

**DRAFT**  
**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
**FOR**  
**THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A**  
**NEW READINESS CENTER**  
**AT THE**  
**OFFUTT AIR FORCE BASE**  
**BELLEVUE, SARPY COUNTY, NE**

As the lead agency, the United States Air Force (USAF) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the potential physical, environmental, and cultural effects associated with a proposed construction and operation of a Readiness Center (RC) for use by the Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG), the proponent, to be located on Offutt Air Force Base (OAFB), near Bellevue, Nebraska. This EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA, 42 U.S. Code [USC] §§4321-4370e), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (CEQ Regulations, 40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508), the USAF Environmental Impact Analysis Process (32 CFR 989, 01 July 2011), and the Environmental Analysis of Army Actions (32 16 CFR 651, 29 March 2002). As set forth in Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 5105.77, National Guard Bureau (NGB), the National Guard Bureau is a joint activity of the DoD and as such must comply with the NEPA.

## **1. Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives**

### **Proposed Action**

Implementation of the Proposed Action includes the construction and operation of a new RC within OAFB near Bellevue, Nebraska to replace existing facilities that are outdated and do not meet the current needs and standards of the NEARNG. Funding for construction of the RC is anticipated in fiscal year 2020. The 41-acre parcel for the RC would be on USAF property that would be permitted to the US Army Corps of Engineers and then licensed to the State of Nebraska for use by the NEARNG. The Proposed Action would include the construction of a 126,595-square foot RC. In addition, the Proposed Action would include construction of 276,795 square feet of parking area and roads. Construction would be expected in FY 2020 for the RC. Activities proposed at the RC would include administration, individual training, large-group training event coordination, and logistics.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to meet company-sized facility requirements of the NEARNG, in accordance with National Guard Regulation (NGR) 415-12 (National Guard Bureau, 2015). The need for the Proposed Action was brought about by two RCs in eastern Nebraska not meeting Mission and space requirements and have been directed to be consolidated into one location.

### **Alternatives Considered**

In addition to the Preferred Action Alternative, the USAF evaluated two other alternatives: (1) Mead-Yutan Alternative, and (2) the No Action Alternative.

1. In addition to the Preferred Action Alternative and No Action Alternative, the NEARNG considered the Mead-Yutan Alternative. This would include executing the construction of a RC between the towns of Yutan and Mead, Nebraska to provide the requisite infrastructure for training and other activities for NEARNG units and assigned mission requirements of the NEARNG. This alternative was considered and eliminated from further consideration and was not fully evaluated in detail in the EA due to it not meeting one or more of the selection standards and screening criteria. The Mead-Yutan alternative was eliminated because it was not compatible with the installation Master Plan, currently has two RCs on the property and does not have the community base to warrant or support a third RC in the area, and its location did not meet all mission requirements.
2. Pursuant to NEPA and CEQ regulations, the No Action Alternative was considered. Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed RC and associated facilities would not be constructed, and the purpose and need described in the Proposed Action would not be met.

All alternatives were measured against established acceptability criteria and two alternatives were selected for detailed analysis in the EA: the Preferred Action Alternative and the No Action Alternative. The Preferred Action Alternative would provide the best combination of land and resources to sustain quality military training and to maintain and improve the units' readiness postures.

## **2. Environmental Analysis**

The potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Proposed Action are fully described in the EA. The EA identifies the environmental resources that could be affected by the Proposed Action and determines the significance of the impacts, if any, to each of these resources. Based on analyses presented in the EA, the USAF and NEARNG have determined that known and potential adverse impacts from the Proposed Action on land use and cover, air quality, noise, soils, water resources, biological resources (including special status species), cultural resources, public and occupational health and safety, socioeconomics, infrastructure, and hazardous and toxic materials and waste would be less-than-significant.

## **3. Mitigation**

Implementing the Proposed Action would be expected to result in less-than-significant adverse effects on the environmental resources identified in the EA. To guard against circumstances developing that could, in limited cases, result in site-specific adverse effects, the NEARNG will maintain their stewardship posture by ensuring enforcement and implementation of necessary measures unique to their locations.

As impacts were determined to be less-than-significant, the USAF and the NEARNG determined no mitigation measures were deemed necessary to reduce adverse environmental impacts to below significant levels. The NEARNG will implement appropriate Best Management Practices (BMP) as identified in the Proposed Action and per local, state, and federal environmental regulations. Additionally, the NEARNG will obtain all necessary permits and construction site approvals prior to on-site implementation of this action.

## 4. Regulations

The Proposed Action would not violate NEPA, the CEQ Regulations, 32 CFR Part 989, 32 CFR Part 651, or other federal, state, or local environmental regulations.

## 5. Commitment to Implementation

The USAF as the lead agency and NEARNG as the proponent affirm their commitment to implement this EA in accordance with NEPA. Implementation of the Proposed Action is dependent on funding. The NEARNG and NGB's (ARNG) Installations and Environment Directorate and Training Directorate will ensure that adequate funds are requested in future years' budgets to achieve its implementation.

## 6. Public Review and Comment

The USAF, as the lead agency, will publish and distribute the draft and final EA and, if found to be appropriate, the draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for a 30-day public review and comment period, as announced by a Notice of Availability (NOA) in publications of the USAF's choosing. Review copies will also be made available for public review at the Bellevue Public Library. Throughout this process, the public may obtain information on the status and progress of the EA through the OAFB Public Affairs at (402) 294-1110.

## 7. Draft Finding of No Significant Impact

After careful review of the EA, I have concluded that implementation of the Proposed Action would not generate significant controversy or have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. Per 32 CFR Part 989 and 32 CFR Part 651, the EA and dFNSI will be made available for a 30-day public review and comment period. Once any public comments have been addressed and if a determination is made that the Proposed Action will have no significant impact, the dFNSI will be signed and the action will be implemented upon allocation of appropriate funding. This analysis fulfills the requirements of the NEPA and the CEQ Regulations. An Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared, and the USAF and NGB are issuing this FONSI.

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Date

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