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FALLON RANGE TRAINING COMPLEX MODERNIZATION:
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, December 13, 2018

Lovelock, Nevada

Reported by: JANET MENGES, CCR #206

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PRESENTERS:

Allison Turner
Captain David Halloran
Alex Stone

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Clyde Gentry
Rob McDougal
John Brady
Douglas Martin
Kaden Mahaffa

1 like to welcome you on behalf of the Navy to today's
2 meeting on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement
3 or the EIS for the Fallon Range Training Complex
4 Modernization.

5 If you would like to join us in the
6 Pledge of Allegiance, we ask that you please stand at
7 this time.

8 (The Pledge of Allegiance was recited at this time)

9 MS. TURNER: Thank you very much.

10 I hope you had a chance to visit the
11 poster stations this morning and talk to the various
12 team members that are here and have your questions
13 answered.

14 We are going to -- this portion of the
15 meeting will be for the Navy to provide a brief
16 presentation and then we will proceed to the oral
17 comment portion where you will have an opportunity to
18 make a comment.

19 In accordance with the National
20 Environmental Policy Act and applicable executive
21 order, the Navy has analyzed the environmental
22 impacts associated with the proposed alternatives for
23 the modernization of the Fallon ranges.

24 There are two purposes for today's
25 meeting. First is to provide the public with

1 information about the project, and second is to
2 provide an opportunity for you to provide any
3 comments on the Navy's proposal and the draft
4 environmental analysis.

5 This is our sixth meeting of seven.
6 We've had quite a few meetings over this past week
7 and we will be in Reno this evening, so again we
8 appreciate your participation.

9 So as I mentioned, the Navy has prepared
10 a short presentation and then we will follow right up
11 with the oral comment session. Here today to receive
12 your comments are Captain David Halloran, the
13 Commanding Officer of Naval Air Station Fallon, and
14 Mr. Alex Stone, who is the EIS Program Manager from
15 the United States Pacific Fleet. My role is to
16 ensure that you have a fair and orderly meeting where
17 you have an opportunity to make a comment on the
18 Draft EIS.

19 Today's presentation and oral comments
20 session are being transcribed for the administrative
21 record by Janet seated to my right. We ask that the
22 Navy presenters and people providing an oral comment
23 not be interrupted so that we can accurately
24 transcribe the proceedings for the record.

25 So at this time I would like to introduce

1 Captain Halloran.

2 CAPTAIN HALLORAN: Good morning,
3 everyone. Good to see so many people here trying to
4 get information on what we're doing and why.

5 My name is Captain David Halloran. I am
6 the Commanding Officer of Naval Air Station Fallon,
7 been in the Navy for over 26 years. I am an aviator.
8 I fly F-18s. I have trained here in NAS Fallon 20
9 times during my career doing temporary duty, and I
10 can tell you, as you saw on the video, that the
11 training that we get in Fallon is the best training
12 that we can get anywhere, and I will talk about that
13 a little bit more as I give my presentation.

14 Next slide, please.

15 So a little over two years ago we did
16 another tour of Northern Nevada explaining why we are
17 looking to modernize our ranges. During that time I
18 gave a presentation that lasted, the shortest was
19 45 minutes and the longest was an hour and a half.
20 Now, don't worry, I'm really trying to target about
21 ten minutes, but considering I try to go into depth
22 to explain as much as I possibly can without getting
23 too longwinded it will probably be somewhere between
24 fifteen to twenty minutes to speak today, but there's
25 a lot of details into the why we're looking to

1 modernize.

2 The first thing that I want to talk about
3 is I will talk about the what we do at NAS Fallon.
4 Then I will talk about the why we're looking to
5 modernize. At that point I will turn it over to
6 Mr. Alex Stone, which is why -- he's the main purpose
7 of why we're here, meaning what he's talking about is
8 the main purpose, because I will give you a brief
9 overview and then he is going to talk about all the
10 information that we've pulled in over the last two
11 years and then compiled the Draft EIS that we're
12 pushing forth now, and what I mean by pushing forth
13 is we're making it public so that we can get another
14 comment period to take in more information, so that
15 we can then come up with our finalized Draft EIS to
16 push forward through the Navy channels. After the
17 Navy says, okay, have we taken in what everybody
18 said, this is what the Navy is looking to do, all
19 right, and then the Navy will make a decision on what
20 they're going to request, and at that point it goes
21 into Congress for actual approval, okay.

22 So that's our agenda for today, what
23 we're going to talk about, and then as Allison said
24 there will be a time for public comment. You don't
25 have to do it orally. If you want, you can, and then

1 you can also do it written, and then in addition you
2 can just come right over here and talk to our
3 wonderful stenographer and just do a direct
4 one-on-one if you didn't want to do an oral one in
5 front of everybody. So we are looking for public
6 comments. I can't emphasize that enough. We're not
7 trying to do this under -- in a vacuum, just do it
8 our own way. We're trying to find a win-win solution
9 as best we possibly can.

10 Next slide, please.

11 So the Fallon Range Training Complex, we
12 call it the Carrier in the Desert, and the reason is
13 NAS Fallon was designed, when we moved Top Gun from
14 San Diego up to Fallon, we did it because the ranges
15 were so good and the training that we got here was so
16 essential. So we realized the Top Gun out of San
17 Diego wasn't working as well as Top Gun out of Fallon
18 was.

19 So we have four bombing ranges and we
20 have airspaces 80 by 120 miles. We're not looking to
21 modernize the airspace by expanding it east, west,
22 north or south, because the FAA just does not have
23 the room for us to be able to do that. I will tell
24 you, though, 80 by 120 miles 30 years ago was enough
25 airspace. With our modernized aircraft and our

1 adversaries' modernized aircraft 80 by 120 miles is
2 not nearly enough.

