

Environmental Assessment
for the
U.S. Army Garrison Fort Rucker
New Fuel Storage Facility at Hanchey Army Helipoint



Prepared For:

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
ACROD	Alabama Cultural Resources Online Database
ADCNR	Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
ADEM	Alabama Department of Environmental Management
AHC	Alabama Historical Commission
AHP	Army Heliport
APE	Area of Potential Effects
AR	Army Regulation
AVCOE	Army Aviation Center of Excellence
BA	Biological Assessment
BGEPA	Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
BMP	Best Management Practices
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act
COA	Course of Action
CWA	Clean Water Act

DA	Department of the Army
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FONPA	Finding of No Practicable Alternative
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
HMCC	Hazardous Material Control Center
HMMP	Hazardous Materials Management Program
HTMW	Hazardous and Toxic Materials and Wastes
HTRW	Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Waste
HWMP	Hazardous Waste Management Plan
ICRMP	Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan
ICUZC	Installation Compatible Use Zone Study
IICEP	Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning
IONMP	Installation Operational Noise Management Plan
ISCP	Installation Spill Contingency Plan
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NLEB	Northern Long-eared Bat
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPCC	Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WNS	White-nose Syndrome

1 Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

1.1 Introduction

This Environmental Assessment (EA) will describe the Proposed Action and alternatives related to the construction and operation of a new fuel storage facility at Hanchey Army Heliport (AHP) within the Fort Rucker Installation. Fort Rucker is the headquarters for U.S. Army Aviation, and serves as the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence (AVCOE), covering approximately 63,000 acres in southeastern Alabama. Fort Rucker is comprised of aviation base fields, stage fields, remote training sites, unit training areas, small arms ranges, and cantonment area. Training areas within Fort Rucker are utilized by Soldiers assigned to Fort Rucker, active Army units from other installations, U.S. Army Reserve, National Guard, and U.S. Air Force units. The 1st Battalion, 14th Aviation Regiment trains aviators in the AH-64D/E aircraft at Hanchey AHP, one of three active base fields at Fort Rucker.

1.2 Project Location and Description

Fort Rucker averages 17 miles long by 9 miles wide and is located approximately 25 miles northwest of Dothan, Alabama, between the cities of Daleville, Enterprise, and Ozark in the counties of Coffee and Dale. Hanchey AHP is located near the southeast corner of the Installation.

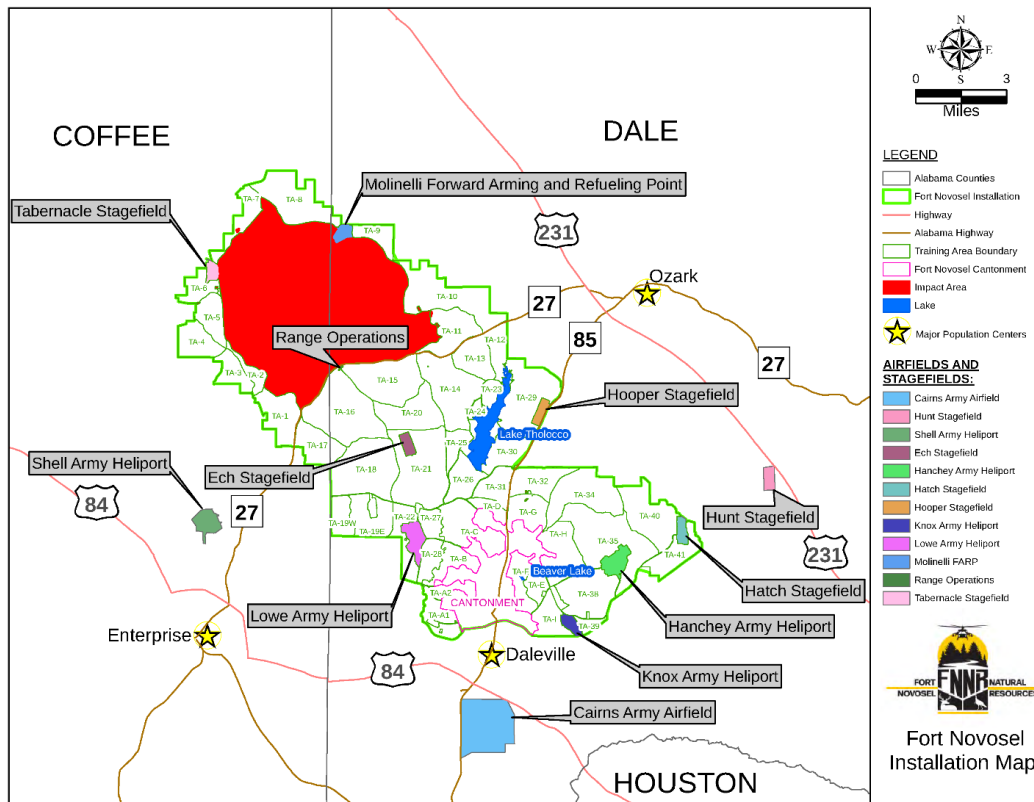


Figure 1. Map of Fort Rucker Installation (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024)

1.3 Background

During the first few months of World War II, the mobilization of manpower required for the defense of the United States led to the creation of new training camps and military bases. Fort Rucker, originally called Camp Rucker, opened as an Army post on May 1, 1942. The Army Aviation Center was officially established at Camp Rucker on February 1, 1955, and later that year, Camp Rucker was given permanent status and renamed Fort Rucker.

During the Vietnam War, the use of helicopters became crucial to warfighting and gradually became the dominant focus at Fort Rucker. Hanchey Field, also known as Hanchey Army Heliport (AHP), served as an essential heliport at the time and is still to this day (US Army Aviation Center and Fort Rucker, 2016). Hanchey AHP includes 18 helipads for attack and advanced scout helicopters, utilized for both primary and advanced flight courses. In addition to housing maintenance and support facilities, Hanchey AHP is equipped with lights for nighttime use (Fort Rucker, 2011).

Fort Rucker's mission "Provides synchronized and integrated base support for the aviation training mission and quality-of-life services for Soldiers, Civilians, and Family members" (Army, 2025a). Named the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence (AVCOE) in 2008, AVCOE at Fort Rucker generates and develops highly trained, disciplined, and fit Aviation Warfighters while delivering aviation training and education, developing leaders, and driving change by modernizing the Force (Army, 2025b).

In support of the mission, Fort Rucker serves as a refueling point for response teams during adverse weather and natural disasters in the region. One of the crucial fuel storage facilities within the Installation is located within Hanchey AHP. The current fuel storage facility is located near the southwest corner of Hanchey AHP and is comprised of four tanks (two receipt tanks and two issue tanks), two fill stand positions, two offload positions, and supporting infrastructure.

1.4 Purpose

The purpose of this project is to improve fuel supply planning and forecasting for Fort Rucker by constructing a new fuel storage facility to be utilized as a reserve to sustain operations at Hanchey AHP.

1.5 Need

The fuel storage capacity at Hanchey AHP is restricted by safety considerations to a three-day supply. This creates a logistical vulnerability, as weather-related impacts on training intensity often leave the facility unable to accept scheduled fuel deliveries, jeopardizing a consistent fuel supply. Most recently, Defense Logistics Agency – Energy (DLA-E) supply planners have had to adjust the number of daily deliveries and subsequently incur costs for supplier downtime. Additionally, mechanical failures at the existing fuel storage facility have contributed to supply disruptions. Disruptions to fuel truck delivery schedules impact the fuel supply at Hanchey AHP, ultimately affecting mission support. Increasing the total fuel capacity at Hanchey AHP is needed to improve fuel supply planning and forecasting for Fort Rucker.

1.6 NEPA Compliance Requirements

The U.S. Department of the Army (DA) is the lead federal agency for the NEPA process. The EA will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 et seq.); *Department of Defense National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures*; and Protection and Enhancement Army Regulation (AR) 200-1. The information presented in the EA will serve as the basis for deciding whether the proposed action would result in significant impacts to the human environment requiring the preparation of an environmental impacts statement (EIS), or whether no significant impacts would occur, in which case, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) would be appropriate. If it is determined that the execution of the proposed action would involve “construction” in a wetland, as defined in Executive Order (EO) 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*, or “action” in a floodplain under EO 11988, *Floodplain Management*, a Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) would be prepared in conjunction with the FONSI.

The potential direct, indirect, and cumulative physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects of the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative will be analyzed in the EA. A detailed description of the proposed action is provided in Section 2.1

This EA evaluates the potential impacts of implementing the Proposed Action and alternatives. Resource categories described and evaluated in the EA include water resources, vegetation, fish and wildlife, migratory birds, threatened and endangered species, invasive species, cultural resources, hazardous, toxic and radioactive waste (HTRW), air quality, noise, topography, geology and soils, socioeconomics and social effects, and public and occupational health and safety.

