

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

FOR

Replace/Construct Multi-Spectral Test & Training Environment (MSTTE)
Group Offices and Latrine, TS A-30
Eglin Air Force Base Florida

RCS 05-450 & 05-623

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 Code of Federal Regulations 1500 1508), 32 CFR Part 989, and Department of Defense Directive 6050.1, the Department of the Air Force has conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the probable environmental consequences resulting from constructing and operating two office/equipment facilities and a new latrine facility on Range A-73 at Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), Florida.

Proposed Action: The scope of the original proposed action found in EA, RCS 95-665, at Appendix A has changed. The original proposed action was for Vitro, Inc, the Range Maintenance contractor at that time, to construct a 9000 square foot concrete facility. The new proposed action is for the construction of a 3000 square foot concrete facility at TS A-30, 3000 square foot concrete facility at the radar site between TS A-30 and TS A-31 on Range A-73, and the installation of a latrine at TS A-31. The proposed latrine would be a 10' x 14' framed aluminum "Stuff Buster" type building with aluminum roof to replace the old trailer facility. The proposed action would not include any improvements to existing roads or parking areas at the proposed 3000 square foot radar tower site or the latrine site. The proposed action would include a gravel parking area adjacent to the 3000 square foot facility at TS A-30. No additional paved employee parking is required at this time.

The area affected by the proposed action is located in an air quality attainment region. The area supports no threatened or endangered species and contains no surface water, wetlands, or flood plains. No lead-based paints (LBP), asbestos containing materials (ACM), underground storage tanks, or Environmental Restoration Program remediation sites or areas of concern exist at the site.

Management Requirements: Storm water runoff during construction would be controlled through the use of silt fencing and hay bales, if necessary. All construction waste would be disposed of in a proper landfill. The siting would be regulated under Planning and Programming of Facility Construction Projects, AFI 32-1021; The Standard Facility Requirements Handbook, AFI 32-1084; The Land Use Component of the Base Comprehensive Plan, DOD 6055.9STD; DOD Ammunition and Explosive Safety Standards and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on my review of the facts and the Environmental Assessment, I conclude that the proposed construction of these two office and equipment facilities and a latrine on Test Range A-73, Eglin AFB, Florida, will not have a significant adverse impact of a long-term nature to the quality of the human or natural environment. This analysis fulfills the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, the President's Council on Environmental Quality regulations, and 32 CFR 989. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required and will not be prepared.



TIMOTHY P. GAFFNEY, Colonel, USAF
Commander, 96th Civil Engineer Group

7 Sep 05

DATE

Environmental Assessment

Replace/Construct Multi-Spectral Test & Training Environment (MSTTE)
Group Offices and Latrine, TA A-30
Eglin Air Force Base Florida

RCS 05-450 & 05-623

1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

1.1 Introduction

This Environmental Assessment (EA) is an update to the previously signed EA for RCS 95-665, “Construct Instrumentation and Control Building at Site A-30/A-31, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida”, and is meant to address and analyze changes in the scope of the project since the previous EA. It has been prepared for the proposed construction of a MSTTE Group Offices at Test Sites (TS) sites A-30 and A-31, and a latrine at Test Site A-31, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. This document is prepared in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500; Environmental Quality, AFD 32-70; The Air Force Environmental Impact Analysis Process, 32 CFR 989; and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Following the acceptance of this EA, a decision to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be made.

1.2 Purpose and Need for Proposed Action (Mission Objectives)

The purpose and need for this action is to provide permanent, environmentally controlled and secure work areas for the personnel servicing the threat radar systems located at TS A-30 and A-31 and the addition of a new latrine for site A-31. Office space is required for approximately 35 BAE Systems employees permanently assigned to TS A-30 and A-31. Their previous office space, a pre-fabricated building, was destroyed during Hurricane Ivan. Employees currently utilize approximately 25 small temporary converted missile storage and transport trailers that are very difficult to heat and cool. Expensive radar and test equipment requires a controlled environment and is being damaged due to the current inadequacy of the facilities that house these assets. In addition to the equipment in the area, personnel are also affected by the extreme heat and cold during summer and winter months. The proposed latrine replacement will eliminate the damaged and unsanitary facility currently utilized.