3 There's an operation that we do every two
4 years off the coast of Australia where it's a joint
5 exercise with Australia, South Korea, Japan. It's
6 called Talisman Sabre, and they carved out, I believe
7 it was 200 by 400 miles of airspace over the Indian
8 Ocean, and the first lesson learned that they came up
9 with was can we get more airspace next time, and the
10 reason is our radars can look so far, you're actually
11 in the fight, the weapons are so good now that you're
12 actually in a weapons envelope right when you start a
13 fight, okay.

14 So we really can't ask for more airspace
15 and so, therefore, we're not doing that, but the
16 reason we call ourselves the Carrier in the Desert is
17 everything that we do at NAS Fallon mimics what we do
18 off of a carrier, except for the catapult launch and
19 the arrested landing. Everybody launches on the good
20 guys, i.e. the ones that come here to train in the
21 air wing, and an air wing is comprised of seven or
22 eight squadrons that go onto a carrier.

23 So everything that we do on our strikes
24 from the carrier is organic, meaning that if it's on
25 the carrier that's what we utilize. Sometimes we do

1 pull in Air Force assets, but more often than not we
2 launch our entire strike package from the carrier,
3 go do our strike and come back and land. So we mimic
4 that at NAS Fallon.

5 So the good guys are the blue forces. We
6 will launch out and we will go out to our eastern
7 boundaries. The bad guys will launch after us,
8 because they will stay on the western side, which is
9 essentially right over NAS Fallon. So it takes the
10 good guys a little bit longer to get out to the east.

11 The good guys go out to the east. They
12 get all set up. The bad guys launch out. They're
13 set up in the west. Everybody is ready to go. We
14 say check tape's on, fight's on, and we do our fight.
15 What happens in that training now is as a Navy
16 aviator is I go and I fight through the enemy
17 aircraft. I then defend against surface-to-air
18 missiles. I then locate my target, put my bomb on
19 the target. I then defend against surface-to-air
20 missiles and fight through enemy aircraft to get back
21 to the carrier, which would be simulated out in the
22 east at this point.

23 So we launch from the aircraft, we fight
24 into our strike, and then we have to fight back out
25 and then go back to the carrier. So that's why we

1 call ourselves the Carrier in the Desert because all
2 tactical training that is done at NAS Fallon is done
3 for carrier aviators.

4 In addition we do training of the Navy
5 SEALs out in Bravo 16. They do the same type of
6 training to where they get all of their dynamic and
7 static firing of their weapons on platforms that are
8 moveable. So they fire their -- they learn to fire
9 their weapons here, but they also learn to fire them
10 in a movement activity.

11 So they will get in their Humvees,
12 they'll drive around, handle and engage simulator
13 targets, and we'll talk about that in a little bit.

14 Next slide.

15 Okay, so the need for -- the need for
16 modernization really comes down to the fact that our
17 ranges have not evolved in 30 years, but technology
18 significantly has evolved. Our training has evolved
19 because we've gotten better. At NAS Fallon we have a
20 schoolhouse called Top Gun that most of you are
21 probably familiar with. That is one of eight
22 different schoolhouses that are housed under Naval
23 Aviation Warfighting Development Centers. So every
24 tactical training that we have has a warfare center
25 that is designed to ensure that our training is as

1 topnotch as possible. They are all housed under
2 Naval Aviation Warfighting Development Centers so
3 that we ensure that all eight of those schools work
4 together in coordination so that what one school is
5 doing matches up with the other ones so that we can
6 work as jointly as possible and get the best possible
7 training we have.

8 I mentioned the air wing strike that we
9 do. That builds up to where we end up having 20
10 aircraft going against 20 aircraft and going against
11 multiple targets that we would hit in our two main
12 bombing ranges, which is Bravo 17 and Bravo 20.
13 That's the culmination of a day and a half of
14 pre-flight planning and designing the mission. Then
15 we brief. Then we walk to our jets. We launch. We
16 do the fight, which lasts about 20 to 25 minutes, and
17 then we come back and we pull out every detail we can
18 as lessons learned in the debrief which can last up
19 to five hours. The next day we start all over again
20 with another two day cycle. So we continue to do
21 those evolutions and an air wing will come out for
22 three to four weeks to get their topnotch training.

23 The reason that the training came about
24 and what we do to entail the training comes out from
25 90 Days To Combat, which was an analysis done by

1 naval aviation to say these are all the training
2 tactical requirements that an air wing has to have
3 prior to going on deployment. So when an air wing
4 pulls out on the ship for deployment they are ready
5 to handle anything that they can possibly do on
6 deployment from close air support to, you know,
7 air-to-air engagements. So they hit every single
8 tactical training that they can possibly do. Their
9 training is at the highest level after they leave
10 Naval Air Station Fallon and while they're on
11 deployment we cannot simulate what we do at NAS
12 Fallon on deployment, because NAS Fallon is the only
13 place that we can actually train unless it's actual
14 combat.

15 So unless our carriers and our air wing
16 actually go into combat our training and readiness
17 drops while on deployment. That's how crucial and
18 essential NAS Fallon is at the start of deployment
19 they are as ready as they possibly can be.

20 The Navy SEALs do the same type of
21 training. I mentioned that a little bit. When they
22 come out to do their training, it's 18, 19, 20 year
23 olds that have just gone through their Naval SEAL
24 training called BUD/S. They pin on their warfare pin
25 and now they're attached to a SEAL unit that is going

1 to go on deployment. Navy Special Warfare has
2 decided, just like naval aviation, that within
3 90 days of deployment they have to come through NAS
4 Fallon and the reason is they get their topnotch
5 training. So they get trained on, you know, the
6 beaches in San Diego and Oceana, but they don't do
7 any desert style training and they don't have
8 anyplace where they can actually drive their vehicles
9 and fire the weapons and get to use them in a dynamic
10 environment.

11 So the problem that we have with the Navy
12 SEALs in their training on Bravo 16 is we have a
13 stimulated target set that they can fire, but because
14 the range is small we want to make sure that the
15 weapons stay on the range. That is obviously an
16 important safety factor for us. So in order to do
17 that we've designed a course that they run from south
18 to north and then turn around and come north to
19 south, because they can only fire to the west.