The Proposed Action and its alternatives have been developed based on mission requirements. As such, no quantitative financial assessment has been performed as part of this EA. However, economic factors that result in socioeconomic impacts to the surrounding area are addressed in this document as required by NEPA.

1.7 Intergovernmental Coordination, Public, and Agency Participation

Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning (IICEP) is a federally mandated process for informing and coordinating with other governmental agencies regarding federal actions. Through the IICEP process, the DA notifies relevant federal, state, and local agencies and allows them sufficient time to make known their environmental concerns specific to the proposed action. Comments and concerns submitted by these agencies during the IICEP process are subsequently incorporated into the analysis of environmental impacts conducted as part of the EA. This coordination fulfills requirements under EO 12372 (superseded by 12416 and subsequently supplemented by EO 13132), which requires federal agencies to cooperate with and consider state and local views in implementing a federal proposal. It also constitutes the IICEP process for the EA. Federal, state, and local agencies with jurisdiction that could be affected by the Proposed Action would be notified and consulted during the development of the EA. Coordination will include: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR), Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), Environmental Protection Agency Region

4 (EPA), and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Scoping letters, dated 18 June 2025, requesting comments and considerations on the proposed project were mailed to agencies on 25 June 2025. A response was received from USFWS on 18 August 2025 and is discussed in Section 3.6. and found in Appendix A. No additional comments were received.

A Biological Assessment (BA) was completed to comply with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. Technical coordination with USFWS began 1 August 2025 and concluded on 25 November 2025. See Section 3.6 for threatened and endangered species discussion, Appendix A for coordination with USFWS, and Appendix B for the BA submitted to USFWS through the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) site on 18 February 2026.

The DA invites public participation in decision-making on new proposals through the NEPA process. The draft EA was made available for a 30-day public review comment period on Fort Rucker's environmental webpage from February 27, 2026, through March 29, 2026. No comments were received. The final FONSI and EA will be published on a publicly accessible website.

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800) require federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings. This involves consultation with the Consulting Parties described in 36 CFR 800.2(c), including the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and federally recognized Indian Tribes that attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by the undertaking. In addition, under Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 4710.02, *Interactions with Federally Recognized Tribes*, federally recognized tribes historically affiliated with lands in the vicinity of proposed and alternative actions have been invited to consult on the proposed undertaking.

The Section 106 Consultation process is distinct from the NEPA interagency coordination process and requires notification specific to consultation. The Agency (DA) initiated Tribal and Agency Consultation and coordination on 18 June 2025, regarding Cultural Resources by Letters sent via email. The Agency did not receive any responses from Tribal Nations. AL SHPO concurred with the Agency Finding on 9 July 2025, for an Agency Determination of No Historic Properties Affected. See Section 3.8 for discussion on cultural resources.

2 Proposed Action and Alternatives

This section provides a description of the Proposed Action and alternatives to the Proposed Action that were considered during the planning process. Two Courses of Action (COA) were assessed under established criteria discussed in Section 2.2. One of the COAs was selected as the preferred alternative and will be compared with the No Action Alternative in *Chapter 3, Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences*.

2.1 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is to construct a fuel storage facility consisting of Jet A fuel to be utilized by Fort Rucker at Hanchey AHP. Additional construction will include two concrete containment

areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets, one pump shelter, two truck offload equipment skids, two bulk fill stands, two offload position canopies, two fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical, and control equipment. Construction would require earthwork and designated areas to stage equipment. Construction would take approximately 18 months.

Following construction, operation and maintenance activities would occur based on monthly and quarterly inspections. Operation activities of the fuel storage facility would consist of actions such as receiving fuel, fuel dispensing, inventory management, and monitoring. Management activities would include actions such as tank repairs, corrosion protection, venting system maintenance, leak testing, replacement of failing and/or worn-out components, pump and motor maintenance, and containment area inspection and repairs.

2.2 Alternatives Formulated

2.2.1 Fuel Tank Facility

The following five considerations were referenced to determine the most optimal site for construction of the fuel tank facility. Two courses of actions (COAs), or alternatives, were assessed and are shown in Figure 2 below.

1. Proximity to the present fuel facility
2. Barriers between new and present construction (i.e. roads and rough terrain)
3. Visibility of the new structure from the existing facility
4. Need to remove legacy infrastructure at site
5. Anticipated need for ancillary construction (i.e. need for new security fencing)

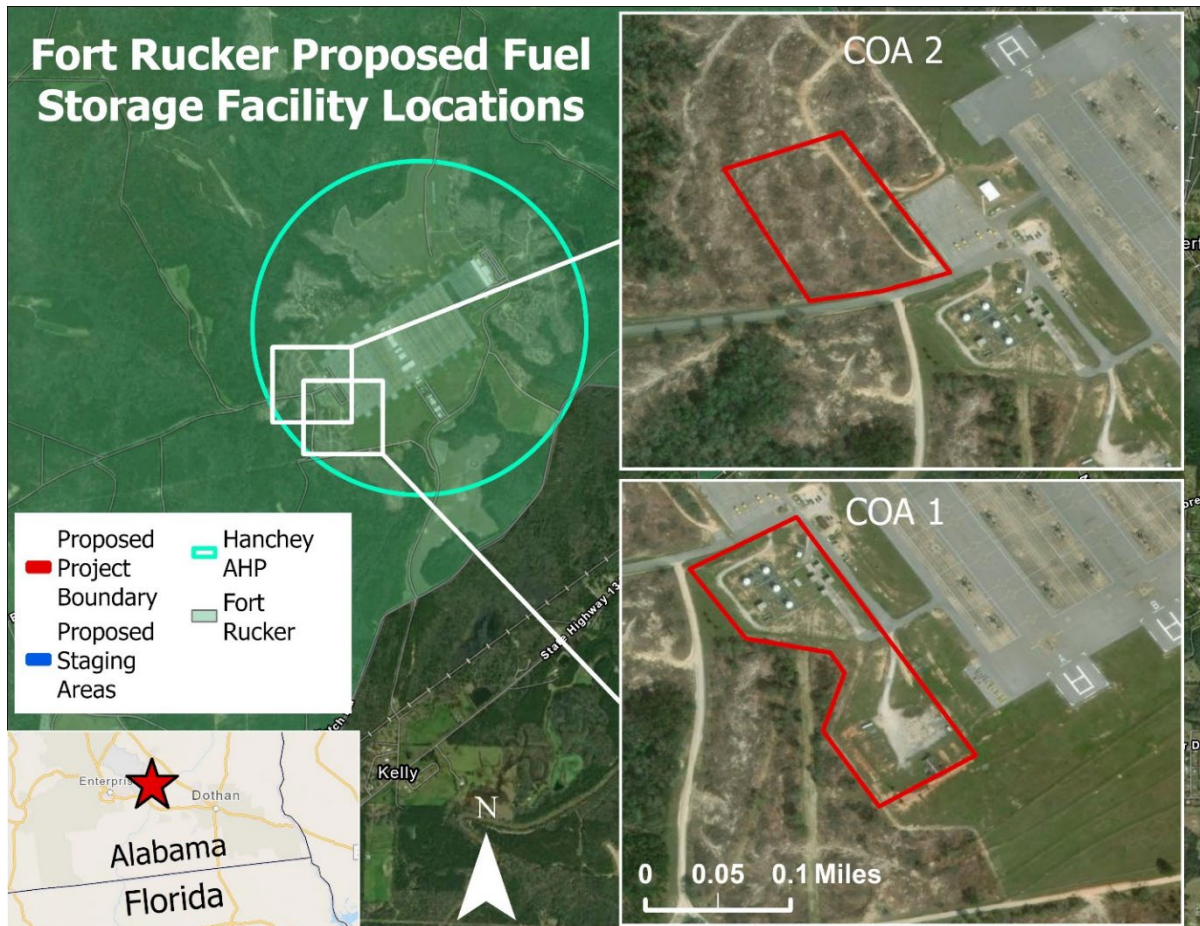


Figure 2. Fort Rucker Proposed Fuel Storage Facility Location Alternatives (COA 1 and COA 2)

2.2.2 Staging Areas

Multiple locations were considered for staging equipment for construction. Originally, two proposed staging areas were included in project scoping; however, it was later determined that these locations were not feasible due to inclined terrain or being too close to the airfield. An additional five locations were identified (See Figure 3 below) and assessed at a high-level based on location, proximity to the existing fuel facility within Hanchey AHP, and need for grading and restoration following construction:

- **Area A:** Associated with COA 1, within the fenced area of Hanchey AHP, would not require any additional vegetation removal or grading, and would require negligible post-construction restoration
- **Area B:** Associated with either COA 1 or COA 2, located outside the fenced area of Hanchey AHP and would require additional grading, vegetation clearing to include tree removal, and minor post-construction restoration
- **Area C, D, and E:** Associated with COA 2, located at progressively greater distances outside of the fenced area of Hanchey AHP, would require additional

grading, vegetation clearing to tree removal, and minor post-construction restoration



Figure 3. Construction Equipment Staging Area Location Alternatives

2.2.3 Fuel Waste Tank

The proposed action under COA 1 would require the relocation of an existing waste fuel tank that currently resides within the boundary of COA 1. Two potential locations were considered for relocating the waste fuel tank and are shown within Figure 4 below.

