

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

### **U.S. Army Garrison Fort George G. Meade**

#### **Proposed Construction and Operation of a New 70th Intelligence Wing at Fort Meade, Maryland**

**AGENCY:** United States Army

**PURPOSE:** The United States Army has prepared an Environmental Assessment of the potential environmental consequences of the proposed construction and operation of a new 70th Intelligence Wing facility at Fort Meade, Maryland. This Environmental Assessment has been prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing the NEPA; Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 6050.1; and *Environmental Effects in the United States of DoD Actions* and instructions implementing NEPA.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The major command for Fort Meade is the Military District of Washington (MDW). Construction of a new 70<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Wing (70 IW) facility would support Fort Meade's mission by allowing the 70 IW to deliver tailored, timely, and full spectrum information operations to national decision-makers, theater commanders and warfighters of all services, and would enhance the Wing's ability to conduct foreign intelligence and information assurance operations as a major element of the Air Force Global Intelligence Mission.

#### **PROPOSED ACTION:**

The Proposed Action would construct a new 70th Intelligence Wing facility between Love Road and 3<sup>rd</sup> Cavalry Road at NSA. An open paved parking lot with 269 spaces for the facility would be constructed on an existing playing field immediately north of Newjon Road, near 3<sup>rd</sup> Calvary Road. The proposed 70th Intelligence Wing facility would facilitate more effective communication between all essential parties by bringing together the now geographically-separated members of the 70<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Wing in one building with updated, state-of-the-art facilities. Construction of the new 70th Intelligence Wing facility conforms to the installation's current master planning strategy, and would support DoD objectives.

#### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:**

The following topics are addressed in this Environmental Assessment: land use, air quality, water resources, aquatic resources and wetlands, vegetation, wildlife resources, threatened and endangered species, prime and unique farmlands, wild and scenic rivers, cultural resources, hazardous materials and waste, utilities/infrastructure, traffic, socioeconomics, noise, and environmental justice. Potential impacts are summarized below:

**Land Use.** Under the Proposed Action, the 70th Intelligence Wing would be sited in an existing paved parking area; a 2-acre parking lot would be constructed on an existing grassed playing field. Consequentially, the Proposed Action would conform to existing land use plans. Construction of the 70th Intelligence Wing would be consistent with post-wide and regional development strategies included in the post's land use plan. No adverse impacts to land use are anticipated.

**Air Quality.** Construction-related emissions would be short term and temporary. Operations-related emissions from the 70th Intelligence Wing would make minimal (less than 1 percent) contribution to the total annual air emissions at Fort Meade. NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from the boiler are estimated to be 0.28 tpy, and CO would be 0.14 tpy. All other pollutant emissions are negligible (i.e., 0.01 tpy or less). An MDE air quality permit will likely be required. Because of current access restrictions on post, no definitive air quality analysis of emissions from commuter vehicles can be conducted, but it is assumed that Fort Meade will continue to promote carpooling and shuttle services to minimize commuter vehicle emissions.

**Water Resources.** Surface waters are not likely to be affected under the Proposed Action. Given the planned use of storm water management features, both during and after construction, and the fact that the preferred site is an existing paved parking area, no significant impacts on surface waters from runoff are anticipated. Fort Meade groundwater resources are sufficient to meet potable water supply needs. Project construction plans include shallow subsurface excavations. No significant, adverse impacts to groundwater are anticipated.

**Aquatic Resources and Wetlands.** No streams or wetlands exist on or around the site of the Proposed Action. No impacts are anticipated.

**Vegetation.** Construction on this currently developed site would remove only existing herbaceous and grassed vegetation. Landscape plantings would provide positive visual values.

**Wildlife Resources.** Under the Proposed Action, it is expected that the few urbanized birds and small mammals that may be found on the construction site would relocate to compete for similar habitat elsewhere on the installation. Therefore, no impacts to wildlife are expected.

**Threatened and Endangered Species.** No threatened and endangered species or their habitats are found within the areas designated for construction under the Proposed Action. Therefore, no impacts to threatened or endangered species areas are expected.

**Prime and Unique Farmland.** The site of the Proposed Action does not have soils categorized as prime farmlands. No impacts are anticipated.