20 So when you have these type A personality
21 Navy SEALs and they know their threat when they drive
22 south to north is only going to be on the left,
23 they're not going to be looking to the right, they're
24 not going to be looking in front of them, they're not
25 going to be looking behind them. They know that the

1 only threat is going to come up on their left and
2 that's where they are going to focus their vision.
3 Well, in actual combat the threat can happen
4 anywhere.

5 So modernizing that range and expanding
6 it will allow them to have threats on all directions
7 and all sides and they can have multiple types of
8 scenarios that they play out instead of we know we're
9 running south to north, now we know we're running
10 north to south, we know where the threats are going
11 to be. They'll pop up different threats, but we know
12 what will end up happening. It's going to be on one
13 side of the -- one side of the Humvee when it comes
14 up to fire.

15 Most of the weapons they use out there
16 they can't even fire, because if the muzzle goes at
17 the wrong angle it will go off range. So they fire
18 it only at a static set target. They can't fire it
19 dynamically. Modernizing that range will allow them
20 to do dynamic at all times and have a far better
21 simulation of what they actually see in full combat.

22 Next slide, please.

23 So that's an explanation of how the SEALs
24 need to do it to make sure that they keep their
25 weapons on range. What I really want to emphasize is

1 that in naval aviation and in the Navy where we work
2 with our weapons, we do everything we can to ensure
3 that our weapons stay on range and we have a
4 tremendously positive safety record.

5 For the aviation picture we have depicted
6 here, when I first came to Fallon 25 years ago to
7 drop bombs I would find my target, I would drive into
8 my target and I would roll in on my target. I would
9 put my target into the sights. I'd reach my release
10 parameters and release my weapon. I was one to
11 two miles away from the target.

12 Desert Storm used those tactics and we
13 found that we were losing aircraft when we shouldn't
14 have. We went -- we over the last 30 years have gone
15 against competitors that have been far below us when
16 it comes to actual tactical capabilities. We have
17 not gone against a near-peer competitor and yet we
18 were losing aircraft in Desert Storm, and what we
19 realized was our tactics were not up to snuff. We
20 needed to do different tactics.

21 The Air Force realized the same thing the
22 Navy did and what ended up developing is what you see
23 pictured there. Instead of dropping weapons low and
24 close to the target, which put you close to the
25 threat that you're actually trying to take out, we

1 figured -- we realized, hey, these threats that we
2 have aren't just surface-to-air missiles. They are
3 also somebody that's just on the ground with a rifle
4 and they're also AAA, anti-aircraft artillery. This
5 anti-aircraft artillery is not the anti-aircraft
6 artillery that we saw in movies like World War II
7 movies in the Midway where somebody is actually
8 rolling the turret around and trying to train the
9 weapon in the area of the aircraft and firing it at
10 the aircraft.

11 These anti-aircraft artillery had radars
12 associated with them and so the radar picks up my
13 aircraft, knows my speed, my altitude and my heading
14 and it sends a projectile to where I'm going to be
15 when the projectile gets there. This is very lethal
16 and we want to stay away from them.

17 How we stay away from them is get above
18 them. We get above the rifles. We get above the
19 AAA. Now we're only dealing with the surface-to-air
20 missiles when we're up high. If I'm high and I'm far
21 away from the target, the surface-to-air missile has
22 to travel much further to get to me. There's a much
23 greater chance of me being able to survive that, come
24 back, have my asset, which is the aircraft, to be
25 able to go up the next day on a different mission.

1 So these tactics came about which
2 enhanced the development of new weapons. So we used
3 to just have dumb bombs, which was you dropped them
4 and they would just -- they would free-fall with
5 whatever energy you had and hit the target based on
6 where you released it.

7 Now we have weapons that are smart
8 weapons, Joint Direct Attack Munitions called JDAM,
9 and we also have laser guided bombs, which is the
10 premise of what we're looking for in our bombing
11 ranges to utilize, and I'll talk about the other
12 weapons here in a second that we did not touch on.

13 So all of these weapons have with them,
14 they have flight control systems, they have a flight
15 control computer and they have batteries. Everybody
16 knows that any type of computer system is not
17 failsafe. We have a very high success rate of our
18 weapons operating the way they are supposed to, but
19 we have to maintain the same safety factor that we
20 currently have in our smaller ranges, and so how we
21 do it now with our safety factors in small ranges is
22 we drop our weapons from a lower altitude at a slower
23 airspeed and on a specific heading. That ensures
24 that no matter what happens with the weapon, if it
25 fails, it stays on the range.

1 If we drop our weapons like we do in
2 tactical combat we will be dropping them from 12 to
3 14 miles. I mentioned they have flight control
4 systems, they have computers and they have batteries.
5 If anything fails on that bomb we have to make sure
6 it's going to stay on the range. So, for example, if
7 the battery fails on a Joint Direct Attack Munition,
8 and this happens statistically about 1 every 8,000
9 Joint Direct Attack Munitions, which is a pretty darn
10 good success rate for the weapon operating, 7,999 out
11 of 8,000 is pretty darn good. Our contractors are
12 trying to get that to be 8,000 out of 8,000, but
13 perfection is something that is a little out of the
14 realm of expecting to happen when you're talking
15 about mechanical and computer associated hardware and
16 software.

17 So anyways, we drop this bomb. If the
18 battery fails it will now free-fall like a dumb bomb.
19 Well, if I drop a bomb at 12 miles that has Joint
20 Direct Attack Munition and it is going to actually
21 flight control and control itself onto pinpoint
22 accuracy within 1 to 3 meters of the target, I have
23 to give it more than 12 miles' worth of energy
24 because as it's controlling itself it's bleeding off
25 energy. Anybody that's a pilot understands if you go

1 into a turn, if you want to maintain your airspeed
2 you have to add a little bit of power. A bomb
3 doesn't have extra power. It only has what you give
4 it. So if you free-fall it, you give it, let's just
5 say, 13 miles of energy and it's going to free-fall
6 and get the pinpoint accuracy at 12 miles. If the
7 battery fails it's going to free-fall at 13 miles.
8 That's why we have to have a little bit of extra
9 space there to ensure safety.

