will entail. Overall, this would result in a potential for incremental impacts from the IPBC and minor cumulative adverse effects on soils and vegetation in the ROI.

5.4.2 Wetlands

The ROI for wetlands and stream banks consists of the wetlands and streams located within the local watershed. Past, present, and foreseeable future actions in the ROI include construction and road/trail maintenance and have the potential to contribute to sedimentation or contamination of wetlands and damage to stream banks in the ROI. The ISBC, combined Club Facility, and the National Infantry Museum have the potential for moderate adverse effects to wetlands and stream banks. The rehabilitation of the Maneuver Corridors on Fort Benning would result in positive

effects to wetlands and stream banks, due to the erosion control and soil stabilization measures' potential for reducing sedimentation of adjacent wetlands and stream banks. Adherence to applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, such as following guidance in the wetlands permitting process, the ESPCP, and stream buffer variances, would help minimize this potential for adverse cumulative effects. Overall, this would result in a potential for incremental impacts from the IPBC and a minor cumulative adverse effects on wetlands in the ROI.

5.4.3 Protected Species

The ROI for federally protected species is also very localized and, for the purposes of this analysis, contained within the Installation's boundary. Past, present, and foreseeable future actions in the ROI include construction of the ISBC, DMPRC, NIM , Modularity, and road/trail maintenance. All of the projects have the potential to contribute to degradation or loss of RCW habitat (pine trees 30-60 years of age or older) in the ROI. Although the rehabilitation of the North/South Maneuver Corridors would include selective thinning of trees in areas containing federally protected species, all thinning activities would be minimal, as described earlier, and would be in accordance with guidelines laid out in the RCW ESMP. On Fort Benning, adherence to the RCW ESMP, the 2003 Recovery Plan for the RCW, and the Fort Benning INRMP during construction projects would be required, which would minimize potential adverse impacts. The installation of erosion control measures in the maneuver corridors would avoid other federally listed species, such as relict trillium, if found. Other means to minimize potential effects may also be employed. Fort Benning will request USFWS coordination and consultation as appropriate for future projects in the ROI. Overall, this would result in a potential for incremental impacts from the IPBC and a minor cumulative adverse effects on protected species in the ROI.

5.5.4 Air Quality

The ROI for soils and vegetation consists of the area described in Section 5.1. Past, present, and future actions in the ROI, such as construction and road/trail maintenance, have the potential to contribute to the degradation of air quality. Increases in particulate matter (PM) in the form of fugitive dust would be the most prevalent because these activities would include ground disturbance and travel over unpaved surfaces as well as increased traffic. Although it is not possible to quantify additive impact of potential future projects with the proposed action, the resultant cumulative effects would not be expected to significantly degrade the air quality in the area. Overall, this would result in a potential for incremental impacts from the IPBC and a minor cumulative adverse effects on air quality in the ROI.

(This Page Left Intentionally Blank)

6.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed action, construction of a permanent IPBC on Fort Benning between, and including portions of, the Flint and Garnsey Training Ranges, is the most effective and environmentally sound method to meet the requirement to provide Army, Reserve, and National Guard units with a permanent installation to exercise live fire training to improve combat readiness for units at Fort Benning. There is no indication that constructing the IPBC would violate any federal, state, or local environmental laws or regulations. Furthermore, the no action alternative does not meet the Army's requirement for a single live-fire and maneuver training range to allow dismounted platoon units to employ their skill in a comprehensive manner as well as to meet the growing training requirements of the Army.

The conclusion is that the proposed action does not constitute a "major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the natural and human environment" when considered individually or cumulatively in the context of NEPA. Therefore, the recommendations are that a finding of no significant impact be published for the proposed action and that an environmental impact statement is not required for the proposed action.

