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**Appendix M**

**National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Documentation**

Final DRAFT

## **Appendix M: National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Documentation**

Appendix M includes appropriate NEPA documentation: a current Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) signed 15 September 2008. A sample of AF form 813, Request for Environmental Impact Analysis can be found online: <http://rsdo.gsfc.nasa.gov/documents/Rapid-III-Documents/MAR-Reference/AF-Form-813-Environmental-Impact.pdf>. See section 2.3.2 of this INRMP for additional information regarding NEPA documentation and the NEPA review process for the 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
AND FINDING OF NO PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE**

**Environmental Assessment for the Implementation of the 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing  
Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, PAFB, FL**

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations, the provisions of the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and *Environmental Impact Analysis Process* (32 CFR Part 989), the United States Air Force (AF) conducted an assessment, hereby incorporated by reference, of the potential environmental consequences of the Proposed Action to implement the updated (2006-2008) Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) in an effective manner. The INRMP will guide natural resources management at the 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing (45 SW). Implementing the INRMP would conserve and protect natural resources, build upon established relationships with federal, state and local agencies, and sustain the military mission at 45 SW.

The 45 SW INRMP integrates inventories, best management practices, plans, and programs related to natural resource management. The INRMP would incorporate principles of ecosystem management and would contain sufficient information for resource managers to make informed decisions and enhance the practice of adaptive management. The only viable alternative considered to the Proposed Action was the No Action Alternative, in which the 45 SW would continue to operate with an outdated INRMP.

No significant environmental impacts were identified that would require the completion of an Environmental Impact Statement. Additional supplemental analyses, including Environmental Assessments, when warranted, shall be accomplished when project specific details are realized and can be analyzed sufficiently. This Environmental Assessment (EA) will be incorporated by reference for any additional analyses. In accordance with the Endangered Species Act and Magnuson Stevens Fisheries Act, Section 7 and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultations will be accomplished for projects that may affect threatened and endangered species and/or EFH. The 45 SW INRMP has been coordinated with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission with minor revisions requested that were incorporated. The following paragraphs identify and summarize some less than significant and some beneficial impacts of the Proposed Action with implementation of the INRMP.

*Air Quality:* Proposed project activities, would be expected to produce short-term, intermittent air quality impacts from fugitive emissions (particulate matter) and other common air pollutants/greenhouse gases (nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide) from project equipment/vehicles during scrub restoration activities and controlled burns. While the periodic prescribed burning at 45 SW would emit smoke during the actual burning event, the small amount of acreage burned at any one time and the varied schedule for burning would not create significant impacts to air quality or greenhouse gas emissions. A schedule of controlled burns attempts to mimic the historic natural fire regime. Fifty years of fire suppression has intensified the potential for larger and more dangerous fires creating poor air quality. These procedures are designed to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local requirements.

*Biological Resources:* By using an integrated management system, existing biological resources would be protected from significant negative impacts by keeping INRMP



activities in line with mission needs following all legal requirements; beneficial impacts to biological resources would be anticipated. The actions implemented as a result of specific INRMP goals and objectives would ensure compliance with environmental laws while enhancing the environment. These actions include scrub habitat restoration, invasive species management, threatened and endangered species protection and monitoring, fish and wildlife protection and monitoring, migratory and resident bird protection and monitoring, protection of coastal habitat, and wetland and aquatic habitat restoration and protection. In addition, the INRMP includes specific management plans for the Florida Scrub jay and sea turtles that would be coordinated with other natural resource management plans such as invasive species control and integrated pest management to achieve optimal habitats for wildlife and vegetation.

*Cultural Resources:* There would be no significant impacts to cultural resources from implementing the INRMP. Using an integrated management system, positive impacts would be anticipated to historically significant buildings and archaeological sites with invasive species management by reducing resource integrity breaches while also delineating new resources that may be encountered with land clearing activities.

*Geology and Soils:* By implementing Best Management Practices to prevent erosion during INRMP activities, no significant impacts to soils would be anticipated and potential negative impacts (e.g., sheet flow and gully erosion) would be avoided. All land clearing activities, including scrub restoration, that have the potential to impact soils were evaluated in the 2005 Programmatic Environmental Assessment for land clearing activities on 45SW assets (FONSI received 26 May 2005). No significant impacts are anticipated from these actions. Coordination with 45 SW CEVR (Installation Restoration Program) will also prevent the disturbance/spread of existing contaminated soils.

