

DRAFT
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
GRISSOM AIR RESERVE BASE INDOOR FIRING RANGE
GRISSOM AIR RESERVE BASE, INDIANA

Pursuant to provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321, et seq.); the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508, effective September 14, 2020); and the Air Force Environmental Impact Analysis Process (32 CFR Part 989), the United States (U.S.) Air Force (USAF) prepared the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) to assess the potential environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action to construct, operate, and maintain a new indoor small arms firing range and potentially demolish the existing outdoor firing range at Grissom Air Reserve Base (ARB), Indiana (IN).

Purpose and Need

Grissom ARB is home to the 434th Air Refueling Wing (ARW), which has a mission to develop and maintain the operational capability of its units and train reservists for worldwide duty. The 434th ARW at Grissom ARB consists of three major organizations, which are further comprised of various squadrons, each with its own mission and requirements. The Proposed Action to construct a new indoor firing range would support mission requirements of the 434th Security Forces Squadron (SFS), which is required to train and qualify Airmen with a variety of small arms. An outdoor firing range is currently used for this training; however, it is outdated and has insufficient firing lanes and facility layout, and does not enable training requirements to be met. In addition, the existing outdoor firing range is not in compliance with minimum surface danger zone distances.

As a result of the condition of the outdoor firing range and these constraints, Grissom ARB has been unable to facilitate all required training for its Airmen on-site. Airmen have been sent to Camp Atterbury Military Reservation Range, approximately 106 miles away, to supplement weapons qualification, although range schedules at Camp Atterbury are not guaranteed and are subject to change. Further, transportation of Airmen and explosives requires the use of multiple vehicles and drivers, and may take up to a full training day. Construction of a new, indoor firing range would enable Grissom ARB to meet the training requirements of the 434th SFS on-base, and would eliminate the need for travel to Camp Atterbury.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to replace the existing deficient outdoor firing range at Grissom ARB with a new, operational indoor firing range to support the small arms training requirements of military and security forces personnel at the base. The Proposed Action is needed to address training inefficiencies caused by the outdated conditions of the existing outdoor firing range and the increase in training load since the outdoor firing range was constructed, which have resulted in the inability of all Airmen to complete mandatory weapons training at Grissom ARB.

Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

The Proposed Action involves construction of the indoor firing range, operation and maintenance of the indoor firing range, and the option to demolish the outdoor firing range if sufficient funding is available. Following an evaluation of potential alternatives, the USAF determined that construction of a new indoor firing range adjacent to the existing outdoor firing range best meets the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action (herein referred to as the "Preferred Alternative"). In addition to the Preferred Alternative, the No Action Alternative is also being considered.

Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative includes three primary components: construction of a new indoor firing range, operation and maintenance of the new indoor firing range, and optional demolition of the existing outdoor firing range.

- Construction of a new indoor firing range includes construction of an approximately 23,000 square foot indoor small arms firing range at Grissom ARB. It would be located west of Grissom Avenue, south of Dragonfly Lane, and adjacent to the northwest corner of the existing outdoor firing range. The proposed indoor firing range would be a 21 lane live fire range facility with 25 meter firing lanes to support small arms training. The new facility would require utilities to be routed to the Project Site from nearby locations on-base, and would also include associated administration, classroom, maintenance, weapons cleaning, storage, utility, and building support rooms, as well as restrooms. Site access would be provided from Grissom Avenue to allow for maintenance and fire trucks, but no dedicated parking would be provided.
- Once construction is complete, and the indoor firing range is operational, Airmen would be able to complete all of their small arms training requirements at Grissom ARB and would not have to travel to Camp Atterbury to supplement training. The facility would contain its own storage and mechanical rooms to assist with maintenance. The facility would be designed to have a 40-year useful life.
- Proposed demolition of the existing outdoor firing range would not occur until the new indoor firing range is operational, and is considered an optional component of the Preferred Alternative, as demolition would only occur if sufficient funding is available. Lead contamination is presumed present within the outdoor firing range, and ground-disturbing activities occurring within 100 feet of the existing outdoor firing range may require lead sampling to identify potential lead contamination beyond the facility.