1.3 Issues Eliminated from Further Study

Environmental Justice: After careful analysis of aerial photography it is determined that no minority group or low-income group would be unfairly treated or unduly burdened by implementing or not implementing the proposed action. Therefore, the issue of environmental justice was eliminated from further analysis and does not appear in later sections of this environmental assessment.

Executive Order 13405, “Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks”, mandates that federal agencies identify and assess environmental and health risks that may disproportionately affect children as a result of the implementation of federal policies, programs, activities and standards (62 Federal Register 19,883-19,888). This controlled /fenced site is located approximately 4 miles from the nearest public roadway. The proposed action to construct 2 office/equipment storage facilities and a new latrine facility in this controlled area does not pose risk outside the fenced site. Therefore, risks to children’s health and safety are not an issue and were eliminated from further analysis and do not appear in later sections of this Environmental Assessment update.

Cultural Resources: No historical or cultural issues/assets exist at or in close proximity to the proposed sites of the planned action. Additionally, no effects will occur on any other structures or sites eligible for listing on the National Register. Therefore, the issue of Historic or Cultural Resources was eliminated from further analysis and does not appear in later sections of this environmental assessment.

Biological Resources: Although the area is considered gopher tortoise habitat, none were found during the initial inspection. A gopher tortoise survey will be required prior to any construction and any found will be moved to an alternate location so as to not impact the species. Since the facilities would be constructed in previously developed locations on the Eglin reservation, no wildlife or other critical habitat would be affected by the proposed action.

Physical Resources: No unique geographical features or areas exist in the vicinity of the proposed action.

