

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR TEMPORARY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM SUPPORT FACILITIES
AND BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM TRAINING 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 temporary support facilities for the new 5th Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division and the training that would be conducted by this Brigade Combat Team (BCT) on existing ranges and training areas at Fort Benning, Georgia. These documents were prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

The Army intends to temporarily station the 5th Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division at Fort Benning. BCT Soldiers will begin to arrive at Fort Benning by early Fall of 2005; the BCT is expected to be at full strength with approximately 3,400 Soldiers by mid-October 2005. As such, temporary facilities are needed so that Soldiers will have facilities to support them. Temporary construction would include parking areas, maintenance, barracks, administrative, dining, and other support facilities. The BCT would train using existing ranges and training areas on Fort Benning.

Three alternatives are considered in the EA. Alternative I is to locate the temporary support facilities on approximately 247 acres of land in three clustered areas within the East, North, and Central Harmony Church cantonment area. Three World War II buildings would be demolished and two others would either be reused by the BCT or demolished. The BCT would train on the Light Infantry ranges and practice light maneuvers on the training areas that currently exist at Fort Benning; existing environmental controls and monitoring for environmental effects for these areas would continue.

Alternative II would involve locating the temporary support facilities for the BCT within the East Harmony Church cantonment area within an area covering approximately 238 acres. The existing military police dog kennel and the Bradley drivers' training course would be relocated to accommodate the facilities in this location. BCT training would be the same as with Alternative I.

Alternative III is the no-action alternative. With this alternative, no support facilities would be constructed for the newly arriving troops that will comprise the 5th/25th BCT. Soldiers would instead be housed in hotel rooms or rented apartments off-post in the communities near Fort Benning. Administrative and maintenance duties would be performed in existing facilities or off-post leased properties. BCT training would be the same as with Alternative I.

The EA evaluates the effects associated with each of the alternatives on soils, water quality, biological resources, land use, recreation, socioeconomics, environmental justice, cultural

resources, transportation, utilities, hazardous materials and waste, public health and safety, air quality, and noise.

The EA and Draft FNSI for the proposed action have been completed and made available to the public for a review period of 15 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. Patrick Chauvey), Building 6 (Meloy Hall) Room 309, Fort Benning, Georgia 31905-5122, or call (706) 545-4211.

Sincerely

Craig Taylor
Deputy Director of Public Works