Construction is anticipated to be completed within two years, and would include site preparation, including site clearing, excavation, and grading; installation of foundation piles and concrete foundation slab; erection of structural concrete and steel; and modification or extension of roads and pedestrian sidewalks. Construction activities would be conducted in accordance with the applicable requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and Section 438 of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) to manage stormwater discharges and restore the pre-development hydrology of the Project Site.

No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, Grissom ARB would retain the existing outdated and insufficient outdoor firing range. The outdoor firing range would not be demolished, and no new construction would occur. The 434th SFS would continue training at Grissom ARB, but Airmen would still travel to Camp Atterbury in order to supplement their training and fulfill weapons training and qualification requirements. While the No Action Alternative would not meet the Proposed Action's purpose and need, it is analyzed in the EA to provide a comparative baseline with the Preferred Alternative.

Summary of Environmental Impacts

The EA evaluates the existing environmental conditions and potential environmental consequences of implementing the Proposed Action with regard to visual resources; air quality and climate; noise; earth resources; water resources; biological resources; cultural resources; utilities; socioeconomics and environmental justice (EJ); transportation; and hazardous and toxic materials and waste (HTMW). The USAF has concluded that the Proposed Action would not affect the following resources: airspace, and land use and zoning; thus, these resources were eliminated from detailed analysis in the EA. Environmental impacts are summarized below.

Visual Resources: Construction of the Preferred Alternative would slightly alter viewsheds in the Region of Influence (ROI) by demolishing infrastructure associated with the existing outdoor firing range on Grissom ARB and by replacing it with a new facility in the open space adjacent to the existing outdoor firing range. Views of the demolition and construction activities would primarily be limited to personnel on-base, with the most prominent views along Grissom Avenue to the east and Dragonfly Lane to the north. The Project Site would also be visible from adjacent parking lots and buildings, as there are no trees or other natural or built features to obstruct the Project Site. Proposed demolition and construction activities, however, would be consistent with other proposed development activities under the Grissom ARB Training District Area Development Plan (ADP), and would not be incongruous on the landscape.

The Preferred Alternative would permanently alter the viewscape in the ROI by constructing a new building in the open space adjacent to the existing outdoor firing range. The proposed indoor firing range would constitute a new built feature on a primarily open, lightly developed landscape; however, the design of the facility would be consistent with the character of other buildings in the viewshed and would meet Grissom ARB design standards. Construction of the proposed facility therefore would not introduce discordant elements into the ROI. In addition, demolition of the existing outdoor firing range would remove this feature that is outdated and in disrepair, potentially resulting in an improvement in the quality of the viewscape. Overall, no significant adverse impacts on visual resources are anticipated.

Air Quality and Climate: Construction activities would temporarily generate fugitive dust from grading, clearing, and soil remediation and site restoration activities, and criteria pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions from the use of diesel-powered and gasoline-powered equipment. Following construction, ongoing annual emissions would occur from operation of the proposed indoor firing range, which would primarily include fuel combustion for space heating. Use of the indoor firing range may also result in insignificant emissions from the increased firing of frangible rounds. However, building construction would include proper ventilation design and filtration systems to remove airborne contaminants and capture particulate and metal emissions, and ensure that exhaust air would meet all local, state, and federal air quality requirements.

The USAF used the Air Conformity Applicability Model (ACAM) to analyze the potential air quality impacts associated with the Proposed Action. The ACAM results indicate emissions associated with the Preferred Alternative would not exceed regulatory or insignificance thresholds, and the potential air quality impact from all criteria pollutants is insignificant. In the short-term, construction and demolition under the Preferred Alternative would produce approximately 337.4 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent over a two-year period. In the long term, there would be approximately 97.0 tons per year of steady state greenhouse gas emissions. These steady state emissions would result in a 0.01 percent and 0.03 percent emissions increase over the baseline for Cass County and Miami County, respectively. Potentially relevant long-term climate change areas of concern for the Proposed Action include increases in heavy precipitation and flooding, drought, and extreme heat. However, the Proposed Action would not be constructed in a floodplain, and the proposed facilities would allow training to be conducted indoors year-round, regardless of weather conditions. Overall, no significant adverse impacts to air quality or climate are anticipated.

