Draft

Finding of No Significant Impact

Environmental Assessment of the Disposal and Reuse of Fort Monmouth, New Jersey

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (Title 40 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] Parts 1500–1508) for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 *United States Code* 4321 et seq.) and 32 CFR Part 651 (*Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*), Fort Monmouth has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) of the potential environmental and socioeconomic effects associated with disposing of the 1,126 acres of improved lands of Fort Monmouth in accordance with the recommendations of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC Commission).

Proposed Action

The proposed action is to dispose of the 1,126 acres of improved lands of Fort Monmouth.

Alternatives

The Army has identified two disposal alternatives (accelerated and traditional) and a caretaker status alternative. Under accelerated disposal, the Army would take advantage of various property transfer and disposal methods that allow the reuse of the property to occur before environmental remedial action has been taken. Under traditional disposal, the Army would transfer or dispose of property after environmental remediation is complete for individual parcels of the installation. Under caretaker status—which would arise if the Army is unable to dispose of all or portions of its surplus BRAC property within the period of time defined for initial caretaking of the property—the Army would reduce maintenance to levels consistent with federal government standards for excess and surplus properties.

Three reuse scenarios, based on medium, medium-low, and low intensity uses, encompass the community's reuse plan and are evaluated as secondary actions. In the context of Fort Monmouth, a medium intensity reuse would be represented by use of existing facilities in the same way as they have been used in the recent past. A medium-low intensity reuse in the context of Fort Monmouth would represent a lower level of use intensity, perhaps from not reusing some existing facilities. A low-intensity reuse could represent a level of activity that might be found in uses requiring only minimal numbers of buildings, with park or recreation functions occurring over substantial portions of the installation.

The Army's preference is the accelerated disposal alternative. The Army expresses no preference with respect to reuse scenarios because decisions implementing reuse will be made by other entities. Each of the disposal alternatives and reuse scenarios is evaluated in detail in the EA. Consistent with guidance issued by the Council on Environmental Quality, the No Action Alternative is also evaluated.

Environmental Consequences

Implementing the proposed action would be expected to result in a mixture of short- and long-term minor adverse effects and short- and long-term minor beneficial effects on the subject environmental resources and conditions. The proposed action would, in addition, not be expected to have an effect on many resources. The EA does not identify the need for any mitigation measures.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the EA, which is herewith incorporated, it has been determined that implementation of the proposed action would have no significant adverse effects on the quality of the human or natural environment (see Table 1). Preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required prior to implementation of the proposed action.

Table 1
Summary of findings of effect

Resource area	Basis of finding of no significant effect	
	Disposal	**Reuse**
Land use	Disposal would not create land use conflicts	FMERPA would ensure land use compatibility [a]
Aesthetics and visual environment	Disposal would not alter the existing aesthetic environment	A well-developed reuse plan would ensure aesthetic and visual compatibility among landscape elements
Air quality	Cessation of activities at Fort Monmouth would reduce air emissions	New owners would perform a regulatory analysis to determine whether air permitting would be required; permitting would keep new air emissions within regulatory limits
Noise environment	Cessation of activities at Fort Monmouth would reduce sources of noise; remedial activities would not exceed noise thresholds	The reuse plan does not envision noise-intensive uses; under reuse, the noise environment would be typical for a suburban metropolitan area; construction noise would cease once construction was completed
Geology and soils	Completion of remedial activities would improve soil quality	Reuse would affect soils only during construction
Water resources	Remedial activities would improve water quality, particularly groundwater	Implementation of reuse would comply with state water resource protection laws and regulations; at medium-intensity reuse, the quantity of impervious ground would be similar to baseline conditions or slightly higher, but within CAFRA limits (Main Post area)[b]
Biological resources	Disposal would not affect biological resources	Implementation of reuse would comply with state and federal laws and regulations protecting listed species; the reuse plan envisions the inclusion of a green belt
Cultural resources	Minor effects only due to discontinuing federal ownership; the Programmatic Agreement would ensure resource protection	The Programmatic Agreement would provide deed restrictions mandating the protection of historic properties by new owners as a condition of sale or transfer
Socioeconomic environment	Cessation of activities at Fort Monmouth would have adverse economic effects	As envisioned, reuse would largely offset the economic impact of closure
Transportation	Cessation of activities at Fort Monmouth would reduce local traffic	As envisioned, under medium-intensity reuse the local traffic conditions would be similar to baseline conditions; traffic system improvements are planned
Utilities	Cessation of activities at Fort Monmouth would reduce demand on all local utility systems	System improvements are anticipated for many of the utility systems owned by Fort Monmouth upon transfer to local utility entities
Hazardous and toxic substances	Cessation of activities at Fort Monmouth would reduce the use of hazardous substances on the property; remedial activities would reduce on-site contamination	New users would be required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous substance

[a] FMERPA: Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Planning Authority

[b] CAFRA: Coastal Area Facility Review Act (N.J.S.A. 13:19)

The EA and draft finding of no significant impact (FNSI) are available for review and comment for 30 days from publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Asbury Park Press* of Neptune, New Jersey. Copies of the EA and draft FNSI can be obtained by contacting the Fort Monmouth Public Affairs Office (PAO) at Public Affairs Office, AMSEL-IO, Fort Monmouth, NJ 07703, at 732-532-1258, or from the BRAC Division Web site at www.hqda.army.mil/acsim/brac/env_ea_review.htm. A copy of the EA and draft FNSI is available for review at the Monmouth County Library, Eastern Branch, 1001 Route 35, Shrewsbury, New Jersey. Comments on the EA and draft FNSI should be submitted to the PAO no later than the end of the public comment period.

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Commanding