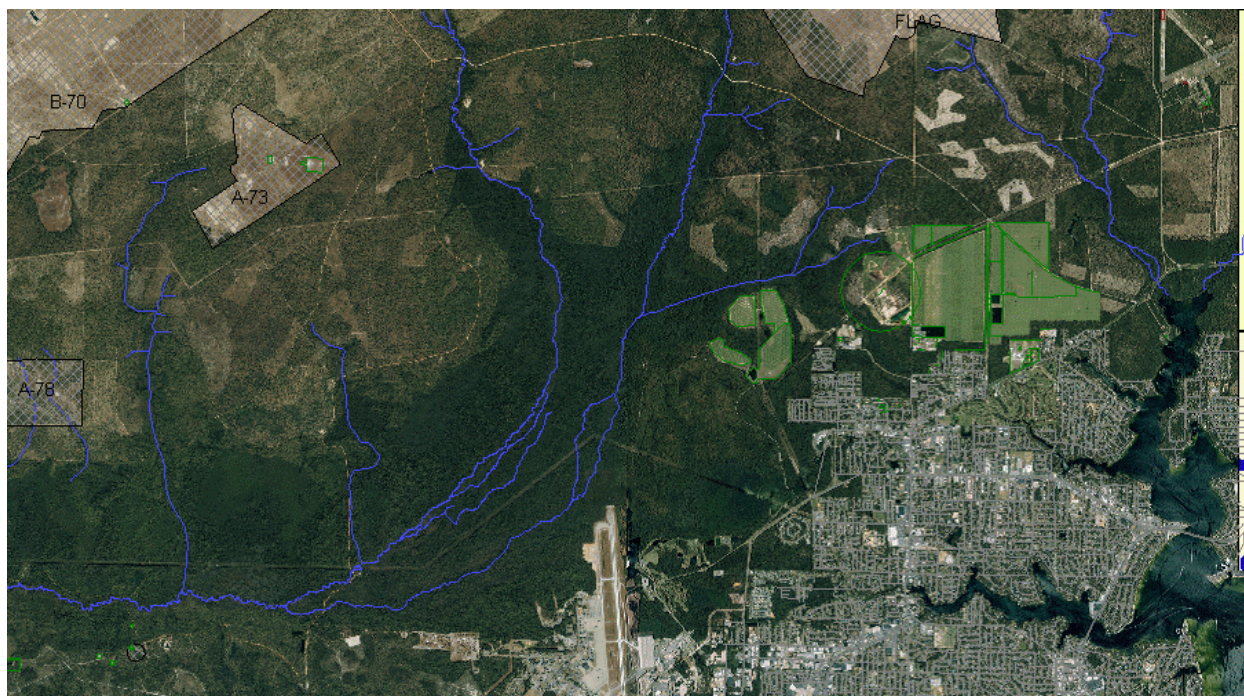


Figure 1
Aerial photo showing A-73 (upper left) in relation to Fort Walton Beach (lower right)

1.4 Applicable Regulatory Requirements

These facilities would be constructed in accordance with the requirements set forth in the *Military Handbook, MIL-HDBK-1190; Planning and Programming of Facility Construction Projects, AFI 32-1021; The Standard Facility Requirements Handbook, AFI 32-1084; The Land Use Component of the Eglin General Plan, DOD 6055.9STD; and The Americans with Disabilities Act.*

2.0 Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.1 Proposed Action

The scope of the original proposed action, found in EA RCS 95-665 at Appendix A, has changed. The original proposed action was for O&M Contractor Systems to construct a 9000 square foot concrete facility. The new proposed action is for the construction of a 3000 square foot concrete facility at TS A-30 and 3000 square foot concrete facility between radar sites A-30 and A-31 on Range A-73, and the installation of a latrine at TS A-31. The proposed latrine would be acquired by the purchase of a 10' X 14' framed aluminum "Stuff Buster" type building with aluminum roof to replace the old trailer facility. The proposed action would not include any new roads to the new facilities but would include a gravel parking area for approximately 20 vehicles located adjacent to the new concrete facility proposed for site A-30. See Proposed Action in RCS 95-665, Appendix A, for previous proposals and alternatives.

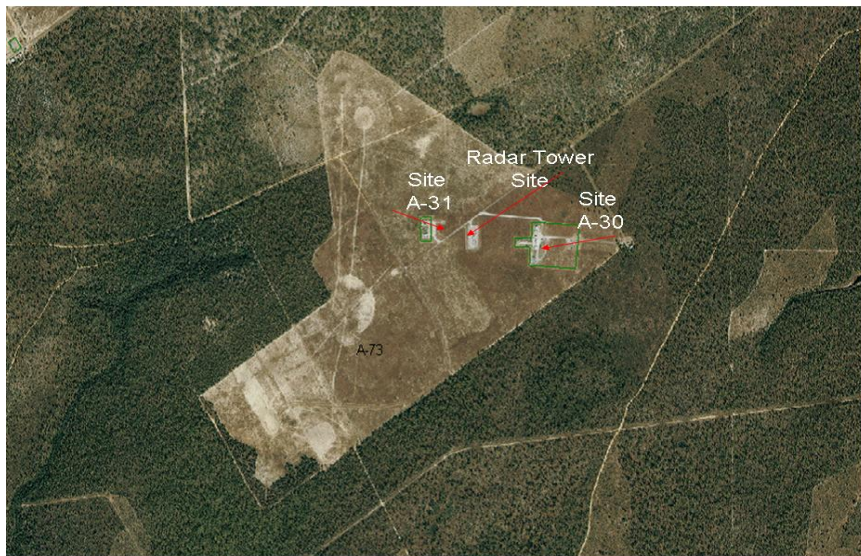


Figure 2

This figure depicts all of Range A-73 and the approximate locations of the two 3,000 square foot office facilities at Site A-30 and at the tower site between A-30 and A-31. It also includes location of new pre-fabricated facility to be used to replace current trailer at site A-31.