10 So that's why as you look at the ranges
11 getting bigger, they are getting bigger for a safety
12 factor that we are held accountable for of
13 99.9 percent safety.

14 Battery went dead. I think I will just
15 speak louder, which is a little bit better. If you
16 can't hear me at any time please let me know.

17 So we want to make sure that we maintain
18 the same safety factor that we had on our current
19 ranges when we go to our modernized ranges of
20 99.9 percent safety factor. So if there's a failure
21 of any of these weapons we have to make sure that it
22 stays on the range, doesn't go off the range, and
23 that's why you're seeing, even though we have
24 pinpoint accuracy weapons that hit 99 percent of the
25 time exactly on the target, and of that 1 percent of

1 the time that it's not hitting on the target it's
2 still hitting in the target area. So the range
3 itself that we will be dropping bombs on is not as
4 large as what you see depicted. That's the safety
5 factor and the buffer. The actual target areas will
6 be about the same size of what we have as to where
7 our bombs will be hitting, but we have to ensure that
8 we have the safety so that nobody is just hanging out
9 there, if we happen to have a stray weapon, we
10 definitely don't want it to hurt anybody. That's why
11 we're looking for the more land that we have, okay.

12 So that is a breakdown of the Navy SEALs
13 need more area to make sure that they keep their
14 weapons on the range when they are firing and that we
15 make sure that our weapons stay on our ranges as well
16 when we're talking about dropping -- dropping bombs
17 from aircraft.

18 Next slide, please.

19 So the bottom line is on the need to
20 modernize. Thirty years ago I dropped really close
21 to the target. I didn't need as much range. Now
22 when I drop my Joint Direct Attack Munition I
23 will fight through enemy aircraft, I will defend
24 against surface-to-air missiles, and then the fight
25 stops so that I can get to my certain heading, my

1 certain altitude, and my slow airspeed so I can
2 release my Joint Direct Attack Munition and ensure
3 that it stays on the range, if it has a failure. So
4 in order to do that on a smaller range I have to be
5 lower and slower so I don't give it enough kinematics
6 so that it can go off the range. So we maintain that
7 safety factor of making sure that the bomb will stay
8 on the range. However, that's not how I'm dropping
9 it in combat.

10 Now, I will you tell you the first time I
11 drop a Joint Direct Attack Munition I still have to
12 make sure did the ordnance men build the bomb
13 correctly? Did the aviations electronics men have it
14 so that the bomb is talking to the aircraft and the
15 aircraft talking to the bomb? Is the aircraft
16 picking up the proper satellite and getting the
17 proper coordinates? When I released the bomb did I
18 go through all my proper checklists and get my
19 switchology and release the bomb in the proper area
20 on the proper target and hit it? Did I get battle
21 damage assessment, i.e. my forward looking infrared
22 picking up the bomb hitting the target so I can
23 validate that I hit what I was supposed to hit and it
24 actually did hit so that we know when we get back to
25 the boat, as we simulate it here in Fallon, somebody

1 else doesn't have to go out on the next wave and hit
2 that same target because I took it out. So that's
3 great training.

4 The second time I do it I've already done
5 that bomb drop. I'm not doing it how I would
6 normally do it in combat. How I would do it in
7 combat is after I'm done with the enemy aircraft,
8 after I'm done with the surface-to-air missile and I
9 have a way to get into the target, I pull the winds,
10 figure out where the winds are, and I'm going to drop
11 into a headwind or a tailwind and I'm going to pick a
12 headwind or a tailwind, whichever one is closest to
13 me, and the reason I'm going to do that is anybody
14 that has ever flown from the west coast to the east
15 coast and then back knows that your flight takes less
16 time to go west to east than it does east to west
17 because of the jet stream.

18 So if I drop a bomb into a headwind or a
19 tailwind the computer can calculate that. However,
20 the bomb cannot actually handle a crosswind because
21 it doesn't have -- it doesn't have an engine on it
22 and it doesn't have flight surfaces that are big
23 enough to be able to counter a 70 degree or a 70 knot
24 crosswind, all right. So I have to pick a headwind
25 or a tailwind.

1 So when you look at the bombing ranges
2 you will see a pie chart essentially, a half of a
3 pie. In reality what we need is 360 degrees to be
4 able to pick the headwind or the tailwind that is
5 closest to us, because that's what I'm going to take
6 in combat. What we realized was more reasonable when
7 it looks at the amount of space that we want to take
8 up is if we go with 180 degrees that will give us
9 either a headwind or a tailwind. So that's why
10 you're looking at a half pie when you look at the
11 bombing ranges.

12 In addition to that we only looked at
13 laser guided bombs and we only looked at Joint Direct
14 Attack Munitions. We have weapons that have ranges
15 far greater than what we're asking for. Our Standoff
16 Land Attack Missile, extended range, our JASSM and
17 our JSOW weapons all have ranges far greater than
18 what we're asking for. Why are we not asking to be
19 able to have a range for those, because we didn't
20 want to try to extend the ranges out 60, 70,
21 80 miles. We realize that there is some rational,
22 you know, limit to what we can ask for. So we said
23 what do we normally train with here, what can we use,
24 what makes sense and that's what we asked for.

25 So we asked not for 360 degrees,

1 180 degrees so that we can get that headwind or
2 tailwind and we only asked for the weapons that we're
3 actually utilizing all the time, but were not able to
4 train with the way we actually use them in combat,
5 okay.

