

Environmental studies and effects

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Are there any environmental challenges?

The project must follow strict environmental requirements through the National Environmental Policy Act known as NEPA. The project site will go through an environmental assessment known as an EA and will conduct a Findings of No Significant Impact process. If this process finds environmental concerns which would be harmful to human health or the environment, the process requires alternatives be looked at to correct. A public comment period allows the community to respond to the alternatives and to give input into the process.

What will the Army's environmental assessment entail and the connection to an Environmental Impact Statement?

It is important to note that any environmental assessments will be released to the community to keep the community informed. This is traditionally done by placing a report in a local library and providing copies to local officials. For the reserve site in Middletown, if an Environmental Assessment, known as an EA, finds the project will cause significant impacts to the environment and an Environmental Impact Statement will be needed, the Army will search for another suitable site location.

Army BRAC EA documents can be found at:

http://www.hqda.army.mil/acsimweb/brac/env_ea_final.htm and Army BRAC EIS documents at: http://www.hqda.army.mil/acsimweb/brac/nepa_eis_docs.htm.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider potential environmental impacts before taking major actions, such as issuing permits or making decisions that affect federal lands. If significant impacts are likely, the agency must prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS). This report will be reviewed by the Environmental Protection Agency. EPA's primary role under NEPA is to review documents on proposed federal agency actions and prepare written comments.

NEPA evaluates the effects of a federal project and includes alternatives. For the reserve projects, the Army, through an environmental contractor, will prepare a written environmental assessment (EA) to determine whether or not a federal undertaking would significantly affect the environment. If the answer is no, the agency issues a finding of no significant impact, known as a FONSI. The FONSI may address measures which an agency will take to reduce, or mitigate, potentially significant impacts.

An EA, includes a brief discussion on the need for the project, alternatives in working with any environmental concerns, environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives, and a listing of agencies and persons consulted. The EA would include impacts to humans and the environment. This includes endangered species; air, water and noise pollution; traffic and other environmental impacts.

If the EA determines that the environmental consequences of a proposed federal undertaking may be significant, an EIS is prepared for the project to continue.

An EIS is a more detailed evaluation of the proposed action and alternatives. The public, other federal agencies and outside parties may provide input into the preparation of an EIS and then comment on the draft EIS when it is completed. If a federal agency anticipates that an undertaking may significantly impact the environment a federal agency may choose to prepare an EIS without having to first prepare an EA.

What access is needed at the site, specifically the current site? What about traffic?

The project must have good access and location near an interstate is a benefit. For whatever site is chosen, traffic and noise will be addressed in the environmental assessment.

Will the use of this property impact local residents and what will be done to address these concerns?

The project must follow strict environmental requirements through the National Environmental Policy Act known as NEPA. The project site will go through an environmental assessment known as an EA and will conduct a Findings of No Significant Impact process. If this process finds environmental concerns which would be harmful to human health or the environment, the process requires alternatives be looked at to correct. A public comment period allows the community to respond to the alternatives and to give input into the process. This process includes evaluating traffic and noise levels.

What about possible contamination from the new reserve center?

Environmental laws and practices require specific environmental processes be followed at federal facilities. The new projects include collectors to remove oil or other contaminants from reaching surrounding soil or water. Also, parking lots for federal projects require a system to collect runoff.

Environmental links

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Army BRAC EIS documents at:

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