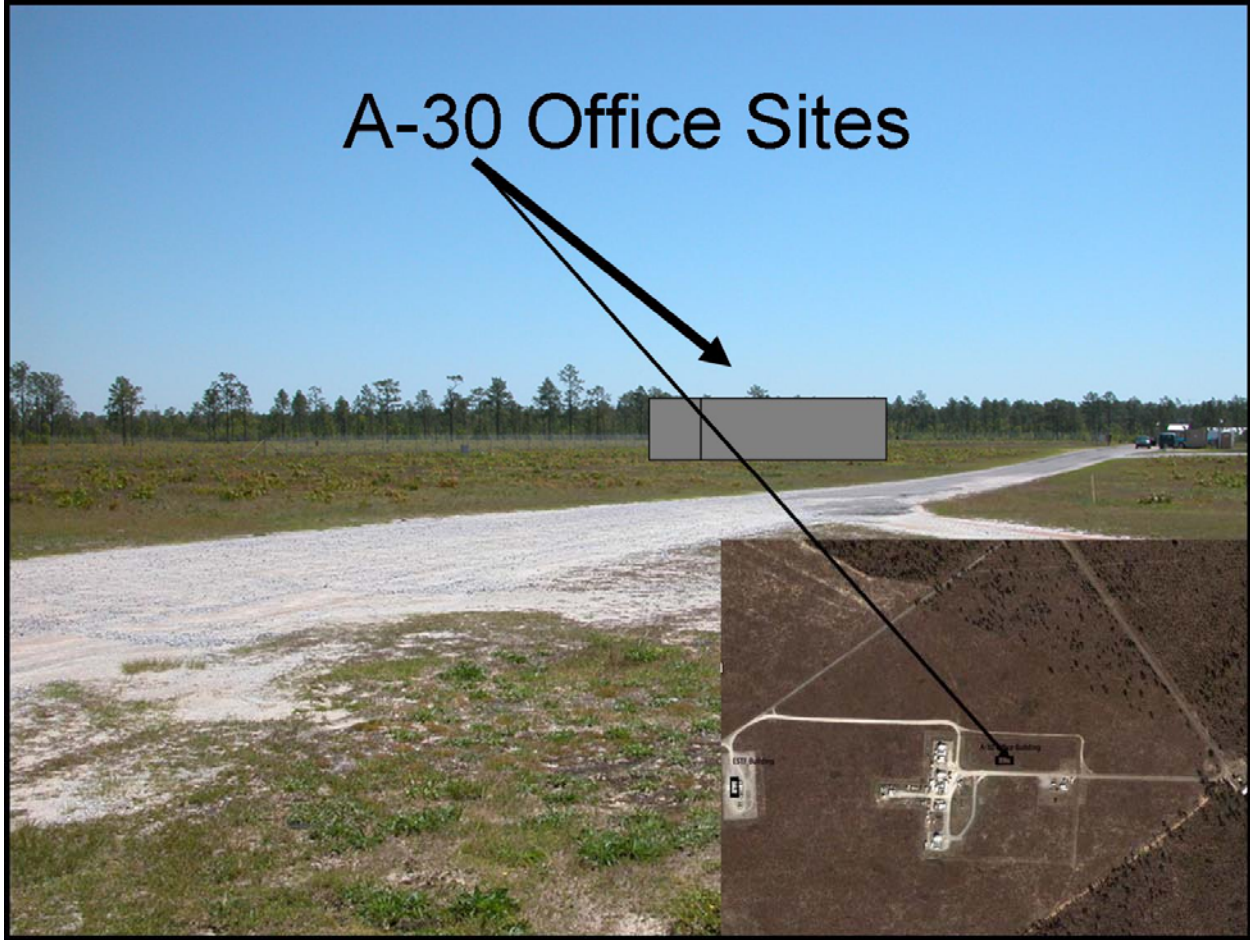


Figure 3
Proposed new site for office and equipment facility at Test Site A-30



Figure 4
Proposed site for office and equipment facility at A-73 Radar Tower site



Figure 5
Existing latrine
trailer and site of
proposed new
facility at Site A-31

2.2 No Action Alternative

No action would result in maintaining current operations that involve the continued use of the trailers and damage to sensitive radar equipment. The use of these facilities jeopardizes the physical security of highly sensitive and classified operations. See Section 4 for No Action impacts.

2.3 Alternative Considered but not Carried Forward for Analysis

See proposed actions analyzed in EA 95-665 at Appendix A.