*Water Resources:* Land disturbance activities have the potential to accelerate erosion. Erosion and sediment control measures would be designed and implemented to retain sediment on-site and prevent violations of State and Federal water quality standards. Any erosion or shoaling that could cause adverse impacts to water resources would be controlled using Best Management Practices.

Aquatic habitats will be improved through a multi-disciplinary approach to preventing non-point source pollution, utilizing aquatic safe pesticides and minimizing pesticides as much as practical, and using adaptive management for outdoor recreation planning.

Any permit requirements will be met to prevent negative impacts to water resources and wetlands. There would be no significant impacts to water resources from implementing the INRMP.

*Hazardous Materials and Wastes:* The proposed activities may require/generate small quantities of hazardous materials/wastes, such as fuels and lubricants associated with equipment operation, fertilizers and pesticides. All wastes generated will be managed in accordance with all federal, state, local and installation regulations and directives. No significant impacts would result from hazardous materials and waste. Pesticide usage for invasive vegetation will be controlled, monitored and used according to label requirements. Should an accidental spill occur, the CCAFS Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures Plan, and the 45SW Hazardous Material Response Plan (OPLAN 32-3) would be followed. Project personnel would be familiar with spill prevention and response procedures in order to be prepared for accident response.

*Health and Safety:* There would be no significant impacts to health and safety from implementing the INRMP. Some INRMP actions may have the potential to impact health and safety such as prescribed burns, utilization of All Terrain Vehicles for beach surveys,



mixing hazardous materials (pesticides), and potential interaction with dangerous wildlife could result in adverse impacts to the health and safety of personnel. However, adherence to AFI 91-301, *Air Force Occupational and Environmental Safety, Fire Protection, and Health*, and proper use of Personal Protection Equipment would minimize any potential impacts. In addition, integrating risk management into natural resource planning would promote positive impacts to health and safety. Examples of risk management include the prescribed burn notification system and the integration into site planning such that osprey platforms are installed outside of the flight line.

*Infrastructure and Transportation:* The scrub habitat restoration and invasive species management actions identified in the INRMP are anticipated to indirectly improve the utility corridors, lines of sight, and security clear zones when activities occur in these areas. Utility outages from overgrown exotic vegetation interfering with utility lines, utility stations, wells, and wastewater pumping stations would be minimized. Impacts may also occur to roadways during prescribed burns when roads are closed and traffic is re-directed in the action area. However, no significant impacts are anticipated.

*Land Use and Zoning:* There would be potential positive impacts to land use from implementing the INRMP. Currently, 45 SW lands are managed for multiple uses. Implementation of the Grounds Maintenance and Outdoor Recreation Plans will enhance land use and emphasize sound land management practices.

Federal consistency is a Coastal Zone Management Act requirement in which federal activities, including development, that may have an reasonable foreseeable effect on coastal resources must be consistent with the state federally approved Coastal Management Program (15 CFR Part 930, Subpart C). The Proposed Action is deemed consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program. The Air Force will ensure that the Action continues to be consistent to the maximum extent practicable.

*Noise:* Even though land clearing activities would generate noise, which although not continuous, could be disruptive for brief periods to wildlife and individuals in the immediate area, no significant impacts are anticipated from implementing the INRMP. Implementing the INRMP would not cause excessive noise or significant negative impacts due to noise.

*Socioeconomics:* Socioeconomics comprise such interrelated resources as population, employment, income, temporary living quarters (during construction activities), and public finance as defined in Executive Order (EO) 12898, *Addressing Environmental Justice for Minority and Low-Income Populations*. It is not anticipated that the Proposed Action will affect employment patterns on a permanent basis or induce substantial growth or growth-related impacts. No adverse effects are anticipated for minority and low-income populations as natural resource management actions are on base and generally do not impact economics. However, removing invasive vegetation on 45 SW properties will benefit the surrounding community by eliminating another potential seed source. The INRMP has received a public review period which allowed all local populations a chance to comment. The INRMP would be integrated with other Installation plans. As a result of this coordination, resource management activities would result from one plan and would be carried out more efficiently and effectively resulting in cost savings and beneficial impacts to all resource types.

**No Action Alternative:** The No Action Alternative is the continuation of an out-of-date INRMP. However, it does not fully comply with DoD regulations derived from the Sikes Act Improvement Amendments (SAIA) that mandate the preparation and implementation of INRMPs. Selection of the no action alternative is not considered a viable option, as it



would not enable the 45 SW to utilize the best management techniques and options available to support mission requirements while protecting and enhancing valuable natural resources. Another more environmentally preferable alternative was not identified that would protect sensitive species, restore native habitats, and satisfy mission requirements.

