

DRAFT Finding of No Significant Impact

TITLE OF ACTION: *Environmental Assessment for Borrow Pits; U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground.*

BACKGROUND: The U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground (Garrison) prepared an environmental assessment (EA) to establish multiple long-term borrow pit sites in close proximity to YPG cantonment areas. The EA was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA [40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500-1508]; Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 4715.9, *Environmental Planning and Analysis* (1996); and *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions* (32 CFR Part 651; March 29, 2002).

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES: The purpose of the proposed action is to establish multiple long-term borrow pit sites in close proximity to YPG cantonment areas. These borrow pit sites are needed to provide aggregate material for construction and maintenance of facilities on YPG. Establishing the pits near the respective cantonment area is necessary to reduce the costs associated with hauling material from the pits to construction sites. The borrow pits are intended to be in well defined locations and would be reused for future construction and maintenance projects in years to come. The proposed pits were sited near the cantonment areas because fill material is often needed near these locations.

Alternative A (Proposed Action)-To Establish Three (3) Borrow Pits - establish three borrow pit sites in the vicinity of the major cantonment areas on YPG. These three sites would be the Howard Cantonment Area (HCA, formerly known as MAA) Pit, Ocotillo Pit, and 6th Street Pit. The proposed pits are located along existing roads and have had varying degrees of previous surface disturbance to portions of the sites. Portions of the proposed HCA, Ocotillo, and 6th Street pits have previously been used at some time in the past as borrow pit sites. The pit locations were chosen primarily based on proximity to existing access roads and previous surface disturbance. Prior to use all pit boundaries would be clearly marked to ensure that no additional areas would be disturbed or expanded.

Alternative B-No Action Alternative

Under the no action alternative, the borrow pits would not be established. Aggregate fill material would be obtained on a project-by-project basis from available sources located in remote areas or from commercially available sources.

Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

During the planning process, YPG considered 14 additional sites to meet the purpose and need of the proposed action; however, those alternatives were eliminated from further consideration because they did not meet one or more of the selection criteria. They were eliminated due to conflicts with ongoing military activity, safety, or environmental concerns.

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The evaluation of affected resources and the potential for environmental consequences initially encompassed a broad range of Valued Environmental Components (VECs); however, the potential for environmental impacts to some of the resource areas were determined to be nonexistent, unlikely, or negligible. Chapter 3 of the

EA provides a discussion of those VECs not carried forward for further detailed analysis. As a result, the scope of environmental analysis focused on the VECs listed below because they were determined to be potentially affected in connection with activities associated with the proposed action.

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Health and Safety
- Recreation
- Soil Resources
- Traffic and Transportation
- Water Resources

The analysis found that no significant impacts to environmental resources would result from establishing the three borrow pits, as proposed under Alternative A (Proposed Action).

The analyses in the EA included a consideration of potential cumulative effects associated with of the proposed action that could occur on a regional scale, including those that could result from incremental impacts. The analysis found that cumulative impacts to the natural and human environment on a regional scale are not likely to occur as a result of implementing the proposed action.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Scoping letters were sent to Federal, State, tribal, and local agencies; and to public stakeholders on September 18, 2014. The U.S Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground published a public notice in the Yuma Sun on January 11, 2014 announcing the availability of the EA and draft FNSI for review and comment. Copies of the EA and draft FNSI were sent to several stakeholders that requested copies during the scoping process. The EA and DRAFT FNSI were made available on YPG’s public website at <http://www.yuma.army.mil/Documents.aspx>. The public review period ended February 11, 2015 and comments received did not result in a change in the proposed action or analysis of potential environmental effects.

CONCLUSION: Based on the analysis presented in the EA for establishing borrow pits on YPG no significant environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of implementing the project as proposed under Alternative A (-To Establish Three (3) Borrow Pits). Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required and a FNSI is the appropriate decision document to conclude the NEPA process.

I have read and concur with the findings and analyses documented in the Environmental Assessment and hereby approve the Finding of No Significant Impact.

PENDING

Gordon K. Rogers
YPG Garrison Manager

Date