(This Page Left Intentionally Blank)

7.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

- **Mr. Cody Jackson, Booz Allen Hamilton**
- **Mr. Tom Lavelle, Booz Allen Hamilton**
- **Ms. Diane Clark, Booz Allen Hamilton**

8.0 PERSONS AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

- Dr. Paul Theis, Chief, Environmental Training Support Branch, US Army Environmental Center
- Mr. Michael Nichols, Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, US Army Corps of Engineers
- Mr. Scott Farley, Environmental Law Specialist, Army Environmental Center
- CPT Dave Blalock, Environmental Law Division, U.S. Army Legal Services Agency
- Mr. Charles Bowden, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District
- Mr. Fred Weekley, Range Control Office, Fort Benning
- Mr. John Brown, Environmental Management Division, Fort Benning
- Ms. Linda Veenstra, Environmental Law Specialist, OSJA, Fort Benning
- Ms. Melissa Kendrick, Environmental Management Division, Fort Benning
- Mr. Mark Thornton, Conservation Division, Fort Benning
- Ms. Polly Gustafson, Environmental Management Division, Fort Benning
- Mr. Felix Seda, Environmental Management Division, Fort Benning
- Mr. Gary Hollon, Environmental Management Division, Fort Benning
- Dr. Albert Bivings, Wildlife Biologist, US Army Forces Command

9.0 REFERENCES

- Title 32, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 651, [Army Regulation 200-2], Environmental Analysis of Army Actions, March 29, 2002
- Department of Defense Form 1391, Project Number 55105, September 2004
- Department of Army Training Circular No. 25-8, Training Ranges (5 Apr 2004)
- Final Corrected Charrette Report, Infantry Platoon Battle Course at Garnsey Range, Fort Benning, Georgia (March 2004).
- Final Environmental Impact Statement, Digital Multi-Purpose Range Complex, Fort Benning, Georgia, April 2004
- Environmental Assessment for Temporary Brigade Combat Team Support Facilities and Brigade Combat Team Training at Fort Benning, Georgia, Fort Benning, Georgia, January 2005
- Environmental Assessment for Implementation of the Integrated Pest Management Plan, Fort Benning, Georgia, December 2004
- Intensive survey of Compartments A-12, CC-1 and Q-7, Fort Benning, Chattahoochee County, Georgia, Panamerican Consultants, Inc., August 1997.
- Intensive Survey of Training Areas A13, A15, A16, and A17 in Fort Benning, Chattahoochee County, Georgia, Panamerican Consultants, Inc., May 2005).

(This Page Left Intentionally Blank)

Appendix A: Draft Finding of No Significant Impact

1. Description of the Proposed Action: The proposed action to construct an Infantry Platoon Battle Course (IPBC) west of Jamestown road and north of Sunshine Road near Garnsey range. An IPBC puts infantry platoons through a series of targets and missions in an obstacle course setting. Moving and stationary targets, bunkers, landing zones, mortar simulation devices and buildings provide a realistic training environment that allows for multiple advances, defend, and threat scenarios. This training range is required to provide the active Army, Reserve, and National Guard Units with a permanent facility to exercise live fire training requirements to improve combat readiness for infantry soldiers.

Projected training load for Fort Benning is 7,946 for the Infantry Officer Basic Course, Basic Officer Leader Course, Phase I (all branches); and the Infantryman Advanced Non-commissioned Officer Course. Units must be trained to standard in platoon level operations tactics, techniques, and procedures that are currently written in the Army's doctrinal and training publications. Without the Infantry Platoon Battle Course (IPBC), units will be unable to train to the Army's current doctrinal and training standards. If this IPBC is not provided, there will be a significant adverse effort on the unit training. The infantry units will not be able to attain the maximum degree of proficiency required for combat.

This IPBC is in conformance with the Installation Master Plan and the Range Development Plan (RDP). The project site is West of Jamestown Road and North of Sunshine Road near Garnsey Range on undisturbed land. As stated above, the mission of the proposed IPBC is to satisfy training requirements for active Army, Reserve, and National Guard units stationed and/or coming to Fort Benning for Plan of Instruction or annual training.

The configuration of the new Infantry Platoon Battle Course Range will be in accordance with US Army Corps of Engineers standards found in “USACE Design Standard/CEHND 1110-1-23” and Army “Technical Circular (TC) 25-8, Training Ranges”, and site adapted to Fort Benning's location.

An “Environmental Assessment for the Construction of the Infantry Platoon Battle Course, Fort Benning, Georgia and Alabama” was prepared and evaluated pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (Public law 91-190, 42 USC. 4321 et seq.). This EA concluded that the proposed action does not constitute a "major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the natural and human environment" when considered individually or cumulatively in the context of the referenced Act, including both direct and indirect impacts. Therefore, the preparation of a more detailed environmental document, an Environmental Impact Statement, was not required.