6 So when it comes to range modernization
7 what I want to emphasize to people is we have not
8 just advanced technologically over the last 30 years,
9 but all of our adversaries have as well. The example
10 I use is China in 1999 had a defense budget to where
11 they spent \$6 billion on their defense budget. They
12 have increased their defense budget every single year
13 since, and in 2018 they spent 173 billion. So
14 they've increased their defense budget by a factor of
15 28 times.

16 China now has two aircraft carriers.
17 They have increased their aircraft loading. They
18 have 26 times the amount of aircraft that they had
19 20 years ago. Their aircraft are now all third and
20 fourth generation and they are taking a fifth
21 generation fighter and reverse engineering it and
22 coming up with their own Joint Strike Fighter to go
23 against us. They are a threat significantly greater
24 than they were 20 years ago.

25 So people that are outside the realm of

1 understanding what we train to, and what we train to
2 at NAS Fallon is we take all of our assets and we
3 utilize them at our topnotch best capability as to
4 what we have and how we can utilize it. We also look
5 at what do our adversaries have, how should they
6 employ those weapons, how are they currently
7 employing them based on intelligence, and we come up
8 with our tactics to try to defend against those and
9 try to find a best way to utilize it.

10 When I first came to Fallon 25 years ago
11 we had the technological advantage on any one of our
12 adversaries. I could fire my missile at them before
13 they could fire at me. That's nice to know that I
14 have something going against them before they can
15 reach out and touch me. They have something to deal
16 with and I can continue pressing in on them. We
17 don't have that advantage any more.

18 The advantage we have over every one of
19 our adversaries is how well we train, how good our
20 schools are, and our adversaries are trying to mimic
21 and copy what we do at NAWDC, which is essentially
22 Top Gun. Our training is the best thing that we have
23 going for us right now. We are doing everything we
24 can to advance our weapons to give our people the
25 advantage, if and when we ever have to go to combat,

1 but right now the best thing that we have is our
2 training, which is why we're asking for what we're
3 asking for.

4 This is not something, and I emphasize
5 this, this is not something that the Navy wants to
6 do. We do not want extra land space to have to
7 manage. This is a requirement. If we are going to
8 continue training at NAS Fallon, and if we are going
9 to continue trying to train at a top level, topnotch
10 so that our people don't go into harm's way
11 unprepared, this is a requirement.

12 So I'm not a miner. I'm not a cattle
13 rancher. That is not my job. I understand that
14 there will be negative affects as this comes into
15 play, but my job is to ensure that the people that go
16 into combat, if they ever have to go into combat,
17 they are trained to a top level. So that is my
18 requirement and my responsibility and we have done a
19 thorough analysis of what we're asking for, and I
20 just want to emphasize to you we're not asking for
21 this because it would be a good idea. We're asking
22 for this because the last 20 years, at least, we have
23 trained at a deficit compared to what we should be
24 training with with our weapons.

25 Next slide.

1 If you have any questions about anything
2 that I said or want more information about what we do
3 at NAS Fallon or what we do -- what they do at NAWDC,
4 ask any of the flight suits in the room and they will
5 be able to give more info. So like I said, that was
6 an hour and half brief that I tried to break down. I
7 went a little bit longer today, because I wanted to
8 give a little more information, but the purpose of
9 today's meeting really is for Mr. Alex Stone to talk
10 about all the information we took in, alternatives
11 that we came up with, and why Alternative 3 ends up
12 being our preferred alternative, and then for you to
13 be able to provide comments, and we look forward to
14 your comments because we really want to try to find
15 the best win-win solution that we possibly can, but I
16 will emphasize to you the Navy has to try to push
17 forward with what we need, not want, but what we need
18 to be able to make sure that our training is as
19 adequate as possible as we push forward, but I will
20 be able available afterwards if you have any
21 questions for me, and like I said, any of the flight
22 suits can answer any of your questions about the
23 naval aviation portion, and we have Navy SEALs here
24 as well that can talk to you about any of the weapons
25 that they use in the training that they do on NAS

1 Fallon.

2 Okay, thank you very much. Alex.

3 MR. STONE: Thanks, Captain, microphone
4 working?

5 Good, good. I think that was one of
6 those battery failures in the JDAM that the Captain
7 was talking about. He was illustrating that point
8 with the microphone.

9 Again my name is Alex Stone. I am in
10 charge of the EIS. I'm not going to take the podium.
11 I will use the microphone.

12 Thanks for coming. We really appreciate
13 you taking your time to be here. It's really great
14 to have a good turn out here.

15 I'm in charge of the EIS portion. I am
16 not, as you can see, not a fighter pilot, a jet
17 flier, but I am in charge of the EIS. I'm
18 representing a team of people. It's really been a
19 team effort to put together this EIS. It's
20 complicated so we wanted to make sure we have a broad
21 expertise of folks, and I hope you have had a chance
22 to meet the team, and I know I've had a lot of great
23 interaction with people before we started this
24 presentation, and like the Captain said, we will both
25 be here after. I think that's -- we like giving the

1 presentation, but I think some of the best
2 interaction is one-on-one with the poster stations
3 and around the maps.

4 So thanks for coming and with that I will
5 go through some slides. I'm kind of going to give a
6 reader's guide to the EIS and hit some of the
7 highlights of the EIS. It's not meant to be a
8 comprehensive summary of the entire EIS, so I will
9 talk a bit about what is in the EIS and how we
10 developed the EIS and where we are in the process,
11 where we go from here.

12 Like the Captain said, this is a really
13 critical stage in the whole process of the
14 modernization because we're getting your input on the
15 Draft EIS and that's really what we're all about here
16 during this portion.

17 The first slide.

18 The EIS is prepared in accordance with
19 the National Environmental Policy Act, which I think
20 the two key aspects of NEPA is that this requires the
21 federal government to evaluate and consider the
22 environmental impacts of a proposal before a decision
23 is made, which ultimately leads to a better decision,
24 and the second aspect of that is to involve the
25 public in that process, and that's what we're doing

1 here right now.