- Relocation Area 1 (Outlined yellow in Figure 4): At this location, the waste fuel tank would be parked within an existing fuel truck park by the entry gate of Hanchey AHP. This truck park is a designated containment area with an oil/water separator.
- Relocation Area 2 (Outlined red in Figure 4): At this location, the waste fuel tank would be relocated to the west edge of the existing fuel tank containment and would require the emplacement of a new tank pad.

Under COA 2, no waste fuel tank relocation would be necessary. The existing waste fuel tank would remain in place and continue to be used.



Figure 4. Areas for Waste Fuel Tank Relocation Alternatives

2.3 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

2.3.1 Fuel Tank Facility

COA 2 is located northwest of the existing fuel facility, outside of the cantonment area. COA 2 would not require the removal of existing infrastructure, as this location currently consists of recently disturbed vegetation. However, because COA 2 is located outside of the cantonment area, the construction of new security fencing would be required. Additionally, the location for COA 2 consists of steeper grades not conducive to construction and would require substantially more clearing and grubbing compared to COA 1. Under these considerations, COA 2 was eliminated from further analysis within this EA.

2.3.2 Staging Areas:

Because COA 2 was eliminated from further consideration, its associated Staging Areas C, D, and E are also screened from further analysis. Area B was determined to be inferior to Area A and eliminated from further consideration as it would require partial demolition of the Hanchey AHP fence-line, additional grading, more vegetation clearing to include tree removal, and more restoration following construction.

2.3.3 Fuel Waste Tank Relocation

Relocation Area 2 was eliminated from further consideration as this location would require additional ground disturbance and the emplacement of a new tank pad as compared to Relocation Area 1.

2.4 Preferred Alternative

Under the Preferred Alternative, the proposed action would occur within the area under COA 1, shown in Figure 2 above. The location of COA 1 is a currently serviceable area at Hanchey AHP. The northwest half of the COA 1 boundary consists of the existing fuel facility and the southeast half consists of concrete pads and abandoned infrastructure (e.g. abandoned electrical service panels and an abandoned trailer). Most of the proposed action would occur within the southeast half, and a staging area would be utilized for construction equipment. Existing infrastructure would be removed, and earthwork would occur where the new infrastructure will be constructed. Earthwork will include excavation and surface disturbance, totaling approximately 1,000 cubic yards of material displacement. The existing waste fuel tank within the proposed project boundary would be relocated to the fuel truck park by the entry gate, and a transfer line would be constructed between the new and existing fuel storage systems. Utilities would be installed from the nearest point of connection. Equipment staging for construction would be located within the footprint of the proposed project boundary (Area A) and would not require any additional tree clearing beyond what is necessary for the proposed project.

2.5 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the new fuel storage facility would not be constructed, and Fort Rucker would continue to utilize the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. This alternative would not increase the amount of fuel storage at Hanchey AHP and therefore fuel supply planning and forecasting for Fort Rucker would continue to be vulnerable to disruptions, negatively impacting mission support. This alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the project.

3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

This Section will describe the existing environment at Hanchey AHP and the surrounding area of the Installation that may be affected by implementing the No Action Alternative or the Preferred Alternative. A baseline will be established through the current existing conditions which will evaluate possible environmental changes attributed to the Proposed Action, which will help serve as a reference for the comparisons in analysis of environmental consequences. Environmental resources present within the proposed project boundary and its vicinity will be addressed in this section along with an analysis of effect on those resources and reasonably foreseeable effects. Environmental resources not present, or that would not be affected by the Preferred Alternative or in the vicinity of the project area, are dismissed from further analysis in Section 3.1.

3.1 Resources Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

Based on the scope and scale of this project, resources with minimal or no impacts have been identified below. Supportive reasoning is also provided describing why no significant adverse effects would result to those resources from implementing the Preferred Alternative. Regardless of the alternative selected, the following resources are not anticipated to be adversely affected: Land Use, Recreation, Floodplain, and Socioeconomic and Social Effects.

Land Use: Under the Preferred Alternative, the proposed project would be located within Hanchey AHP, an area designated for airfield operations. The use of the land would not change regardless of implementation of the proposed project.

Recreation: Hanchey AHP is in a restricted area, designated for airfield operations and therefore does not provide recreation opportunities.

Floodplain: Hanchey AHP is located on higher ground and in an “Area of Minimal Flood Hazard” according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FEMA, 2025). While there are areas within the vicinity of Hanchey AHP that are designated as “Zone A” special flood hazard areas, the Preferred Alternative would not encroach on these areas and therefore would not affect floodplains, as the proposed project would occur within a previously disturbed area designated for airfield operations.

3.2 Water Resources

Water Quality- The Clean Water Act (CWA) as amended (Federal Water Pollution Control Act) 33 U.S.C. 1251 *et seq.* regulates discharges and pollutants from a point source into waters of the U.S. as well as water quality standards for surface waters. In 1987, the CWA was amended by the Water Quality Act of 1987, requiring the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for certain wastewater discharges. Fort Rucker must comply with Federal and state NPDES requirements associated with the industrial and construction activity permit program and all construction contractors must meet the requirements as outlined in the 2023 Fort Novosel (Rucker) Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP) Plan (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2023a). The NPDES permitting authority for the project area is ADEM.

Groundwater – Drinking water for Hanchey AHP is sourced from the Fort Rucker potable water supply which is sourced from groundwater from the Nanafalia/Clayton and Providence Sand/Ripley Formations.

Surface Water – Fort Rucker is located within the Choctawhatchee River Basin. Surface water around Hanchey AHP generally flows northwest to southeast from Brooking Mill Creek and unnamed tributaries to the Choctawhatchee River, located outside the southeastern side of the Installation.

Wetlands – The Protection of Wetlands Executive Order 119900 mandates that each Federal agency must provide leadership and take action to minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands. Fort Rucker supports approximately 3,425 acres of wetlands influenced by seasonal fluctuations in precipitation, overland or near surface flow, shallow groundwater, or some combination of these processes. According to the National Wetland Inventory (NWI), wetlands appear to be located beyond the fence line of Hanchey AHP, primarily along nearby Brooking Mill Creek and unnamed tributaries to the Choctawhatchee River (located outside the southeastern side of the Installation). The proposed area for construction under the Preferred Alternative do not support the presence of wetlands.

3.2.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. There would be no change to existing water resources under the No Action Alternative.

3.2.2 Preferred Alternative

Under the Preferred Alternative, wetlands and surface waters would not be directly impacted, as these resources are not present within the project area. Additionally, contractors would be responsible for verifying the location of all existing utilities within the project area prior to any excavations. Water resources could be indirectly affected by the proposed project due to sediment exposure, erosion, stormwater runoff from the construction site, or if a spill of hazardous, toxic, and radioactive waste (HTRW) were to occur. See Section 3.9.2 for analysis on environmental consequences of HTRW for this project.

The construction contractor would be required to implement best management practices (BMPs) according to the ADEM *Alabama Handbook for Erosion Control, Sediment Control and Stormwater Management on Construction Sites and Urban Areas* and according to the Installation's Stormwater Management BMP Plan. The construction contractor would also be responsible for obtaining the proper NPDES permit for the project. Effective April 1, 2016, ADEM established General NPDES Permit ALR100000 for discharges associated with regulated construction activities that result in land disturbance equal to or greater than one acre. The construction site operator/owner required to obtain coverage under this general permit must submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) in accordance with the permit requirements. With proper BMPs and permitting in place, impacts to water quality from construction activities, operation, and maintenance would be negligible.

3.3 Vegetation

Ecoregions are defined as mostly homogenous ecological areas with similar climates, landforms, soils, natural vegetation, hydrology, and other ecological parameters. Fort Rucker is located within EPA Level IV ecoregion *Southern Hilly Gulf Coastal Plain*, which is within the *Southeastern Plains* Level III ecoregion. Natural vegetation at this location include oak-hickory-pine forest, southern mixed forest, and some southern floodplain forest (Griffith et al. 2001).

