



INITIAL F-22 OPERATIONAL WING BEDDOWN

Draft Environmental Impact Statement



Volume 1

Chapters
1 through 3

April 2001

How to Use This Document

Our goal is to give you a reader-friendly document that provides an in-depth, accurate analysis of the proposed action, the alternative beddown locations, the no-action alternative, and the potential environmental consequences for each base. The organization of this Draft Environmental Impact Statement, or Draft EIS, is shown below.

Overall Proposal

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Detailed Guide for Reading the Draft EIS

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Purpose and Need for the Initial F-22
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- Alternative Identification Process
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Glossary, Acronyms and Abbreviations

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DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR INITIAL F-22 OPERATIONAL WING BEDDOWN

- a. *Responsible Agency:* United States Air Force
- b. *Cooperating Agency:* United States Navy
- c. *Proposals and Actions:* This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluates the environmental effects associated with the beddown of 72 operational F-22 aircraft at an existing Air Force base (AFB). The beddown of the three-squadron Initial F-22 Operational Wing at Langley AFB, Virginia, to replace three F-15C squadrons, is the proposed action and the Air Force's preferred alternative. The four alternatives include Eglin AFB, Florida; Elmendorf AFB, Alaska; Mountain Home AFB, Idaho; and Tyndall AFB, Florida. At Eglin or Elmendorf, three F-22 squadrons would replace two F-15C squadrons. At Mountain Home AFB, three F-22 squadrons would replace one F-15C squadron. At Tyndall AFB, three operational F-22 squadrons would be added and the advanced fighter pilot training F-15C squadron would remain. The no-action alternative would result in no decision to beddown the Initial F-22 Operational Wing at this time.
- d. *Comments and Inquiries:* Written comments on this document should be directed to Ms. Brenda Cook, Initial F-22 Operational Wing Beddown EIS Project Manager, HQ ACC/CEVP, 129 Andrews Street, Suite 102, Langley AFB, VA 23665-2769. Telephone inquiries may be made to Headquarters Air Combat Command Public Affairs at (757) 764-5007.
- e. *Designation:* Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
- f. *Abstract:* This Draft EIS has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. The public and agency scoping process resulted in the grouping of environmental resources in the following categories: aircraft operations, natural resources, cultural and traditional resources, human resources, and community and infrastructure. For the proposed action at Langley AFB, findings indicate that the beddown would have minimal consequences in aircraft operations because Langley AFB is the only location where the land area affected by the Day Night Average Sound Level (DNL) of 65 decibels or greater would be reduced from baseline (a reduction of approximately 88 residential acres). Localized areas currently within the 65 DNL noise contours could have increased noise levels. Langley AFB consequences to natural resources, human resources, and community infrastructure would be the lowest among the locations. Langley AFB construction would impact the architectural and visual aspects of the Langley Historic District. The Eglin AFB alternative has the potential for the greatest noise consequences in the vicinity of the base (with an additional 123 residential acres affected). Eglin AFB has less potential for consequences to historic properties than Langley AFB. In other resource areas, Eglin AFB is approximately comparable to Langley AFB. Elmendorf AFB's increased noise levels would occur over military land or water. Natural resources and human resources, particularly Alaskan Native activities under the training airspace, have the potential for sonic boom consequences. Elmendorf AFB historic properties would not be affected as much as those at Langley AFB. Human and community infrastructure resources would not be substantially affected with the Elmendorf AFB alternative. The Mountain Home AFB alternative could directly impact natural resources from construction and directly and indirectly impact human resources and community and infrastructure, including schools, through increased growth pressure. Noise increases near the base would be over grazing and agricultural land. In the Mountain Home airspace there is a potential for sonic boom consequences to natural and traditional resources. The Tyndall AFB alternative would include an additional 23 acres of residential land affected by 65 or greater DNL noise levels. Construction could potentially affect natural resources through the disturbance of habitat. Increased supersonic activity would occur over water with minimum likelihood for consequences to sensitive marine species. Growth pressures could impact human and community and infrastructure resources. Langley AFB is the only installation with a reduction in operations employment. Compared to the alternative locations, Langley AFB has a greater potential for environmental consequences to historic resources and a similar or lower potential for environmental consequences in the other environmental resources.

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