**Wild and Scenic Rivers.** No significant impacts to either the Patuxent and Severn rivers are anticipated.

**Cultural Resources.** There are no known cultural resources on the project site. No adverse impacts are anticipated.

**Hazardous Materials and Waste.** There would be no expected changes to Fort Meade maintenance procedures, permitted waste facilities, or installation handling of hazardous materials and waste under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts are anticipated.

**Utilities/Infrastructure.** Water, wastewater capacity, and natural gas are sufficient to support the new facility. New electrical lines would be extended to the site. No significant impacts to service from water, wastewater, or energy systems are anticipated. Demands on solid waste facilities may increase minimally, but within capacity.

**Traffic.** The project requires no new personnel. However, because of anti-terrorist measures and restricted access to the post, no definitive traffic analysis of new commuting 70th Intelligence Wing staff can now be conducted. It is assumed that Fort Meade will continue to promote car-pooling and shuttle services to minimize current and future traffic congestion.

**Socioeconomics.** Socioeconomic effects of construction, if any, would be minimal and temporary. 70th Intelligence Wing operation would not change overall living conditions within the Region of Influence (ROI); therefore no significant effect on the area economy is expected.

**Noise.** Construction noise would be of short duration and limited to the project area. Temporary noise barriers between the 70th Intelligence Wing and residential or office areas would be constructed if necessary. No adverse impacts to sensitive noise receptors are anticipated.

**Environmental Justice.** Neither the construction activities nor the operations of the 70th Intelligence Wing project would have disproportionate, adverse environmental or human health impacts on either minority or low-income populations or children. Therefore, the Proposed Action would be expected to have no impact on environmental justice.

**Cumulative Impacts.** Substantial Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) housing construction projects could potentially coincide with the construction of the new 70th Intelligence Wing in 2005. The proposed 70th Intelligence Wing is small in comparison and should not contribute significantly to the cumulative impact of these developments. Effects on resources during the construction phase would be temporary and short-lived. There would only be a minor change in the on-post resident population. Because of recent increased security on-post, cumulative impacts to traffic volumes and resulting air emissions cannot be definitively addressed at this time. It is assumed mitigation measures would be implemented to minimize any potential impact to these resources. The Proposed Action would not significantly contribute to cumulative impacts on any resources.

#### **ACTION ALTERNATIVE:**

The Action Alternative differs from the Proposed Action in that the new 70th Intelligence Wing structure would be built on a different but nearby site. The action alternative site is located immediately north of Newjon Road, near 3<sup>rd</sup> Cavalry Road at the site of an existing playing field (Fig. 2-1). The existing paved parking area on the site of the Proposed Action (immediately west of 3<sup>rd</sup> Calvary Road) would be used for parking for the new facility. Like the Proposed Action,

the Action Alternative would be in close proximity to other NSA facilities. Like the Proposed Action, the Action Alternative would result in removal of about 2 acres of grassed playing field.

**NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE:**

If the No-Action Alternative were to be selected, the 70 IW and 694 IG would continue to operate in geographically separated locations, resulting in decreased effectiveness of a unit responding to National Intelligence tasks. Command and control of the largest intelligence wing in the Air Force would continue to be hindered by the time delay in internal communications. Additionally, 40 airmen will continue to be denied access to Unaccompanied Enlisted Personnel housing and an additional 20 airmen will be required to live off post in order to meet current facility space requirements. The ability of the 70 IW to deliver tailored, timely, and full spectrum information operations to national decision-makers, theater commanders and warfighters of all services will continue to be severely degraded. The Wing's ability to conduct foreign intelligence and information assurance operations as a major element of the Air Force Global Intelligence Mission will continue to be negatively impacted.

**CONCLUSION:**

Based on my review of the facts and analysis contained in this Environmental Assessment, which are incorporated herein, I conclude that the effects of implementation of either the Proposed Action or its Action Alternative are not significant and will not adversely affect the quality of the environment. An Environmental Impact Statement is not required and will not be prepared.

The Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) are available for public review and comments. Copies of the Environmental Assessment and FNSI are available at <http://www.fortmeade-ems.org/>, West County Area Library or may be obtained at The Fort Meade Environmental Division Office, 239 Ross Road, Fort Meade, Md., 20755. Interested parties are invited to submit written comments for consideration on or before 25 March 2005 to the above address. For more information, contact Mr. Michael Butler at (301) 677-9648.

---

**Date**

---

**Kenneth O. McCreedy  
Colonel, Military Intelligence  
Commanding**