According to the 2024 Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan for Fort Rucker, outside the west/southwest perimeter of Hanchey AHP, forested areas dominate and consist of mixed pine-hardwood mesic forests (e.g. loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*) shoretleaf (*Pinus echinata*), and southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*)), hardwood dominated mesic forests (e.g. laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), etc.), xenic sandhill forests (e.g. turkey oak (*Quercus laevis*), and bluejack oak (*Quercus incana*)), young pine stands, and mid-aged pine stands (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). In 2024, a lightning strike burned the majority of tree stands surrounding Hanchey AHP. Vegetation within the cantonment area of

Hanchey AHP is managed and largely consists of mowed grasses with sparsely located individual trees and shrubs in areas that are not regularly maintained. The proposed area for construction under the Preferred Alternative contains sparsely located, mostly dead or dying trees as well as a few shrubs.

3.3.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. There would be no change to existing vegetation under the No Action Alternative.

3.3.2 Preferred Alternative

Under the Preferred Alternative, vegetation within the project area will be cleared to allow for ground disturbing activities. Clearing of trees would be restricted to a specific timeframe to avoid impacts to migratory birds and threatened and endangered species as explained under Section 3.5.2 and Section 3.6.2. While clearing of trees and shrubs within the proposed project boundary are permanent in nature to make room for proposed project components, short-term disturbance areas such as impacted areas for staging activities would be reseeded with native species following construction and returned to existing grade and conditions.

3.4 Fish and Wildlife

Diverse faunae are supported by available habitats throughout the Installation, including habitats provided by the forest types mentioned above in Section 3.3. These forests accommodate passerine birds such as the pine warbler (*Setophaga pinus*) and red-eyed vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), mammals such as the white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), nine-banded armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*), eastern gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) and cotton mouse (*Peromyscus gossypinus*), reptiles such as the green anole (*Anolis carolinensis*), eastern box turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*), and eastern copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix contortrix*), and amphibians such as the southern toad (*Anaxyrus terrestris*), spring peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*), and southeastern slimy salamander (*Plethodon grobmani*) (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024).

The nearest surface water to Hanchey AHP is Brooking Mill Creek to the west and unnamed tributaries to the Choctawhatchee to the south and east of Hanchey AHP. Largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*) and bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*) are examples of species that are likely to be found in these waterways. However, there are no surface waters within Hanchey AHP and therefore no fish or aquatic species present within the proposed project area under the Preferred Alternative.

Habitat for fish and wildlife within Hanchey AHP is minimal and would generally be considered low-quality. It is possible birds may use the few sparse trees available or small mammals may use the available trees and shrubs in the vicinity, however, this location would likely be considered undesirable due to the nearby airfield operations and lack of available, contiguous habitat for species.

3.4.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. There would be no adverse impacts to fish and wildlife resources under the No Action Alternative.

3.4.2 Preferred Alternative

As mentioned above, available habitat for fish and wildlife is either non-existent (for fish and other aquatic species) or generally holds low ecological value for terrestrial species within the proposed project area for the Preferred Alternative. While there is little likelihood for aquatic species to be present within the project boundaries, indirect (secondary) impacts to water resources in which aquatic species rely on could be impacted from construction due to general dust, erosion, sedimentation, and stormwater runoff from construction activities. An analysis of construction activity impacts on water quality is discussed under Section 3.2.2. and concluded that impacts to water quality would be negligible. Clearing of trees would be restricted to a specific timeframe to avoid impacts to migratory birds and threatened and endangered species as explained under Section 3.5.2 and 3.6.2. The vegetation available within the project area provides little available habitat for terrestrial species and it is expected that wildlife would avoid the proposed project area due to construction noise and equipment. Overall, effects to wildlife would be minor and no long-term adverse effects to fish and wildlife are anticipated as a result of project construction, operation, and maintenance.

3.5 Migratory Birds

All federal agencies are subject to provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), as amended (16 U.S.C. 703-712), which regulates the taking, killing, or possessing of any migratory bird species. Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) are considered migratory birds and are also protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA), as amended (16 USC §§ 668-668d). To determine the potential for birds of conservation concern to be present in the proposed project area, the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) tool was consulted on 7 July 2025. The original report is included in Appendix A. A follow-up review of the IPaC report was conducted on 9 February 2026, which confirmed there were no significant changes to the list of potentially affected species. IPaC identified 10 migratory bird species to potentially be present in the proposed project area and immediate vicinity, including the bald eagle. Table 1 below lists the 10 migratory bird species and their breeding season. Fort Rucker is known to support a pair of bald eagles, and one nest has been observed at Lake Tholocco which is located approximately four miles away from Hanchey AHP.

Table 1. Migratory Bird Species Potentially Present in Proposed Project Area

Migratory Bird Species	Breeding Season
Bald Eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	Sep 1 to Jul 31

American Kestrel (<i>Falco sparverius paulus</i>)	Apr 1 to Aug 31
Bachman’s Sparrow (<i>Peucaea aestivalis</i>)	May 1 to Sep 30
Brown-headed Nuthatch (<i>Sitta pusilla</i>)	Mar 1 to Jul 15
Chimney Swift (<i>Chaetura pelagica</i>)	Mar 15 to Aug 25
Chuck-will’s-widow (<i>Antrostomus carolinensis</i>)	May 10 to Jul 10
Grasshopper sparrow (<i>Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus</i>)	Jun 1 to Aug 20
Prairie Warbler (<i>Setophaga discolor</i>)	May 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker (<i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i>)	May 10 to Sep 10
Wood Thrush (<i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>)	May 10 to Aug 31

3.5.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. No adverse impacts to migratory birds would be anticipated under the No Action Alternative.

3.5.2 Preferred Alternative

Under the Preferred Alternative, vegetation within the project area will be cleared to allow for ground disturbing activities. See Section 3.4.2. for an analysis of impacts to vegetation under the Preferred Alternative. It is expected that if birds are present in the area or vicinity that they would clear out due to construction noise and equipment. However, to avoid potential impacts to migratory birds during breeding season, tree removal would be avoided from March 1st to September 30th. If tree removal cannot be avoided within this timeframe, nest surveys may need to be conducted by qualified personnel. If nests are impacted or have the potential to be impacted by construction, Fort Rucker would contact USFWS to discuss mitigation actions. While it would be unlikely for a bald eagle to be present within the project area or vicinity, if an inactive or active bald eagle nest is known to be located within 0.5 miles of the vicinity of the project, USFWS would be contacted regarding the need for a disturbance buffer or any other necessary mitigation actions.

3.6 Threatened and Endangered Species

The Endangered Species Act (ESA), as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq., regulates the protection and conservation of threatened and endangered (T&E) species. Section 7 of the ESA, 16 U.S.C. § 1536 states that all federal departments and agencies shall, in consultation and with assistance of the Secretary of the Interior, ensure that any actions authorized, funded, or carried out by them do not jeopardize the continued existence of any T&E species, or result in the destruction or adverse modification of habitat of such species which is determined by the Secretary to be

critical. The USFWS IPaC tool was consulted on 7 July 2025 to determine the potential for T&E species within the proposed project area. The original IPaC report is included in Appendix A. A follow-up review of the IPaC report was conducted on 9 February 2026, which confirmed there were no significant changes to the list of potentially affected species. Nine species were generated from IPaC as potential to be in the project area. Species are listed below in Table 2 and species-specific descriptions follow. Project scoping letters were sent to USFWS on 18 June 2025, and a response was received from USFWS on 18 August 2025 that incorporated comments and recommendations to avoid impacts to listed species. Technical coordination continued with USFWS through 25 November 2025, mostly concerning potential impacts to the northern long-eared bat (NLEB) and clarifying recommendations to avoid impacts. The Biological Assessment (BA), which incorporates the information from Section 3.6, has been prepared to initiate informal consultation with USFWS. See Appendix B for the BA and Appendix A for additional coordination with USFWS.