3. Summary of Potential Environmental Effects and Proposed Mitigation for the Preferred Alternative (Alternative I: "Construction of the IPBC at Garnsey Range Area"):

RESOURCE*	POTENTIAL EFFECT	MITIGATION
Soils and Vegetation	Minor effect	Adherence to Erosion, Sedimentation, Pollutant Control Plan; no additional mitigation proposed
Wetlands	Minor effect	Adherence to Erosion, Sedimentation, Pollutant Control Plan, Installation SPCCP, and NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges; no additional mitigation proposed
Protected Species	Minor effect	Adherence to existing Installation, state, and Federal laws, regulations, and guidelines; no additional mitigation required.
Air Quality	Minor Effect	Adherence to existing Installation, state, and Federal laws, regulations, and guidelines; no additional mitigation required.

***NOTE: Resources where no effect was are not listed.**

4. Public Comments:

a. The EA and Draft FNSI for the proposed action will be made available to the public for a review period of 30 days starting from the first day of publication (25 June 2004) in "The Columbus Ledger-Enquirer," in accordance with part 1501.4 (e)(1) of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations and 32 CFR Part 651, Environmental Analysis of Army Actions. These documents will be available at the W.C. Bradley Memorial Library, South Lumpkin Library, Fort Benning Main Post Library, and on the Installation website: www.benning.army.mil/EMD/Legal&PublicNotices.htm. A notice of availability (NOA) of the EA and Draft FNSI will also mailed to all agencies/individuals/organizations on the distribution (mailing) list for the proposed action.

b. Summary of Public Comments: Reserved until completion of the public review and comment period.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY:

_____
Date

Garrison Commander

_____
Ricardo R. Riera
Colonel, IN

Appendix B: Distribution List

DISTRIBUTION LIST FOR PUBLIC NOTICE

I. MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Honorable Robert S. Poydasheff
Mayor, City of Columbus
100 Tenth Street
6th Floor, Government Center Tower
Post Office Box 1340
Columbus, GA 31993

Chairman, Chattahoochee County
Board of Commissioners
Mrs. Dallas P. Jankowski
Post Office Box 299
Cussetta, GA 31805-0299

Mr. Mike Gaymon
Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 1200
Columbus, GA 31902

Mr. Myron Wells, Chairman,
Marion County Board of Commissioners
240 Cool Springs Road
Buena Vista, GA 31803

Mr. Julius Hunter
District 3
139 Whippoorwill Lane
Columbus, GA 31906

Mrs. Evelyn Turner-Pugh
District 4
325 Jefferson Drive
Columbus, GA 31907

Mr. Victor W. Cross
Phenix City-Russell County
Chamber of Commerce
1107 Broad Street
Phenix City, AL 36867

Honorable Jeff Hardin
Mayor, City of Phenix City
601 12th Street
Phenix City, AL 36867

Chairman, Unified Government of
Cusseta and Chattahoochee County
Mr. Larry Dillard
PO Box 229
Cusseta, GA 31805

Chattahoochee County Manager
Douglas Westberry
PO Box 878
Cusseta, GA 31805

Kenneth J. Clark, Chairman
Marion County Development Authority
659 Doyle Road
Buena Vista, GA 31803

II. TRIBAL, STATE, COUNTY, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Honorable Tarpie Yargee
Chief
Alabama/Quassarte Tribal Town
P.O. Box 187
117 North Main Street
Wetumka, OK 74880

Honorable Lovelin Poncho
Chairman
Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
1940 Bell Road
P.O. Box 818
Elton, LA 70532

Honorable Osceola-Clayton M. Sylestine
Principal Chief
Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas
571 State Park Road 56
Livingston, TX 77351

Honorable Evelyn Bucktrot Mekko
Kialegee Tribal Town
108 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 332
Wetumka, OK 74883

Honorable Bill Anoatubby
Governor
Chickasaw Nation
124 South Broadway
American Building, 3rd Floor
P.O. Box 1548
Ada, OK 74821

Honorable George Wickliffe
Chief
United Keetoowah Band of the
Cherokee Indians of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 189
Park Hill, OK 74451