2.4 Related Environmental Assessments:

See Appendix A.

3.0 Affected Environment

See Appendix A.

4.0 Environmental Consequences

4.1 Soil and Geologies

The exterior specifications of the proposed action involve the construction of 2 each 3000 square foot foundations upon previously disturbed sites. The sites are currently equipped with 25 each 6' X 10' refurbished missile containers (trailers). Parking will be required for approximately 40 vehicles equally divided between the 3000 square foot facility at TS A-30 and the 3000 square foot facility at the radar tower site between A-30 and A-31 on range A-73. A gravel parking area is proposed to for the new facility at A-30 (See figure 6) and existing parking will be utilized at

the A-73 tower site and the latrine at A-31. No impervious surface parking is planned anywhere on the existing facility.

Soil in the vicinity of the proposed actions and alternative sites consists of Lakeland soils. Lakeland soil is deep, sandy soil with medium to very strong acidity and rapid permeability.

Impact Mitigation-Proposed Action: Construction/installation of the buildings is not anticipated to involve breaching the soil/groundwater interface. Ground disturbance would be limited to shallow excavation during construction of a new foundation. Standard erosion control measures will be implemented during construction. Digging Permit, AF Form 103, Base Civil Engineering Work Clearance Request, would be obtained prior to the commencement of construction activities. This site is free of soil contamination or underground storage tanks (USTs).

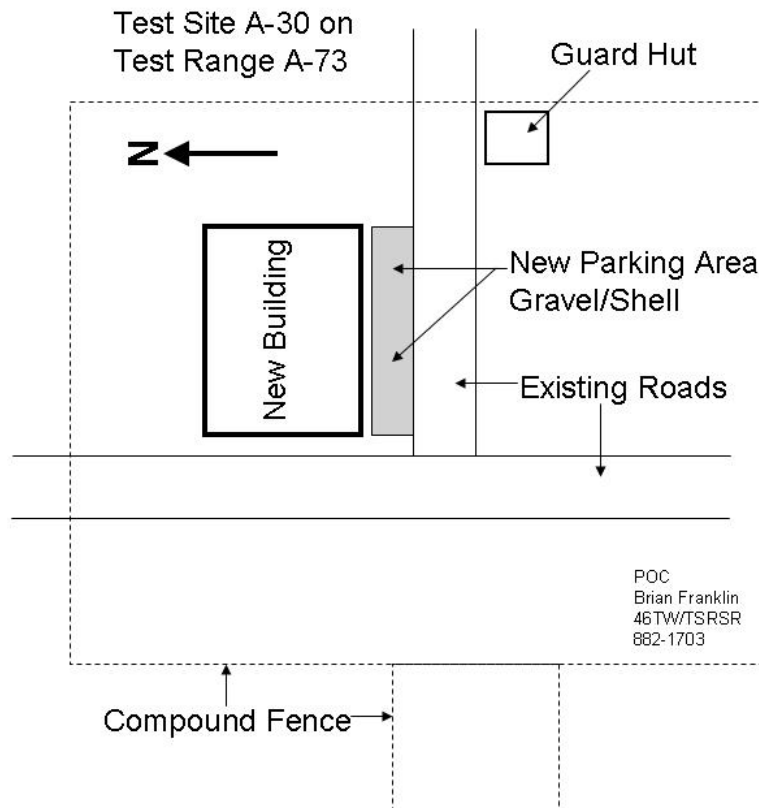


Figure 6
Layout of proposed gravel parking area and existing roadways

4.3 Air Quality

Air quality during and following the implementation of the proposed action would not be affected as a result of excavation or construction activities. Eglin AFB is classified as an air quality attainment region; therefore, a conformity determination is not required. Water would be applied to reduce airborne particulate matter during construction, if necessary.