Table 2. Threatened and Endangered Species Potentially Present in Proposed Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Listing Status
Mammals		
Northern Long-eared Bat	<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Endangered
Reptiles		
Alligator Snapping Turtle	<i>Macrochelys temminckii</i>	Proposed Threatened
Fishes		
Gulf Sturgeon	<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi</i>	Threatened
Clams		
Choctaw Bean	<i>Obovaria choctawensis</i>	Endangered
Fuzzy Pigtoe	<i>Pleurobema strodeanum</i>	Threatened
Southern Kidneyshell	<i>Ptychobranthus jonesi</i>	Endangered
Southern Sandshell	<i>Hamiota australis</i>	Threatened
Tapered Pigtoe	<i>Fusconaia burkei</i>	Threatened
Insects		
Monarch Butterfly	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Proposed Threatened

Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*): The NLEB was listed as threatened under the ESA on April 2, 2015, and reclassified as endangered on November 30, 2022 (USFWS 2022). The status of this species remains centered on range-wide impacts of white-nose syndrome (WNS), a deadly disease affecting cave-dwelling bats across the continent. The NLEB is widely distributed throughout the eastern and north central United States, and Canada (USFWS 2016a). The NLEB spends its winters hibernating in caves or mines with areas of constant temperatures, high humidity, and no air currents (USFWS 2016b). During summer, suitable habitat includes forested areas, including adjacent areas such as wetlands, agricultural fields, and pastures. This includes forests or woodlots containing potential roosts including live trees and/or snags ≥ 3 inches (7.6 centimeters) dbh that have exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, and/or cavities, as well as linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors. Individual trees may be considered suitable habitat when they exhibit the

characteristics of a potential roost tree are located within 1,000 feet (305 meters) of other forested habitats. Stable populations of NLEB exist within Alabama and are known to be active year-round in forested or wooded habitats. Because the temperature in Alabama is mild year-round, NLEB do not have to rely on caves or mines for hibernation, and they may be less susceptible to WNS (USFWS 2024a).

Alligator Snapping Turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*): The alligator snapping turtle was proposed for listing as a threatened species with a rule issued under section 4(d) of the ESA on November 9, 2021 (86 FR 62434). The alligator snapping turtle is the largest freshwater turtle in the United States and is found in waterways in the Midwest, Southeast, and parts of the Southwest. The greatest threats to the alligator snapping turtle are incidental harm from fishing practices, habitat alteration, nest predators, and parasites (USFWS 2021). The project area falls within the Apalachicola analysis unit where nest predation is the most substantial threat. However, the current distribution of alligator snapping turtle is unknown within Dale County, Alabama (USFWS 2021). The alligator snapping turtle has not been documented at Fort Rucker (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024).

Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*): The gulf sturgeon was listed as a threatened species under ESA on September 30, 1991 (56 FR 49653). Gulf sturgeon spawn in rivers in the spring and fall, spend the summer months in riverine habitat, and swim to marine waters in the winter as adults. The greatest threats to the gulf sturgeon are contaminants, dredging, dams, and climate change (NOAA Fisheries 2025). Approximately 2,783 river kilometers of estuarine and marine habitat within Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi were designated as critical habitat for the species on March 19, 2003 (68 FR 13370). A segment of the Choctawhatchee River designated as critical habitat is approximately 0.5 miles southeast from the Fort Rucker Installation and approximately 1.5 miles from the project area. Gulf sturgeon have not been documented within the Installation (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024).

Choctaw Bean (*Obovaria choctawensis*): The Choctaw bean is a freshwater mussel and was listed as an endangered species with designated critical habitat under ESA on October 10, 2012 (77 FR 61664). Choctaw bean mussels were found to be present in Claybank Creek above Highway 27 in a mussel survey conducted from 1998-2000 on Fort Rucker and are known to occur in the Choctawhatchee watershed. Fort Rucker was excluded from critical habitat designated due to conservation efforts such as reducing silt, sedimentation, and non-point source pollution as identified in the 2024 INRMP (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). The closest location of critical habitat to the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP is within the Choctawhatchee River, southeast of the Installation. Streams located outside the Hanchey AHP feed into the Choctawhatchee River. Hanchey AHP is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Choctawhatchee River.

Fuzzy Pigtoe (*Pleurobema strodeanum*): The fuzzy pigtoe is a freshwater mussel and was listed as a threatened species with designated critical habitat under ESA on October 10, 2012 (77 FR 61664). Fuzzy pigtoe were found to be present within Steep Head Creek at Alabama Highway 27 in a mussel survey conducted from 1998-2000 on Fort Rucker and are known to occur in the Choctawhatchee watershed. Fort Rucker was excluded from critical habitat designated due to conservation efforts such as reducing silt, sedimentation, and non-point source pollution as

identified in the 2024 INRMP (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). The closest location of critical habitat to the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP is within the Choctawhatchee River, southeast of the Installation. Streams located outside the Hanchey AHP feed into the Choctawhatchee River. Hanchey AHP is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Choctawhatchee River.

Southern Kidneyshell (*Ptychobranhus jonesi*): The southern kidney shell is a freshwater mussel and was listed as an endangered species with designated critical habitat under ESA on October 10, 2012 (77 FR 61664). Southern kidneyshell have not been documented within Fort Rucker but are known to occur within the Choctawhatchee watershed. Fort Rucker was excluded from critical habitat designated due to conservation efforts such as reducing silt, sedimentation, and non-point source pollution as identified in the 2024 INRMP (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). The closest location of critical habitat to the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP is within the Choctawhatchee River, southeast of the Installation. Streams located outside the Hanchey AHP feed into the Choctawhatchee River. Hanchey AHP is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Choctawhatchee River.

Southern Sandshell (*Hamiota australis*): The southern sandshell is a freshwater mussel and was listed as a threatened species with designated critical habitat under ESA on October 10, 2012 (77 FR 61664). Southern sandshell have not been documented within Fort Rucker but are known to occur within the Choctawhatchee watershed. Fort Rucker was excluded from critical habitat designated due to conservation efforts such as reducing silt, sedimentation, and non-point source pollution as identified in the 2024 INRMP (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). The closest location of critical habitat to the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP is within the Choctawhatchee River, southeast of the Installation. Streams located outside the Hanchey AHP feed into the Choctawhatchee River. Hanchey AHP is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Choctawhatchee River.

Tapered Pigtoe (*Fusconaia burkei*): The tapered pigtoe is a freshwater mussel and was listed as a threatened species with designated critical habitat on October 10, 2012 (77 FR 61664). Tapered pigtoe mussels have not been documented within Fort Rucker but are known to occur within the Choctawhatchee watershed. Fort Rucker was excluded from critical habitat designated due to conservation efforts such as reducing silt, sedimentation, and non-point source pollution as identified in the 2024 INRMP (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). The closest location of critical habitat to the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP is within the Choctawhatchee River, southeast of the Installation. Streams located outside the Hanchey AHP feed into the Choctawhatchee River. Hanchey AHP is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Choctawhatchee River.

Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus Plexippus*): The monarch butterfly was proposed for listing as a threatened species with an accompanying 4(d) rule under the ESA on December 12, 2024 (89 FR 100662 100716). Within the proposal on December 12, 2024, USFWS proposed to designate approximately 4,395 acres of critical habitat within California (USFWS 2024c). The monarch butterfly ranges across the entire United States and can be found in a variety of different landscapes if suitable habitat is present. They can be found in fields, roadside areas, open

landscapes, wetlands, urban gardens, etc., where milkweed and flowering plants are present (USFWS 2024b).

3.6.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. No adverse impacts to threatened and endangered species would be anticipated under the No Action Alternative.

3.6.2 Preferred Alternative

Threatened and endangered species effect determinations are listed in Table 3 below. Further detail regarding potential impacts to each species follows. The northern long-eared bat Determination Key (D-Key) was completed through IPaC and generated a “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” determination for the NLEB. The prepared BA was uploaded to IPaC with the complete D-Key on 18 February 2026. Per the process, automatic concurrence was granted as no response was received from the USFWS within the subsequent 15-day review period (See Appendix A for documentation). It is recognized that proposed species currently do not have statutory protection under ESA, however, proposed species (alligator snapping turtle and monarch butterfly) were given effect determinations in this analysis in case the listing should change for one or all proposed species in the future.

Table 3. Threatened and Endangered Species Effect Determinations

Common Name	Scientific Name	Effect Determination
Mammals		
Northern Long-eared Bat	<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect
Reptiles		
Alligator Snapping Turtle	<i>Macrochelys temminckii</i>	No Effect
Fishes		
Gulf Sturgeon	<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi</i>	No Effect
Clams		
Choctaw Bean	<i>Obovaria choctawensis</i>	No Effect
Fuzzy Pigtoe	<i>Pleurobema strodeanum</i>	No Effect
Southern Kidneyshell	<i>Ptychobranthus jonesi</i>	No Effect
Southern Sandshell	<i>Hamiota australis</i>	No Effect
Tapered Pigtoe	<i>Fusconaia burkei</i>	No Effect
Insects		
Monarch Butterfly	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	No Effect

Northern Long-eared Bat (NLEB): Under the Preferred Alternative, vegetation within the project area will be cleared to allow for ground disturbing activities and any necessary temporary lighting is expected to be shielded and directed downward. Some of the

vegetation to be cleared consists of trees that are ≥ 3 inches dbh and within 1,000 feet of other forested habitat. While some of these trees are dead/dying they could still be considered suitable habitat for the NLEB. However, due to the location and proximity of the existing vegetation within the project area to airfield operations, this location would not be the most desirable for NLEB. Regardless, to avoid any potential impacts to NLEB, tree clearing would only occur during the protective window of July 16th to March 14th. If tree clearing cannot be achieved during this timeframe, Fort Rucker would proceed to acoustic and/or mist-netting surveys to determine presence or probable absence of NLEB at the project site in accordance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *2024 Range-wide Indiana Bat & Northern Long-eared Bat Survey Guidelines*.