2 So to take a little bit of a step back, I
3 think the Captain talked about this, but just to
4 remind everyone sort of where we started, a couple of
5 years ago we went out with what is called scoping
6 where we came out with just the proposal. We didn't
7 have any of the analysis done or the alternatives or
8 really anything other than really the requirements
9 that the Captain talked about. We came out and
10 talked about what are the requirements and then we
11 asked for input from the public on different ways to
12 achieve those requirements, what are -- what areas
13 should we look at, what are the sensitive resources
14 out there, what is out there in the land that we're
15 proposing to withdraw, what are the issues that are
16 important that have potential impacts.

17 We gathered that input without really any
18 more specifics about what the proposal was going to
19 be or any of the alternatives and we used that in
20 developing the Draft EIS that you see reflected here
21 that is out for comment.

22 In addition to the public we realized
23 with the expansion outside of the fence line of the
24 Navy's current ranges and base here in Fallon we
25 needed other experts, too. So we took on a

1 relationship, a cooperating agency relationship with
2 the local counties, state agencies and other federal
3 agencies with jurisdiction or expertise in this
4 project. All of that input is reflected in the Draft
5 EIS as well as the really important aspect of working
6 with all the tribes in the regional area. All that
7 input we used to develop the Draft EIS.

8 Next slide.

9 A really key part of the EIS is the
10 alternatives. We have our requirements, what we need
11 to do that the Captain talked about. The
12 alternatives look at different ways we could meet
13 those requirements.

14 So again the scoping when we went out we
15 didn't have alternatives. So based on the input from
16 the public and from other agencies we developed
17 alternatives. We considered all kinds of
18 alternatives, but we carried forward four that met
19 our requirements for analysis in the EIS.

20 All of the other alternatives that we
21 considered we spent a long time evaluating whether
22 they would work and that's discussed in detail in the
23 Draft EIS and I think that's an important area for
24 people to look at, kind of reflecting some of the
25 discussions we've had around the room here. People

1 have asked about what about this area, why did -- why
2 is this expansion of this bombing range, why does it
3 look exactly like this, why not over here, and why
4 weren't other things considered and this portion of
5 the Draft EIS describes everything that we have
6 gotten during this process, and there were quite a
7 few suggestions, and the reasons why they weren't
8 carried forward for analysis.

9 So we did again carry forward four
10 different alternatives. The first alternative I will
11 describe here is the basic -- reflects the original
12 scoping concept and it really has four elements. The
13 first element is to expand the bombing ranges. We
14 have four bombing ranges. We're proposing to expand
15 three of the four bombing ranges or Bravo ranges by
16 acquiring or by withdrawing federal lands that is
17 under -- public land that is under the authority of
18 the Bureau of Land Management. That is kind of one
19 element.

20 The second element is the acquisition of
21 non-federal private land, which is most prevalent in
22 the B-20 expansion area.

23 The third element is modernizing the
24 airspace. We're not proposing to laterally expand
25 the outer -- the boundaries of the ranges, but to

1 reconfigure the airspace within the boundaries to be
2 more effective and to align with the expanded bombing
3 ranges, and the fourth element is infrastructure
4 associated with the expansion of the bombing ranges.
5 That is the Alternative Number 1 in the EIS.

6 The second alternative looks at that same
7 area with a theme of managed access. Basically our
8 recognition that we're withdrawing land that is open
9 to other land uses right now and so in this
10 alternative we explore what types of managed access
11 would be permissible and would be compatible with our
12 training activities, and as you can see from the
13 slide after a considerable amount of working with
14 different interests and looking at different land
15 uses, the bombing ranges we have very limited access
16 that is allowable on bombing ranges for really two
17 reasons.

18 First of all, the hazards associated with
19 the -- like the Captain described, the hazards
20 associated with the bombing activities, the need to
21 have an area, not just the impact areas, but a buffer
22 around that area to account for failures requires
23 that the area be closed to public access, and the
24 second element is how busy we are.

25 So a number of people have asked about

1 when you're not using the range could other access be
2 allowed and unfortunately the range is used almost
3 all the time. So there is really, between the hazard
4 and how busy we are, very little opportunity to have
5 other managed access on the bombing ranges with a
6 couple of exceptions that I will the mention right
7 now.

8 The bighorn sheep hunt would be
9 permissible in the B-17 area because of the short
10 duration and we're able to work it in with our range
11 scheduling during over generally the holiday period
12 in a coordinated and controlled way on the B-17.
13 Other land uses again in the bombing ranges is not
14 permissible.

15 The Dixie Valley Training Area is an area
16 that is for non-hazardous training that we're
17 expanding. That area would continue to be allowed to
18 be open for most land uses. The concern there is
19 incompatible development. So most land uses it's
20 going to continue to be open as the Dixie Valley
21 Training Area is right now to most land uses. What
22 would not be allowable is large scale infrastructure
23 that is incompatible like transmission lines, towers,
24 large scale mining. We would be able to accommodate
25 in certain areas under certain conditions geothermal

1 as well as salable minerals sand and gravel.

2 Next slide.

3 Alternative 3 really reflects our -- this
4 is our preferred alternative and really reflects our
5 efforts at all that I talked about in terms of public
6 input, cooperating agencies, tribes where we really
7 feel like this allows us to meet our requirements and
8 does everything we can to minimize impacts.

9 As the Captain mentioned, we certainly
10 recognize there are impacts and we're not able to
11 avoid or reduce or minimize all of them, but
12 Alternative 3 reflects our efforts to do that, and
13 the key differences between Alternative 3 and the
14 original proposal, the B-17 bombing range is shifted
15 to the south and to the east, avoids the relocation
16 of 839, the Rawhide Mine Road, gets away from the
17 mountain range in that 839 area.

18 It does -- by moving the range to the
19 east it does overlap the Gabbs Highway, State Highway
20 361. So in this alternative we would relocate State
21 Highway 361. It would continue to provide access to
22 Gabbs just through a relocated corridor.