Honorable A.D. Ellis
Principal Chief
Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 580
HWY 75 & Loop 56
Okmulgee, OK 74447

Honorable Mitchell Cypress
Chairman
Seminole Tribe of Florida
AH-THA-THI-KI Museum
HC-61, Box 21A
Clewiston, Florida 33440

Honorable Fred McGhee
Chairman
Poarch Band of Creek Indians
HCR 69A, Box 85B
Tribal Offices
5811 Jack Springs Road
Atmore, AL 36502

Honorable Bryan McGert7
Town King
Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
P.O. Box 188
Okemah, OK 74859

Honorable Kenneth Chambers
Principal Chief
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 1498
Wewoka, OK 74884

Honorable Archie Mouse
Assistant Chief
United Keetoowah Band of the
Cherokee Indians of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 189
Park Hill, OK 74451

Honorable Phillip Martin
Chief
Mississippi Band of the Choctow Indians
P.O. Box 6010
Choctaw Branch
Philadelphia, MS 39350

Sen. Ed Harbison
Senate District 15
P.O. Box 1292
Columbus, GA 31902

Rep. Vance Smith
House District 110
5331 Hopewell Church Rd.
Pine Mountain, GA 31822

Rep. Calvin Smyre
House District 111
1103 Glenwood Road
Columbus, GA 31906

Rep. Richard Smith
6127 Seaton Drive
Columbus, GA 31909

Rep. Carolyn Hugley
House District 113
4019 Steam Mill Road
Columbus, GA 31906

Senator Saxby Chambliss
416 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Johnny Isakson
6000 Lake Forrest Drive, Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30328

III. LOCAL AND REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS, FEDERAL AGENCIES, OR COMMISSIONS WITH REGULATORY INTEREST

Augustine Asbury
Cultural Preservation Specialist
Alabama/Quassarte Tribal Town
P.O. Box 187
117 North Main Street
Wetumka, OK 74880

Ms. Phyllis Nichols
Tribal Administrator
ATTN: Hugh Cunningham
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
1940 Bell Road
P.O. Box 818
Elton, LA 70532

Debbie Thomas
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas
571 State Park Road 56
Livingston, TX 77351

Mr. Marsey A. Harjo
Heritage/Culture Director
Kialegee Tribal Town
108 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 332
Wetumka, OK 74883

Gingy Nail
Director of Cultural Resources
Chickasaw Nation
124 South Broadway
American Building, 3rd Floor
P.O. Box 1548
Ada, OK 74821

U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of Environmental Policy
& Compliance
Regional Environmental Office
Attn: Gregory L. Hogue
Russell Federal Bldg, Suite 1144
75 Spring Street, S. W.
Atlanta, GA 30303

Joyce Bear
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma
Cultural Resources
P.O. Box 580
HWY 75 & Loop 56
Okmulgee, OK 74447

Willard Steele
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Seminole Tribe of Florida
AH-THA-THI-KI Museum
HC-61, Box 21-A
Clewiston, FL 33440

Robert Thrower
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Poarch Band of Creek Indians
HCR 69A, Box 85B
5811 Jack Springs Road
Atmore, AL 36502

Charles Coleman
Representative
Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
P.O. Box 188
Okemah, OK 74859

Emman Spain
Historic Preservation Coordinator
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
Seminole Nation Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 1768
Seminole, OK 74868-1768

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
North Georgia Office
247 South Milledge Avenue
Athens, GA 30605

Ms. Lisa Stopp
Tribal Representative
United Keetoowah Band of the Cherokee Indians of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 189
Park Hill, OK 74451

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Region IV Attn:
Room 3T41
61 Forsyth Street
Atlanta, GA 30303-8909

U.S. EPA
Dr. Gerald Miller
Atlanta Federal Building
61 Forsyth Street
Atlanta, GA 30303-3104

U. S. EPA
Attn: Waste Management Division
Atlanta Federal Building
61 Forsyth Street
Atlanta, GA 30303-3104

Commander, Savannah District COE
Attn: CESAS-PD-EC (Mr. Coleman)
Post Office Box 889
Savannah, GA 31402-0889

Mr. Don Klima
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.E.
Washington, DC 20004