Alligator snapping turtle, Gulf sturgeon, Choctaw bean, fuzzy pigtoe, southern kidneyshell, southern sandshell, tapered pigtoe: The proposed project area does not include surface waters and therefore does not contain suitable aquatic habitat for federally listed threatened or endangered aquatic species. While suitable habitat does not exist within the proposed project area, these aquatic species depend on excellent water quality and quantity. Indirect project impacts to water resources outside of the project area are addressed in Section 3.2.2. and discuss how water resources could be indirectly affected by the proposed project due to sediment exposure, erosion, and stormwater runoff from the construction site. As stated in Section 3.2.2., With proper BMPs and permitting in place, impacts to water quality from construction activities, operation, and maintenance would be negligible.

Monarch Butterfly: Monarch butterflies could range within the project area and vicinity. However, milkweed and other flowering plants are not known to be present within the project area and existing vegetation is unlikely suitable habitat. No direct nor indirect effects are anticipated to occur to the monarch butterfly under the Preferred Alternative.

3.7 Invasive Species

EO 11987 directs agencies to restrict the introduction of exotic species into the natural ecosystems on lands and waters which they own, lease, or hold for purpose of administration and encourage State and local governments as well as private citizens to prevent the introduction of exotic species in natural ecosystems of the United States. EO 13112 seeks to prevent the introduction of invasive species and authorizes control of said species to minimize economic, ecological, and human health impacts. This EO directs all Federal agencies to address invasive species concerns and refrain from actions likely to increase invasive species problems. EO 13112 was later amended by EO 13751 which directed continuation of coordination for Federal prevention and control efforts. This order also maintains and expands the National Invasive Species Council and further incorporates considerations of human and environmental health, climate change, technological innovation and other emerging priorities into Federal efforts to address invasive species in a cost-efficient manner. Executive Order 13751 directs action to continue coordinated federal prevention and control efforts related to invasive species.

Invasive plant species known to be present at Fort Rucker include Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*), cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*), Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinsense*), yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*)

and fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*). Invasive animal species known to be present at Fort Rucker include the coyote (*Canis latrans*) and feral swine (*Sus scrofa*).

3.7.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. There would be no new risk of introducing invasive species under the No Action Alternative.

3.7.2 Preferred Alternative

Implementation of the Proposed Action under the Preferred Alternative would not lead to the introduction of exotic or invasive species. Temporarily disturbed areas will be reseeded with native species and returned to pre-construction grades and conditions following construction.

3.8 Cultural Resources

54 U.S.C. 306108 (Section 106) of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (NHPA), requires Federal agencies to “take into account the effect of the undertaking on any historic property” prior to expending any Federal funds, or prior to the issuance of any license. Historic property is defined in 36 CFR 800.16(l)(1) as “any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. This term includes artifacts, records, and remains that are related to and located within such properties. The term includes properties of traditional religious and cultural importance to an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization and that meet the National Register criteria.” Execution of the action alternative identified within this report would constitute a Federal Undertaking, and therefore require compliance with Section 106. In addition to the NHPA, this report also demonstrates compliance with a suite of Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources Laws, Regulations, Policies, and Executive Orders.

While Section 106 restricts its focus strictly to Historic Property, NEPA requires consideration of the affected human environment, and this includes, among others, aesthetic, historic, and cultural resources. These terms are not as restrictive as historic property, and therefore require the Agency to consider effects to all cultural resources, not strictly those considered historic property. The following discussion considers all currently identified cultural resources that may be affected by the project, and briefly discusses those resources that are not currently known but may still be present. The section also documents Tribal and Agency Consultation and coordination as it relates to Cultural Resources.

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the action alternative was determined by the Agency and encompasses the areas in which direct effects would occur associated with implementation of the Proposed Action. This includes construction of the proposed fueling facility and associated structures, and would involve site preparation, utilities and connections installation, demolition of existing structures, and relocation of an existing waste fuel tank.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) archaeologists, in partnership with Fort Rucker, conducted a literature search of the Alabama Cultural Resources Online Database (ACROD) and reviewed the most recent (2016) Fort Rucker Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) in June of 2025 to identify the locations of any previously conducted Cultural Resources surveys and any previously recorded Cultural Resources within 1-mile of the APE.

According to this review, only one Cultural Resources Inventory has been conducted within the APE. This is the *Cultural Resources Survey of Selected Training Areas on Fort Rucker, Coffee and Dale Counties, Alabama* written by Todd McMakin, Bruce G. Harvey, and Eric C. Poplin of Brockington & Associates in 1995 (Report Number 4058341).

The search identified twenty-two (22) cultural resources within 1-mile of the APE, as shown in Table 3. Of these resources, only one (1DA43) is a Historic Property. The other twenty-one (21) resources are recommended Not Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. No archaeological sites, historic structures or historic properties are recorded within the proposed project APE. The APE has seen heavy use throughout the life of Hanchey Heliport as part of general development and Base Operations.

Table 4. Cultural Resources Within 1-mile of APE as Reported in 2016 ICRMP

Site	NRHP Status	Description	Pg
DA142	No	Possible Paleoindian; Late Archaic	B-4
DA143	No	Woodland	B-4
DA144	No	Unknown Prehistoric	B-4
DA145	No	Unknown Prehistoric	B-4
DA150	No	Unknown Prehistoric; Historic	B-4
DA151	No	Unknown Prehistoric	B-4
DA203	No	Unknown Prehistoric; Historic	B-5
DA204	No	Unknown Prehistoric	B-5
DA206	No	Late Woodland; Historic	B-5
DA232	No	Early Woodland; Historic	B-7
DA234	No	Unknown Prehistoric; Historic	B-7
DA235	No	Unknown Prehistoric; Historic	B-7

DA238	No	Unknown Prehistoric	B-7
DA239	No	Unknown Prehistoric	B-7
DA240	No	Unknown Prehistoric	B-7
DA243	No	Unknown Prehistoric	B-7
DA319	No	Unknown Prehistoric; Historic	B-7
DA320	No	Unknown Prehistoric	B-7
DA321	No	Historic	B-7
DA322	No	Historic	B-7
DA323	No	Unknown Prehistoric; Historic	B-7
DA43	Yes	Early Archaic lithic scatter; Early Woodland, Late Woodland lithic/ceramic scatter; Historic Creek ceramic scatter	51; B-1

The Agency initiated Tribal and Agency Consultation and coordination on 18 June 2025, regarding Cultural Resources by Letters sent via email. Consulting Parties include Alabama-Coushatta Tribes of Texas; Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town; The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma; Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana; Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, Louisiana; Kialegee Tribal Town, Oklahoma (Creek); Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians; The Muscogee Nation; Poarch Band of Creek Indians; and Thlopthlocco Tribal Town. No additional cultural resources or historic properties were identified through Tribal and Agency Consultation and coordination.

3.8.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Airfield Operations would continue at the current level and no new groundwork activities would occur. There is very low likelihood that any Cultural Resources would be impacted by implementation of the No Action Alternative.

3.8.2 Preferred Alternative

Under the preferred Alternative, construction of the proposed fueling facility and associated structures would occur, as would the associated site preparation, utilities and connections installation, demolition of existing structures, and relocation of an existing

waste fuel tank. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative would have more Impact to Cultural Resources than the No-Action Alternative. With that said, analyses conducted in support of this Environmental Assessment indicate that there are no known Cultural Resources or Historic Properties within the APE for the Preferred Alternative. While ground disturbance would be required, it would occur in a location that is already heavily disturbed as a result of Base development and operations. The location is already in use for a similar Fueling Operation. Given these facts, the Agency considers implementation of the Preferred Alternative to have Low impacts to Cultural Resources.

The Agency made a Finding of *No Historic Properties Affected*, considered tentative at that time pending completion of Tribal Consultation and coordination, and sought concurrence from Alabama SHPO on that finding by letter dated 18 June 2025. The Agency did not receive any responses from Tribal Nations. AL SHPO concurred with the Agency Finding on 9 July 2025, for an Agency Determination of *No Historic Properties Affected*.