**Cumulative Impacts:** Cumulative impacts were considered for the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative. Actions should cumulatively contribute to improvements of the condition and viability of natural resources at the 45 SW, specifically biological resources through the improvement of habitat and surveys to better manage species. Some cumulative negative impacts to migratory birds and sea turtles could result with flushing and startling of these species during nesting/hatching or foraging with INRMP activities when combined with mission actions such as security and Bird Aircraft Hazard patrols, and public use of beaches and shorelines for fishing/boating access. However, the integration of the INRMP into other base plans that interact with natural resources could minimize potential negative impacts by using appropriate land management practices, knowing species behaviors to minimize disturbance, adequately addressing carrying capacity, and preventing geographic and genetic isolation of plant and animal species that could interfere with future mission accomplishments.

Cumulative impacts can also be reduced through conservation of different types of habitat through study of species utilization and preferences. The 45 SW INRMP delineates habitat restoration goals and plan implementers are currently researching options that will sustain the mission including off-site mitigation and conservation easement options.

None of these cumulative impacts are anticipated to significantly impact human health or the environment.

#### *Practicable Alternatives and Environmental Effects*

Section 1 of Executive Order (EO) 11988, *Floodplain Management*, directs each federal agency to provide leadership and take action to restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains in carrying out its responsibilities for federally undertaken construction and improvement projects. If it is determined that the only practicable alternative consistent with the law and with the policy set forth in this EO requires action in a floodplain, the agency is required to design or modify its action in order to minimize potential harm to or within the floodplain, and circulate a notice containing an explanation of why the action is proposed to be located in the floodplain, prior to taking the action.

Section 1 of, Executive Order 11990 *Protection of Wetlands*, directs each federal agency to provide leadership and take action to minimize destruction, loss or degradation of wetlands, and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands in carrying out the agency's responsibilities for (1) acquiring, managing, and disposing of Federal lands and facilities; and (2) providing Federally undertaken, financed, or assisted construction and improvements; and (3) conducting Federal activities and programs affecting land use, including water resources. A Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) must be submitted to Headquarters United States Air Force (HQ USAF/A4/7) when the alternative selected is located in wetlands or floodplains, and must discuss why no other practicable alternative exists to avoid impacts.

The Proposed Action at CCAFS, PAFB, MTA, and JDMTA would result in the implementation of an updated INRMP. The Proposed Action would have unavoidable impacts to wetlands because some INRMP actions such as invasive removal, sea turtle

monitoring and native plantings would be required to occur in surface waters and/or adjacent floodplains, including wetlands. These actions are designed to enhance protection of natural resources by conserving and monitoring native communities that may also encompass endangered, threatened, and rare species. For example, hand clearing of invasive species, instead of mechanical removal, would improve wetlands with minimal impact, resulting in positive change to wetlands. In addition, INRMP activities will not result in a loss of wetland acreage. INRMP implementation will not cause harm to the floodplain or result in increased risk to human safety. No other more environmentally preferable alternative was identified that would meet the Sikes Act requirements.

*Finding of No Significant Impact*

This Draft EA and FONSI/FONPA was made available to the affected public for comment period through notification in a locally reviewed newspaper. The EA and FONSI/FONPA was made available by placing them on file in the local public libraries of Satellite Beach and Cape Canaveral. The Draft EA and FONSI/FONPA was sent to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's state Clearinghouse which provided interagency review by several state organizations found in Appendix B of the EA. The EA's Proposed Action was deemed consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program, and other agencies concurred that the Proposed Action is consistent with their relevant policies and objectives.

In accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190, 42 U.S.C. §§4321-4347), as amended, and 32 CFR 989, 15 Jul 1999, and amended 28 Mar 2001, an assessment of the identified environmental effects has been prepared for the INRMP at 45 SW Mainland Assets, Florida. I find that the action will have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment; thus, an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted.

*Finding of No Practicable Alternative*

Pursuant to Executive Orders 11990 and 11988, the authority delegated by SAFO 780-1, and 32 CFR Part 989 and taking the submitted information into account, I find that there is no practicable alternative to this action that will require some land management activities in wetlands and floodplains. However, the proposed action includes all practical measures to minimize harm to the environment and provides a positive net benefit to wetlands and floodplains.

  
CARLOS R. CRUZ-GONZALEZ  
Colonel, USAF  
Deputy Director of Installations  
and Mission Support

  
Date