4.4 Water Quality, Wetlands and Hydrology

Topography in the area of the proposed action is generally flat. Storm water migrates in a eastwardly direction but no creeks or other surface waters are present within 3 miles of the site. Construction of these facilities will result in an increase in impervious cover of approximately 3,500 square feet. The discharge of untreated storm water in the State of Florida is considered a potential source of pollution and is therefore regulated under 62-25 F.A.C. As defined in 62-25, all new storm water discharge facilities require either a submittal of a Notice of Intent to use the General Permit for Stormwater Discharge Facility Construction, or be covered by an exemption. The general permit is applicable for facilities, which provide treatment through retention or detention with filtration of runoff. It also applies to modifications or reconstruction of an existing storm water management system, provided it is not intended to serve new development, will not increase the associated pollutant loading, and will not change the points of discharge.

It is appropriate for this project to incorporate criteria specified in section 62-25 F.A.C. into the design of a storm water management system for additional runoff generated by the new facilities' increase in impervious cover.

There are no wetlands or 100 or 500-year flood plains within the immediate excavation and construction area.

4.5 Socioeconomic, Aesthetics, Noise, Transportation, and Land Use

Socioeconomic impacts resulting from the implementation of the proposed action would be minimal. Assuming all material and labor required for construction were obtained in the Eglin/Fort Walton Beach /Niceville/Navarre metropolitan area, revenues generated would be minimal.

Aesthetics in the area of the proposed action would not be impacted.

Noise levels resulting from construction and operation activities would not exceed 80 dBA for individuals residing outside the Eglin reservation.

Transportation corridors and community services would not be impacted positively or negatively as a result of the proposed action.

Land use would be compatible with the existing land-use patterns associated with the *Eglin Land Use Plan component of the Eglin General Plan*.