Despite a reasonable and good faith effort to identify historic properties that may be affected by this Undertaking, and despite the Agency efforts to consider the impacts of implementation of the Preferred Alternative on Cultural Resources, there remains a non-zero chance that Cultural Resources could be affected or impacted. Per the *Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan Update, US Army Aviation Center and Fort Rucker, Fort Rucker, Alabama* (2016), Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) #5 - Inadvertent Discovery of Archaeological Deposits/Cultural Material - will be in effect during construction activities. If anything of a cultural nature (artifacts and features, human remains, or burials) is observed or encountered during construction activities, all ground-disturbing activity will cease, any observations or discoveries will be reported immediately to the unit commander or facility manager, the discovery location(s) secured, and activity may not resume in the area of the discovery until cleared by the Cultural Resources Manager.

3.9 Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Waste (HTRW)

Hazardous waste generally consists of the disposal of a substance that has the potential to be dangerous or capable of threatening human health or the environment. Hazardous waste can be generated from a variety of sources and present in the form of liquids, solids, gases, and sludges. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 was enacted to address waste prevention and management of hazardous waste and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980 was enacted to address cleanup and liability for past contamination. Jet A fuel (F-24) is generally considered a hazardous substance due to its flammability and threat to human health and environment based on exposure; however, its consideration under CERCLA and RCRA is case-specific. For instance, Jet-A fuel is excluded from CERCLA unless it contains hazardous constituents above thresholds and is only considered under RCRA if discarded or spilled. Additionally, The Oil Pollution Prevention regulations (40 CFR 112), promulgated under the authority of sections 311(j)(1)(C) and (j)(5) of the CWA, include requirements for Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures (SPCC) Plans. Fort Rucker's latest SPCC plan was finalized in July 2023 to comply with all

federal, state, Army and local regulations relating to the prevention of releases of oil products (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2023b).

The Installation's Hazardous Waste Management Plan (HWMP) was developed in accordance with Army Regulation 200-1 (Chapter 10) (AR 200-1), the ADEM Administrative Code, and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), as amended. The HWMP provides installation personnel with specific procedures and responsibilities to manage hazardous wastes consistent with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Additionally, The Fort Rucker HWMP and SPCC Plan discuss procedures and requirements for accumulations, storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous waste within the Installation (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2023c and Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2023b). The Hazardous Materials Management Program (HMMP) at Fort Rucker was established in 1998 and consists of the Hazardous Material Control Center (HMCC), responsible for reducing hazardous waste, maximizing procurement dollars, and controlling acquisition, handling, use, and disposal of hazardous materials (HM) (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2025).

Jet A fuel is a colorless, flammable liquid that smells like kerosene and is used in some military aircraft such as helicopters. It is made up of hydrocarbons found naturally in the earth as crude oil. Jet A fuel can enter the environment if some components are evaporated into the air from open containers or spilled into water or soil. If this occurs, chemicals may be broken down in reaction with sunlight or other air chemicals, seep into the groundwater or bottom sediment, or stay in the soil for more than a decade. It is also possible that chemicals in the fuel may be broken down by bacteria or other organisms (United States, 2017). The existing fuel storage facility within the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP consists of two receipt tanks, two issue tanks, two fill stand positions, two offload positions, and supporting infrastructure.

3.9.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. The existing fuel storage facility stores Jet A (F-24) fuel in above ground storage tanks and therefore the risks associated with the storage, handling, and disposal of HTRW as they currently exist would remain the same.

3.9.2 Preferred Alternative

Under the Preferred Alternative, the fuel tanks would be composed of steel, constructed aboveground, and would store Jet A fuel for aircraft use. The existing above ground fuel waste storage tank that currently resides within the project footprint would be relocated to the existing fuel truck parking lot northwest of the project area by the Hanchey AHP entry gate; this parking lot is a containment area with an oil/water separator. Potential sources of pollution could occur from spills and leaks during fuel delivery, rainfall falling on the fuel area or stormwater running onto the fuel area, leaking storage tanks, overfilling aircrafts, or piping leaks.

All hazardous, toxic, and radioactive substances and waste would be managed and handled according to the Installation's HWMP and if a spill were to occur at any point

during project construction and/or operation, immediate action would ensue in accordance with the Fort Rucker Installation Spill Contingency Plan (ISCP) (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2023d). According to the 2023 Fort Novosel Stormwater Management BMP Plan, the facility map for Hanchey Heliport shows that flow from the project area would flow northwest of the site in the event of a spill/release of materials. The lack of flow direction also indicates that any spill/release of materials (i.e. Diesel, used oil, F-24 fuel, etc.) would likely pool around the associated container and overall migration would be negligible.

Based on pre-existing plans set in place by the Installation to address the handling of HTRW and consideration of the general topography of the project area, effects to human health and the environment from the relocation, use, and storage of Jet A fuel would be negligible to minor and if a spill were to occur, effects would likely be short term and minor to moderate, depending on the nature of the spill.

3.10 Air Quality

In accordance with the Clean Air Act of 1963, the EPA set National Ambient Air Quality Standards for pollutants considered harmful to the environment and public health. The six principal pollutants, also known as “criteria” pollutants are ozone, lead, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide. Counties where the levels of a particular pollutant exceed EPA standards are deemed “non-attainment counties.” Alabama currently has no non-attainment areas; therefore, the air quality within the project area meets or is below a given safe standard set by the EPA for the six principal pollutants (EPA 2025).

Majority of emissions within the proposed project area are produced as a result of Hanchey AHP operations such as the burning of fuel for helicopters, vehicles, or other types of machinery, causing the release of various gases, including carbon dioxide and other pollutants.

3.10.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. There would be no adverse impacts to air quality under the No Action Alternative.

3.10.2 Preferred Alternative

Sources of emissions under the Preferred Alternative include the operation of construction equipment, work vehicles, the demolition of existing structures, and operation and maintenance activities.

The contractor will be responsible for obtaining and/or processing any necessary paperwork for construction and operation activities that require an air quality permit. Additionally, to address air quality and reduce potential pollution for construction and operation of the new fuel storage tank facility, Fort Rucker offers the following guidance which should serve as best management practices for this project under the Preferred Alternative:

- Maintain equipment and vehicles so that they operate efficiently and clean, and use the control devices intended for the equipment or vehicle.
- If constructing, modifying, or replacing a building or operation that may emit pollutants, the Installation's Environmental Division will be contacted to begin processing a construction/operating permit. Failure to obtain permits prior to construction or modification can result in issuance of notices of violation from the state of Alabama and EPA.
- Assure that all operating air pollution sources have a current, up to date air permit.
- Comply with Stratospheric Ozone Protection requirements.

Through execution of the best management practices mentioned above and obtaining proper permits, impacts to air quality would be short term and minor as a result of project construction, operation, and maintenance.

3.11 Noise

The Noise Control Act 42 U.S.C §4901 et seq. (1972) establishes a national policy to promote an environment for all Americans free from noise that jeopardizes their health and welfare. Sources of operational noise on Fort Rucker range from small arms to aircrafts. Helicopter flight training has the largest noise impact within the Installation. The 2011 Installation Operational Noise Management Plan (IONMP) provided an overview of the current and future noise at Fort Rucker, methodologies used to analyze exposure to noise associated with military operations, and guidelines for achieving compatibility between the Army and surrounding communities. The 2019 Fort Rucker Installation Compatible Use Zone Study (ICUZC) replaced the 2011 IONMP and was updated to reflect the most recent account of activities as of 2019.

Noise within the Installation is categorized by three different noise zones. Hanchey AHP and the proposed project area is located within Noise Zone III. Noise Zone III consists of areas where the PK15(met) decibels (dB) are greater than 104 (for small arms), the A-weighted day-night level is greater than 75 dB (for aircraft), or the C-weighted day-night level is greater than 70 dB (for large arms and demolitions). Noise-sensitive land uses (i.e. residential areas, schools, and hospitals) are not recommended within Zone III (Fort Rucker, 2019).

3.11.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. Noise levels would remain the same within the project area and vicinity of Hanchey AHP.

3.11.2 Preferred Alternative

The main source of noise under the Preferred Alternative would come from construction activities. Most construction activities are in the 80-90 dBA range (FHWA, 2017). Noise levels generated from construction could be louder than noise levels that occur in the area but would likely still be within a range that is comparable to other sources of noise in

Noise Zone III. Overall, there would be a temporary increase in noise levels during construction, but impacts are anticipated to be short term and minor.

3.12 Topography, Geology, and Soils

Fort Rucker was developed on indurated resistant siliceous claystone and sandstone, known as the Burhrstone Hills sub-district. The Installation extends northwestward from the Choctawhatchee River floodplain and ranges in elevation from 164 feet above mean sea level to slightly above 515 feet above mean sea level (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024).