23 The other differences in Alternative 3
24 that is especially important here is in the B-20
25 area, the original proposal the withdrawal overlapped

1 East County Road and in Alternative 3 the withdrawal
2 does not overlap East County Road. It would remain
3 open and is not part of the withdrawal.

4 Similar in B-16, there is a road in that
5 area, Simpson Road, which in this alternative is no
6 longer part of the withdrawal.

7 Other aspects of Alternative 3 is the
8 Dixie Valley Training Area south of Highway 50, those
9 areas that were in the -- that were in Alternative 1
10 are no longer part of the withdrawal area. Again
11 this is the Navy's preferred alternative.

12 Next slide.

13 The National Environmental Policy Act
14 requires us to look at a no action alternative, would
15 not meet any of the requirements that the Captain
16 described, but it's in the EIS and carried forward
17 for analysis, which is a requirement. Under this
18 alternative we wouldn't modernize the ranges or even
19 renew the existing land ranges that we have right
20 now.

21 Next slide.

22 Now, we turn to kind of go back to the
23 reader's guide to the EIS. The beginning portions of
24 the EIS talk about the aspects that the Captain
25 summarized, the requirements. The next part is about

1 the alternatives that I just described, the ones that
2 were considered and not carried forward and those
3 that were carried forward. The rest of the EIS looks
4 at what are the environmental impacts associated with
5 each of those alternatives.

6 We believe the EIS is a comprehensive
7 analysis of everything and reflects all the input we
8 got, but it's just a draft so you're welcome to tell
9 us what's missing, what's not right, what's incorrect
10 in the EIS.

11 We organized the EIS into these resource
12 areas that you see right here, so if you have a
13 particular area of interest in one of these, this is
14 the way it's organized. I'll talk about some of
15 these resource areas just briefly, but not each of
16 them. So if I don't talk about it you can see the
17 list here.

18 Next slide.

19 Mining and mineral resources. As I
20 described, the bombing ranges are going to be closed
21 to mineral development. We realize that is an impact
22 on any of the claims in that area or any potential
23 mineral development in that area would not be
24 permitted in any of the areas, including the Dixie
25 Valley, with the exception of geothermal in certain

1 areas and salable minerals.

2 Next slide.

3 Grazing, this is especially an impact
4 that we recognize in the B-17 area, a number of
5 allotments in that area. The Navy spent a
6 considerable amount of time working with the
7 individual grazers on learning more about how they
8 use their allotments, what times of year they're
9 grazing, where they're grazing, how often they need
10 to access the areas during the grazing period all
11 with the goal of potentially considering a Navy
12 managed grazing program on the bombing ranges, which
13 is certainly not something -- a land use we typically
14 have on live bombing ranges, and we also educated the
15 grazers about how the range works, how busy we are,
16 what are the restrictions we have on where people can
17 be when we're operating. Ultimately we determined
18 that we're not able to accommodate grazing on the
19 bombing ranges after considerable effort, but
20 ultimately determined there would not be any grazing
21 on the bombing ranges.

22 Any grazing on the Dixie Valley Training
23 Area would continue again. That is not a restriction
24 that the Navy would have on any type of grazing in
25 that area.

1 Next slide.

2 Transportation, we recognize that there
3 is an impact on transportation. I guess we can kind
4 of look at each area. The first one I think I
5 described under this alternative, the B-17 expansion
6 withdrawal would close a portion of the Gabbs
7 Highway, but we would relocate that state highway
8 outside of that so the impact would be minimized with
9 the reduced road.

10 We talked about East County Road. It
11 would continue to be open. We do recognize, though,
12 with the closure of the B-20 Access Road is an impact
13 that we do recognize. Also similarly in the B-16,
14 Sand Canyon Road would be closed to access again due
15 to the safety associated with the air-to-ground or
16 the Naval Special Warfare in the B-16 case and how
17 busy the ranges are, no longer -- those roads would
18 no longer be accessible to the public.

19 Next slide.

20 Noise, the noise impacts are -- the
21 changes -- we're going to continue to train in the
22 same manner that we are right now. We're not -- even
23 though we're expanding the bombing ranges we're not
24 increasing the training. It's the same type of
25 training at the same level just in the expanded

1 bombing ranges. We are making changes to the
2 airspace so there are new areas that would experience
3 noises associated with airplanes flying at lower
4 altitudes mainly in the eastern portion of the
5 airspace. There wouldn't be an impact, a change in
6 noise outside of the expanded bombing ranges. The
7 noise from air-to-ground would continue to be
8 contained within the bombing withdrawal area.

9 Next slide.

10 Water resources, two aspects to water
11 resources, the first being water quality. The EIS
12 determined that we're really not expecting there to
13 be any significant impact to water quality. The
14 bombs when they explode, highly energetic event, very
15 little residue. We also have a program where we
16 maintain our ranges so any debris is cleaned up so we
17 would not expect that we're going to have a
18 constituent -- munitions constituents migrating even
19 outside of the impact areas and certainly not outside
20 of the withdrawal area for the bombing ranges.

21 Water rights, kind of the second aspect
22 of this topic, we do recognize that we are
23 withdrawing lands that have water rights underneath
24 those and we do recognize in some cases the Navy may
25 be -- there may not be a way to access the water

1 rights after the withdrawal. We would look at those
2 on a case by case basis and the Navy may ultimately
3 acquire some of the water rights if another solution
4 isn't determined.

5 Next slide.

6 Cultural resources. The EIS, we
7 recognize and analyzed that there is potential impact
8 to cultural resources from airplane noise, vibration.
9 We're working closely with all of the tribes in the
10 regional area and the State Historic Preservation, we
11 did a consultation with that office. We don't
12 believe there would be any significant impacts.

13 The Captain talked about the most -- for
14 the on-the-ground type of cultural resources, the
15 impact areas are very small. Most of the land areas
16 there is not going to be any change to the land
17 activity that allows us to avoid cultural resources
18 in those areas. So we're not expecting an impact on
19 cultural resources.