Noise: Construction and demolition activities associated with the Proposed Action would result in a temporary increase in noise levels within the vicinity of the Project Site, related to use of equipment during demolition of the existing outdoor facility and during construction activities related to construction of the new indoor facility, including site excavation, backfill, material transportation, and building of the physical structure. Noise impacts would be greatest at the Project Site, and buildings along Grissom Avenue and Dragonfly Lane would be the closest receptors. No sensitive receptors or private residences are located nearby that could be adversely affected. Construction and demolition activities would last less than two years, and noise reduction best management practices (BMPs) such as the use of mufflers on equipment and vehicles, would minimize noise impacts. Operation of the indoor firing range would reduce noise from

existing small arms firing activities that currently occur outside and can be heard in the surrounding areas. The building design of the indoor firing range would include sound reduction features, which would minimize the amount of audible noise outside of the facility. Overall, no significant adverse impacts to noise are anticipated.

Earth Resources: During construction and demolition, excavation and soil disturbance/removal would be required to remove infrastructure associated with the existing outdoor firing range, and to construct the building foundation of the proposed indoor facility. Although the Project Site is generally flat, minor grading may be needed to construct the indoor facility. Construction and demolition under the Proposed Action would disturb up to 7.6 acres (i.e., the full limits of disturbance [LOD]), and disturbed soils would be susceptible to runoff and erosion. Since the Project Site would exceed 1 acre of land disturbance, a NPDES Construction General Permit (CGP) would be obtained for the project pursuant to the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1251 et seq; CWA) of 1972. Coverage under the CGP would require development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which would describe pollution prevention activities and establish erosion and sediment controls to manage stormwater discharges and minimize sedimentation to the extent practicable. The State of Indiana also requires a Construction Stormwater General Permit (CSGP), which also requires a SWPPP to establish stormwater controls. The pre-development hydrology of the Project Site would also be maintained to the maximum extent technically feasible in accordance with Section 438 of the EISA through the use of low impact development (LID) features.

Approximately 0.5 acre of prime farmland soils would be permanently impacted by construction activities, as these would be removed to accommodate the footprint of the proposed indoor facility. The loss of these soils would not substantially reduce the amount of prime farmland in the surrounding area; moreover, these soils are neither currently used as farmland nor available for farming due to their location on an active ARB. Soil contamination from lead and other contaminants is potentially present near the existing outdoor firing range; if ground disturbance is planned within 100 feet of the existing outdoor firing range, lead sampling may need to be conducted to identify and delineate potential contamination. Applicable federal and state regulations and guidance would be followed to ensure potential contaminants are not inadvertently dispersed. Overall, no significant adverse impacts to earth resources are anticipated.

Water Resources: Construction of the Preferred Alternative could potentially impact Government Ditch, as proposed utility connections would cross this surface water, which also functions as a stormwater open drainage ditch. Utilities would be routed underneath Government Ditch, and would not result in any fill, although soil disturbance immediately surrounding the waterbody could result in increased runoff and sedimentation. Similarly, wetlands located in the vicinity of the LOD may be indirectly impacted by sedimentation during construction as a result of soil disturbance. Since the Proposed Action would impact approximately 7.6 acres, Grissom ARB would obtain a NPDES CGP and develop a site-specific SWPPP to identify erosion controls and BMPs to manage stormwater discharges. Grissom ARB would also comply with Section 438 of the EISA and incorporate LID features into the design of the proposed facility. Construction and demolition would not result in groundwater withdrawals. Accidental spills of petroleum products or other materials, and inadvertent release of potential soil contaminants may result in impacts to groundwater; with adherence to BMPs such as maintaining spill-containment materials on-site and adhering to site-specific HTMW plans, the potential for impacts to groundwater would be minimized. Overall, no significant adverse impacts to water resources are anticipated.

Biological Resources: Proposed construction and demolition activities would result in various ground-disturbing activities throughout the LOD, including clearing the grassland and landscape vegetation during site preparation, and removing scattered trees to facilitate the placement of utilities. Grissom ARB is exempt from maintaining an Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, so any revegetation activities would be specified in construction design plans prior to implementation of the Proposed Action. The potential spread of weeds or invasive species during construction would be managed in accordance with Grissom

ARB's Integrated Pest Management Plan. Once construction and demolition are complete, the Project Site would be revegetated with native plants or landscape vegetation.