Georgia Area Planning and
Development Commission
Lower Chattahoochee APDC
Post Office Box 1908
Columbus, GA 31994-1399

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Soil Conservation Service
Post Office Box 18
Buena Vista, GA 31803

Georgia State Clearinghouse
Ms Deborah Stephens, Administrator
Office of Planning and Budget
270 Washington Street, SW.
Atlanta, GA 30334-8500

Mr. Joe Tanner
Department of Natural Resources
205 Butler Street SE, Suite 1252
Atlanta, GA 30334-4910

Mr. Keith Parsons
Georgia DNR
Environmental Policy Division
205 Butler Street
Atlanta, GA 30334-4910

Georgia DNR, EPD Air Protection Division
4244 International Parkway, Suite 120
Atlanta, GA 30334

Mr. Mark Edwards
Georgia DNR
Historic Preservation Officer
205 Butler Street
Atlanta, GA 30334-4910

Georgia DNR, Hazardous Waste Management Branch
Floyd Towers East, Suite 1154
205 Butler Street
Atlanta, GA 30334

State Soil and Water Conservation Commission
Post Office Box 8024
Athens, GA 30603

Georgia DNR, Erosion and Sedimentation Control
205 Butler Street, SE.
Suite 1038, Floyd Towers East
Atlanta, GA 30334

Columbus Consolidated Government
Planning Division
Government Tower – West Wing
Columbus, GA 31902

Columbus/Muscogee County Soil Conservation Service
Government Center – East Wing
Columbus, GA 31993-2399

Mr. Carmen Cavezza, City Manager
Government Center – West Wing
Columbus, GA 31901

IV. CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUPS AND LOCAL INTEREST GROUPS OR PERSONS

Mr. Frank Schnell
Staff Archaeologist, Columbus Museum
1251 Wynnton Road
Columbus, GA 31906

Georgia Association of Conservation
District Supervisors
3309 Sylvester Road
Albany, GA 31705

V. LOCAL NEWS AND MEDIA

WRBL TV 3 (CBS)
Attn: Legals
1350 13th Avenue
Columbus, GA

WKCN (99.3 FM)
Attn: Legals
1253 13th Avenue
Columbus, GA 31901

WTVM TV 9 (ABC)
Attn: Legals
1909 Wynnton Road
Columbus, GA 31994

WGSY (100 FM)
Attn: Legals
1501 13th Avenue
Columbus, GA 31901

WXTX TV 54 (FOX)
Attn: Legals
6524 Buena Vista Road
Columbus, GA 31994

WOKS (1340 AM) and WXFE (105 FM)
Attn: Legals
P.O. Box 1998
Columbus, GA 31902

Columbus Times
2230 Buena Vista Road
Columbus, GA 31906

Mellow Times News
2904 Macon Road
Columbus, GA 31907

VI. FORT BENNING OFFICIALS

MG Walter Wojdakowski
Commanding General
Infantry Hall (Bldg 4)
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Deputy CG/Assistant Commandant
Infantry Hall (Bldg 4)
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center
Attn: ATZB-IM
Fort Benning, GA 31905-5122

Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center
Attn: ATZB-PO
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center
Attn: ATZB-JA
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center
Attn: ATZB-AG
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center
Attn: ATZB-PA
Fort Benning, GA 31905-0798

Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center
Attn: ATZB-PS
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center
Attn: ATZB-PSF
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander
5th Ranger Training Battalion
1 Camp Merrill
Dahlonega, GA 30533-1802

Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center
Attn: ATZB-OT
Fort Benning, GA 31905

PWD, Southeast Region, IMA
Attn: SFIM-SE-PW-E (Mr. Jim Cobb)
1593 Hardee Avenue SW
Fort McPherson, GA 30330-1057

Commander, 75th Ranger Regiment
Building 2834
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division
Building 9050 (Kelley Hill)
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, 29th Infantry Regiment
Building 5500 (Harmony Church)
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, 11th Infantry Regiment
Building 2749
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, 36th Engineer Group
Building 2827
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, Ranger Training Brigade
Building 5024 (Harmony Church)
Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, Infantry Training Brigade
Building 3410 (Sand Hill)
Fort Benning, GA 31905

(This Page Left Intentionally Blank)