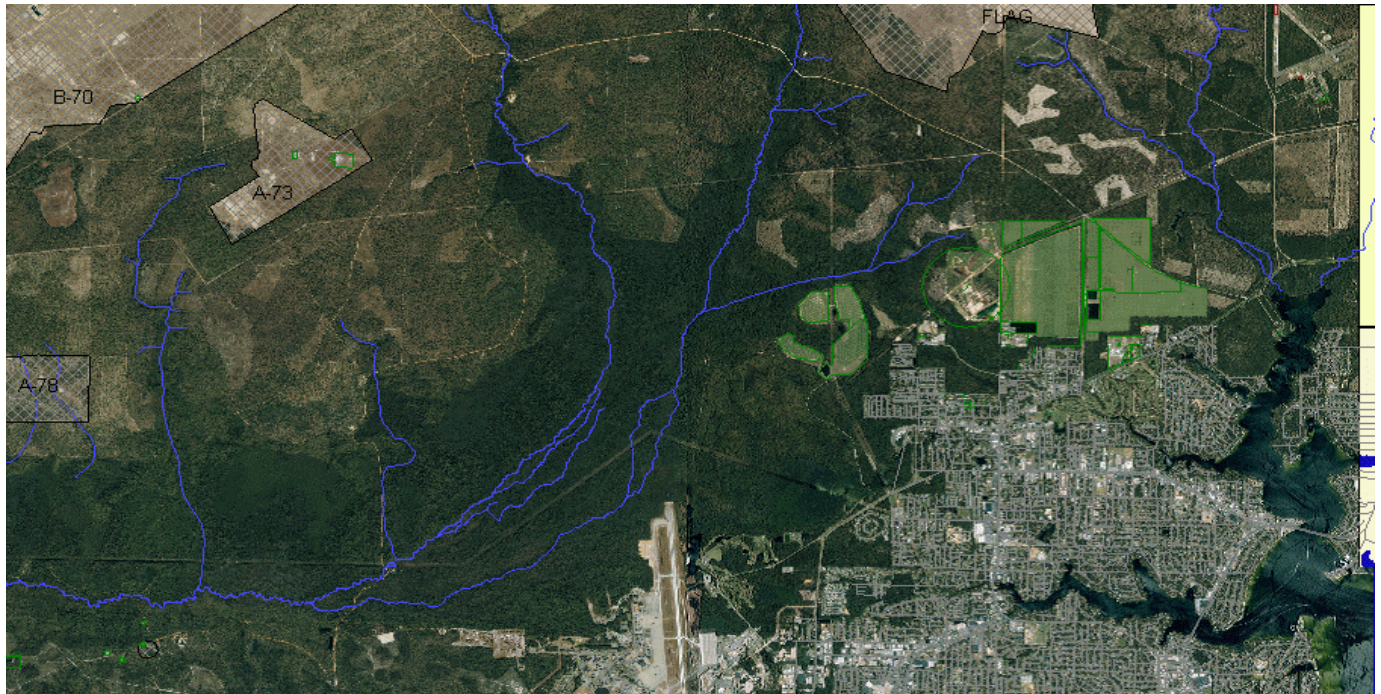


Figure 7
Aerial Photo showing Site A-73 in relation to FWB (lower right)

4.6 Safety

The facilities will not require the intermittent storage and use of pyrotechnics. Any facility that stores or uses explosives is required to obtain a license from the Eglin Weapon Safety Branch.

Public safety would be ensured through compliance with *Eglin AFB's Land Use Plan component of the Eglin General Plan*; AFI 32-7062; and DoD 6055-9.STD.

4.7 Summary of Predicted Effects on the Relevant Issues

Environmental Media	No Action Alternative: <i>Continue using refurbished trailer space</i>	Proposed Action: <i>Construct two new 3000 sq ft office and equipment facilities and latrine at Range A-73</i>
Air Quality	No Impact	Potential for fugitive emissions during construction
Water Quality	No Impact	Potential for limited stormwater runoff during and after construction due to addition of .2 acres of impervious surface.
Weapon Safety	No Impact	The facility will not require the

		need to bring explosives into the building. The proponent understands the requirements for AAC/SEOW and/or DDESB approval, licensing and a site safety plan if the need to bring explosives into the facility arises at a future date.
Ground Safety	No Impact	No Impact

4.7 Conclusions

Under the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) 40 CFR Part 1500; Environmental Quality, AFD 32-79; and The Air Force Environmental Impact Analysis Process, 32 CFR 989, formally AFI 32-7061, environmental consequences resulting from the implementation of the proposed action would be minimal. The site is in an air quality attainment region, supports no threatened or endangered species, and contains no surface water, wetlands, or flood plains. The site contains no asbestos or lead based paint. No cultural resources will be affected. A Finding of No Significant Impact is warranted.

5.0 Management Requirements and Permits

5.1 Management Requirements

The irremediable commitment of resources would be limited to the approximately 0.2 acre parcel of real property. Lay-down areas and areas disturbed by construction equipment would be graded to original contours and reseeded, if necessary. Construction waste would be disposed of in a sanitary landfill, except for wastes that are recycled by Eglin AFB (lumber, scrap metal, cardboard, and asphalt). Storm water runoff during and following construction activities would comply with 62-25 F.A.C. The proposed action would be regulated under the *Planning and Programming of Facility Construction Projects; the Land Use Plan Component of the Base Comprehensive Plan; the Standard Facilities Requirements Handbook, AFH 32-1084; the Military Handbook, MIL-HDBK-1190 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.*

Storm water runoff during and following construction activities would comply with 62-25 F.A.C. Runoff would be controlled through placement of silt fencing, hay bales and other measures until a vegetative cover has been established.

5.2 Permits

- Approval of site plans for the proposed action must be obtained from the Base Community Planning Officer, Mr. Timothy Stone, (796 CEG/CEOPP) and the Range Configuration Commander’s Council (RC3) prior to any construction.
- A Base Civil Engineering Work Clearance Request (AF Form 103) must be obtained before digging to construct footings or other foundation work associated with

construction or other ground-disturbing activity. If the project exceeds one acre of disturbed area, which includes, road work, site work, etc., then the project will require a NPDES stormwater permit and a Pollution Prevention Plan.

6.0 List of Preparers

Judy C Ramsey, Project Manager - Author

Years of Environmental Experience: 23

Areas of Responsibility: Project Manager/Technical Advisor

Paul R. Bolduc, Ph.D. Proofreading and Editing

Years of Environmental Experience: 10

Areas of Responsibility: Proofreading Technical Advisor.