20 Recreation, again the bombing ranges are
21 very difficult to provide access due to how
22 frequently the ranges are used and the safety
23 concerns associated with those. So most recreation
24 uses would not be permitted on the bombing ranges
25 with the exception that I talked about, the very

1 limited bighorn sheep hunting that we would be able
2 to accommodate on B-17. Other types of recreation
3 would not be permitted on the bombing ranges.

4 The Dixie Valley Training Area, though,
5 would remain open to all recreational uses, hunting,
6 off highway vehicle, all -- no restrictions on
7 recreation in the Dixie Valley Training Area.

8 Next slide.

9 Mitigation measures, I think I described
10 how in our alternatives development process we
11 incorporated as much as we can areas where we believe
12 that we're able to mitigate impacts by still meeting
13 our requirements, and the mitigation measures are
14 really an important area of the EIS, really a
15 critical area. We haven't finalized anything. This
16 is a Draft EIS and this is definitely an area of the
17 EIS that we welcome your input on what are mitigation
18 measures that the Navy should consider. All of those
19 we would carefully evaluate.

20 Next slide.

21 Kind of coming back to the process of
22 where we are right now and where we go from here, the
23 Draft EIS is available for public comments through
24 January 15th. At that point the Navy will consider
25 all the comments that we got during the meeting, as

1 well as in the mail, through the website. We will
2 carefully consider all of those comments and we will
3 develop the Final EIS.

4 The Final EIS will contain the comments
5 we received and the Navy's responses to the comments,
6 as well as any changes to any of the alternatives,
7 any of the analysis that we talked about, the
8 mitigation measures, all of those will be reflected
9 in the Final EIS, and then we will publish the Final
10 EIS so you will have an opportunity, if you made a
11 comment, to see how the comment was considered and
12 what was -- what is our response to your comment.

13 We will put that out and there will be an
14 opportunity to review that before the Navy will issue
15 the Record of Decision, which we think will be around
16 the beginning of 2020.

17 With that, that's all we have in terms of
18 a presentation. I will turn it over to Allison who
19 will go over the procedures for the public hearing
20 portion.

21 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Alex.

22 So as you heard from both Captain
23 Halloran and Mr. Stone, the Navy welcomes public
24 review and comments on the Draft Environmental Impact
25 Statement, and there are several ways that you're

1 able to submit comments.

2 As I mentioned, we will be having an oral
3 comment session immediately after I finish these
4 remarks. You may also provide a comment directly to
5 Janet, if you do not want to use the microphone. She
6 will be available afterwards for one-on-one. You can
7 have a seat right there.

8 You can also submit written comments. We
9 have a comment table in the center of the room there
10 that has pens and comment forms that you can turn in
11 today or take home and mail to the address that is on
12 the -- that is in your brochure and on your comment
13 form as well.

14 We also have a project website where you
15 can access all of the information that you have seen
16 here today, everything from the Executive Summary
17 Brochure to the posters, the video, and that
18 presentation that we just looked at is all available
19 on the website and we encourage you to share this
20 information with your neighbors and community.

21 So at this time -- Oh, before I do that I
22 also should mention the website has an online comment
23 form as well. So you can access it through the
24 address and you can provide your comments via the
25 website. You just want to do so by January 15th.

1 That will be the closing date of the comment period,
2 and any comments received by that time the Navy will
3 again consider and incorporate as appropriate into
4 the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

5 Okay, I think at this time we're ready
6 to start the oral comment portion of the meeting. So
7 I will walk over here, get the lectern ready for you.

8 So at this time I have one person signed
9 up to speak. Is there anyone else at this time who
10 wants to give an oral comment with the microphone?

11 Okay, then I will go through the ground
12 rules very quickly, but so far we have one person so
13 we might give you a little extra time. Please keep
14 in mind that the EIS process is intended to ensure
15 that the decision makers will be fully informed about
16 the potential environmental impact associated with
17 the various alternatives before they decide on a
18 course of action.

19 The intent of the oral comment session is
20 to obtain public comments. It's not a debate nor is
21 it a question and answer session. The Navy will
22 receive your comments, but will not respond to them
23 or answer questions at this time.

24 When we conclude the oral comment portion
25 we will return to the open house, so if you have

1 specific questions about the presentation or any
2 information that you have reviewed today, we
3 encourage you to please go to the team members and
4 ask questions at that time.

5 Responses to comments will be provided in
6 the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Comments
7 on issues unrelated to this Draft EIS are beyond the
8 scope of this meeting and will be identified as such.

9 So just to make sure we get an accurate
10 recording of your comment we ask that you speak very
11 clearly into the microphone. I think we've got a
12 good PA system, assuming the battery doesn't go out
13 again, but we want to make sure that Janet can hear
14 you and she can write down everything that you say,
15 and of course the Navy team wants to know -- hear
16 your comments as well.

17 It's helpful if you provide your name and
18 spell your last name as well, but there's no need to
19 provide any other personal information.

20 Every speaker will have three minutes to
21 provide his or her comments. You do not have to
22 speak for the full three minutes, but of course you
23 have that time. If you have a written comment there
24 is no limit to the number of pages you can submit, so
25 you can again provide them here tonight, mail in or

Public Meeting - Lovelock - 12/13/2018
Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization

1 STATE OF NEVADA)
)
2 COUNTY OF WASHOE)

3

4 I, JANET MENGES, CCR #206, a Certified
5 Court Reporter in and for the State of Nevada, do
6 hereby certify:

7 That I was personally present for the
8 purpose of acting as a Certified Court Reporter in
9 the matter entitled herein;

10 That said transcript, pages 1 through 57,
11 which appears hereinbefore was taken in verbatim
12 stenotype notes by me and thereafter transcribed into
13 typewriting as herein appears to the best of my
14 knowledge, skill, and ability, and is a true record
15 thereof.

16 Dated at Reno, Nevada on this 24th Day,
17 December, 2018.

18

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JANET MENGES, CCR #206

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