No federally listed threatened and endangered species have been documented to occur at Grissom ARB, and no suitable habitat exists on-site for state-listed threatened and endangered species. During construction and demolition, common wildlife species would be physically displaced and may be disturbed by noise and increased human activity. Mobile species would likely relocate to areas of similar habitat. Although disturbance, displacement, or inadvertent wildlife mortality from construction activities would be an adverse impact, such impacts would not inhibit the continued propagation of common wildlife populations and species near the Project Site. Once construction is completed, common wildlife species may benefit from the cessation of outdoor firing activities. Overall, no significant adverse impacts on biological resources are anticipated.

Cultural Resources: The Preferred Alternative would have no effect on historic properties, as no known historic properties, either above-ground or archaeological, occur within the ROI. Additionally, the Preferred Alternative would have no effect on tribally significant resources, as none have been identified through tribal consultation. On August 11, 2022, the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with USAF's determination of no effect to historic properties. Should unanticipated cultural resources be encountered, Grissom ARB would immediately cease work and report the discovery to the Indiana SHPO and federally recognized tribes for consultation on how to proceed. Overall, no significant adverse impacts on cultural resources are anticipated.

Utilities: Operation of the Preferred Alternative would increase overall utility usage at Grissom ARB, as the new indoor facility would require utility connections that were not required for operation of the outdoor firing range. New utilities would tie in to existing utilities surrounding the Project Site. Temporary service disruptions to other buildings on Grissom ARB could occur while the new utility infrastructure is being connected. These disruptions would be minimized by ensuring that existing utilities remain operational until the new utilities are ready to be connected, and by providing advance notice to end users. Utility demand would increase, but is not anticipated to burden providers. The facility would be designed in accordance with applicable sustainability standards and measures to reduce energy and water use. Overall, no significant adverse impacts on utilities are anticipated.

Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice: As no EJ communities of concern with respect to race or income are present surrounding the Project Site, there is no potential for the Proposed Action to disproportionately impact EJ communities. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative would not displace nearby residents or adversely affect economic conditions in the ROI. Proposed construction activities would likely be completed by local contractors, increasing employment opportunities, personal incomes, and materials purchases within the community. If non-local contractors support construction, direct economic benefits associated with expenditures on lodging, food, and retail would accrue to the local community. Tax revenues associated with direct and indirect construction expenditures would also benefit economic conditions. Once construction is complete, the Project Site would be maintained by Grissom ARB personnel. Overall, no significant adverse impacts to socioeconomics or EJ communities of concern are anticipated.

Transportation: Construction and demolition under the Preferred Alternative would result in temporary increases in construction-related traffic at the site that would include workers' personal commuting vehicles and heavy construction vehicles. To manage construction-related traffic, the contractor would implement and adhere to a project-specific transportation management plan. As the Project Site is located within Grissom ARB, no lane closures on public roadways outside of the base would occur, and no on-base road closures are anticipated to occur during the majority of construction and demolition activities. Temporary closures of segments of Grissom Avenue, Dragonfly Lane, and Perimeter Road may be required to route

utilities to the Project Site. Parking for construction vehicles would be available at or surrounding the Project Site, so there is no competition for spaces between construction personnel and base personnel. Construction traffic is not anticipated to impede or prevent the flow of traffic within Grissom ARB. Once the indoor firing range is operational, no personal vehicles would be able to access the site and no dedicated parking would be provided. A sidewalk would be built to connect to existing sidewalks along Grissom Avenue. Operation of the proposed indoor firing range would not modify the existing transportation network within Grissom ARB. Overall, no significant adverse impacts to transportation are anticipated.

Hazardous and Toxic Materials and Waste: Operation of construction equipment and vehicles would create the potential for discharge, spills, and contamination of commonly used products, such as diesel fuel, gasoline, oil, antifreeze, and lubricants, at the Project Site. However, all hazardous materials or waste discovered, generated, or used during construction would be handled, containerized, and disposed of in accordance with Grissom ARB's Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure Plan (SPCCP) and applicable local, state, and federal regulations. Solid waste generated during construction and demolition would be managed and disposed of in accordance with the base Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan. The Preferred Alternative would have no potential to interfere with existing Environmental Restoration Program sites; however, soils at the Project Site are potentially contaminated due to past and current firing activities at the existing outdoor firing range. Demolition activities would be conducted in accordance with applicable HTMW management and disposal regulations and procedures.

Operation of the indoor firing range would likely result in the generation of munition solid waste from firing activities. Military munitions, including spent projectiles, may be considered solid wastes under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), and are therefore subject to regulation as hazardous wastes. These wastes would be managed in accordance with RCRA and Grissom ARB's Hazardous Waste Management Plan (HWMP), and would be similar to those generated during operation of the outdoor facility, as the same types of small arms would be used. Use of the indoor facility, however, would generate more HTMW than the outdoor facility, as it would enable more training to occur on-base. This increase would not result in a change of Grissom ARB's large quantity generator status under RCRA. Hazardous waste from munitions would be contained within the indoor facility, and there would be no potential for future contamination outside the facility from firing activities. Operation of the indoor firing range would also involve the use of HTMW typical of administrative operations and facility maintenance, such as solvents, paints, thinners, cleaning products, and petroleum-based products. All such materials would be stored securely and would be used by authorized personnel in accordance with label directions, and hazardous wastes generated would be transported by licensed contractors to permitted facilities for disposal. Overall, no significant adverse impacts to HTMW are anticipated.

Regulatory Compliance Measures and Mitigation Measures

The USAF would comply with all federal and state laws and regulations, including consultation and permitting requirements. With implementation of these measures and other design commitments mentioned in the EA, the Proposed Action would be anticipated to have no significant impacts. As such, no resource-specific mitigation measures are recommended.

Cumulative Effects

The USAF identified and reviewed past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions that have or are planned to occur within the Proposed Action's ROI and analyzed the potential cumulative impacts of the Proposed Action with these other reasonably foreseeable actions in the ROI. Baseline conditions in the ROI generally include development trends, with a focus on expanding the training area at Grissom ARB, which includes the Project Site, and updating infrastructure. Grissom ARB has developed a short-range and long-range ADP that outlines future proposed projects to support its mission. Given the property

surrounding Grissom ARB is predominantly agricultural, there are no reasonably foreseeable actions off-base that would have the potential to contribute to cumulative impacts with the Proposed Action. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative when taken into consideration with reasonably foreseeable future projects could lead to cumulative impacts to visual resources, air quality, noise, earth resources, water resources, biological resources, utilities, transportation, and HTMW. These impacts would be minimized to the extent practicable through implementation of BMPs and adherence to regulatory guidelines under the Proposed Action. No significant adverse impacts would occur.

Public Review

USAF published a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EA and Draft FONSI in the *Peru Tribune* on October 22, 2022. The Draft EA and Draft FONSI were made available on the Grissom ARB 434th ARW website at <https://www.grissom.afrc.af.mil/> and printed copies of the Draft EA and Draft FONSI were held at the Peru Public Library located at 102 East Main Street, Peru, IN 46970 for public review. These documents are available for public review and comment for 30 days following publication of the NOA (i.e., through November 20, 2022).

During the Draft EA public review period, written comments may be mailed to Trisha McClain, Biological Scientist, 7104 S. Warthog Street, Grissom ARB, IN 46971; or emailed to trisha.mcclain@us.af.mil. The USAF will only respond to public comments during specified, formal public comment and review periods.

Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning

USAF coordinated with federal, state, and local agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise over the Proposed Action to inform the range of issues to be addressed in the EA. The USAF also consulted with federally recognized tribes that are historically affiliated with the geographic region of Grissom ARB regarding the potential for the Proposed Action to affect properties of cultural, historical, or religious significance to the tribes. Responses have been considered and incorporated in the EA, as appropriate. Records of agency and tribal correspondence are included in **Appendix A**, **Appendix B**, and **Appendix C** of the EA.

Findings

Finding of No Significant Impact. After review of the EA prepared in accordance with the requirements of NEPA and CEQ regulations, and which is hereby incorporated by reference, I have determined that the proposed Grissom ARB Indoor Firing Range project will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment with implementation of the regulatory compliance measures and BMPs identified. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This decision has been made after taking into account all submitted information and considering a full range of practical alternatives that meet project requirements and are within the legal authority of the USAF. The signing of this FONSI completes the environmental impact analysis process.

THOMAS O. PEMBERTON, COLONEL
USAF Commander

Date

Attachment: Environmental Assessment for Grissom Air Reserve Base Indoor Firing Range