Soils within Fort Rucker overlie the Buhrstone Escarpment – a formation consisting of shale and sandstone (Roberts 1996 as cited in Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). Soils on the Installation are highly erodible and fragile, largely including the Troup-Orangeburg-Nankin-Lucy series and Troup-Luverne-Conecuh series. Soils within Hanchey AHP and its vicinity mostly consists of Blanton Loamy Sand (NRCS, 2025). The Blanton series consists of somewhat excessively drained to moderately well drained and moderately to slowly permeable soils on uplands and stream terraces in the Coastal Plain (USDA, 2019).

3.12.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. No adverse impacts to topography, geology, and soils would be anticipated under the No Action Alternative.

3.12.2 Preferred Alternative

Earth moving activities such as excavation and general surface disturbance would occur within the project area under the Preferred Alternative. Most ground disturbance activities would occur on the southeast side of the project area, where the new above-ground fuel storage tanks, access road, and pump shelter would be constructed. Estimated excavation cut/fill volume would include approximately 1,000 cubic yards of material. Excavated material would be considered Construction and Demolition (C&D) material and would be transported to a nearby landfill. Any excavated material that could potentially be contaminated would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Fort Rucker Environmental Office. To ensure erosion and sediment controls are implemented during construction, the construction contractor would be required to implement best management practices (BMPs) according to the ADEM *Alabama Handbook for Erosion Control, Sediment Control and Stormwater Management on Construction Sites and Urban Areas* and according to the Installation's Stormwater Management BMP Plan. Soils within the project area would be permanently disturbed under the Preferred Alternative; however, given the proposed project area is already located within a previously disturbed location, designated for airfield operations, impacts would ultimately be negligible.

3.13 Socioeconomics and Social Effects

The socioeconomic environment refers to the interaction between social processes and economic activity. In accordance with NEPA of 1969, as amended, the federal government shall utilize social sciences in planning and decision making that may have an impact on man's environment (42 U.S.C 4332(a)). To understand potential impacts of the proposed project, it is necessary to understand the social factors and community dynamics in the study area. An analysis of the socioeconomic environment refers to a review of the interaction between social pressures and economic activity in the community.

The majority of Fort Rucker, including Hanchey AHP and its vicinity is located in U.S. Census Tract Number 01045020000. This census tract is approximately 66.6 square miles, and as of 2020, contains a total population of 4,474 with a density of 67.2 people per square mile. As of 2023, approximately 13.3% of residents within this census tract live below the poverty line (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Most residents on Fort Rucker live in the cantonment area, located within the southern portion of the Installation, approximately 2 miles west of Hanchey AHP.

3.13.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. There would be no impacts to socioeconomics or other social effects.

3.13.2 Preferred Alternative

The project location within Hanchey AHP is located within a restricted area, designated for airfield operations. Temporary, beneficial effects may occur to the local community should the Preferred Alternative be selected for implementation, as temporary jobs may become available for construction of the proposed project. The implementation of the project under the Preferred Alternative is not anticipated to have significant adverse impacts to socioeconomics nor is it anticipated to have disproportionate adverse effects to minorities.

3.14 Public and Occupational Health and Safety

The Occupational Safety and Health Act 29 U.S.C §§ 651 et seq., statute assures safe and healthful working conditions for working men and women. It is the contactors responsibility to manage for safety and ensures all health and safety measures are met and complies with occupational health and safety regulations and worker compensation programs during the construction of the Preferred Alternative.

3.14.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 2.1 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. No change to public and occupational health and safety would occur.

3.14.2 Preferred Alternative

The implementation of the Proposed Project under the Preferred Alternative is not anticipated to have significant adverse impacts on public and occupational health and safety. The contractor would be responsible for managing exposure to hazardous materials, providing use of personal protective equipment, and making material safety data sheets available. The contractor should also follow specified procedure in the event a hazardous substance spill does occur. No adverse effects to public or occupational health and safety are anticipated.

4 List of Preparers

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers prepared this EA on behalf of the Department of the Army with assistance from Fort Rucker. The qualifications and roles of USACE and Fort Rucker staff engaged in writing the EA are provided below:

Kristina Amato

B.S. Fisheries and Wildlife

Years of Experience: 3

Role: Primary Author of EA

Justin Bailey

B.S. Construction Engineering Tech.

Years of Experience: 16

Role: Fuels Military Construction (MILCON) Project Manager

Ryan Mathison

M.A. Anthropology

Years of Experience: 6

Role: NEPA Cultural Resources Lead and Supporting Author

Wendy Weaver

M.S. Geoarchaeology

Years of Experience: 30

Role: NRHP Section 106 Compliance Support

Rebecca Podkowka

B.S. Wildlife Biology

Years of Experience: 15

Role: Reviewer

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Appendix A

Agency Coordination and Attachments



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSEL AL 36362-1100

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Alabama Department of Environmental Management
Director's Office
Attention: Mr. Lance R. LeFleur
1400 Coliseum Boulevard
Montgomery, AL 36110-1463

SUBJECT: Scoping for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Novosel Installation

Dear Mr. LeFleur:

The Omaha District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is in the process of conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) on behalf of the U.S. Department of the Army (DA) to assess the overall effects of the proposed construction of a new fuel tank storage complex at Hanchey Army Heliport (AHP) within the Fort Novosel Installation. Fort Novosel averages 17 miles long by 9 miles wide and is located approximately 25 miles northwest of Dothan, Alabama, between the cities of Daleville, Enterprise, and Ozark in the counties of Coffee and Dale. Fort Novosel serves as the headquarters for U.S. Army Aviation, comprised of aviation base fields, stage fields, remote training sites, unit training areas, small arms ranges, and cantonment area.

The DA is the lead federal agency and the decision-maker for the NEPA process. The EA will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 et seq.); Environmental Protection and Enhancement Army Regulation (AR) 200-1; and Environmental Analysis of Army Actions (AR200-2), 32 CFR Part 651.

The purpose of this project is for the DA to construct a new fuel storage complex, consisting of two [REDACTED] above ground fuel storage tanks, [REDACTED] of Jet A fuel to be utilized by Fort Novosel at Hanchey AHP. Fort Novosel serves as a refueling point for response teams during adverse weather and natural disasters in the region. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Historically, disruptions to fuel truck delivery schedules impact the fuel supply at Hanchey AHP, ultimately affecting mission support. Additionally, mechanical failures at the existing fuel storage facility contribute to supply disruptions. Increasing the total fuel capacity at Hanchey AHP will improve fuel supply planning and forecasting for Fort Novosel.

Two locations are being considered for construction of the new fuel storage facility. Preliminary review has suggested that the first course of action (COA 1) would be the most feasible, cost efficient, and least environmentally impactful. The area for COA 1 has been

previously disturbed and currently consists of concrete pads and abandoned infrastructure that would need to be removed near the southwest corner of Hanchey AHP. Additionally, COA 1 is within proximity to the existing fuel storage facility and is located within the cantonment area. The second course of action (COA 2) is directly northwest of COA 1 and located outside of the cantonment area. The location for COA 2 consists of steep grades not ideal for construction and would require new security fencing and more tree clearing and grubbing compared to COA 1. Proposed project area maps and plan sheets for both courses of action are enclosed for reference.

Because COA 1 is currently the favored course of action, specific construction details have been discussed and considered in greater depth than COA 2 up to this point in project planning. Construction for COA 1 would require demolition of existing facilities, earthwork, relocation of an existing waste fuel tank, and establishing utilities and connections. The two [REDACTED] vertical above-ground fuel tanks would be constructed adjacent to the existing fueling complex and would include two concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets. Additional construction will include a pump shelter adjacent to the proposed tanks, two truck offload equipment skids, two bulk fill stands, two offload position canopies, two fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical, and control equipment. Two potential staging areas are currently proposed for construction under COA 1, directly adjacent to the proposed project boundary.

Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning (IICEP) is a federally mandated process for informing and coordinating with other governmental agencies regarding federal actions. Through the IICEP process, the DA notifies relevant federal, state, and local agencies and allows them sufficient time to make known their environmental concerns specific to a proposed action. Comments and concerns submitted by these agencies during the IICEP process are subsequently incorporated into the analysis of potential environmental impacts conducted as part of the EA. This coordination fulfills requirements under EO 12372 (superseded by 12416 and subsequently supplemented by EO 13132), which requires federal agencies to cooperate with and consider state and local views in implementing a federal proposal. It also constitutes the IICEP process for the EA. USACE is requesting your agency provide us with any comments within 30 days receipt of this letter so they may be considered in the analysis.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Ms. Kristina Amato at (402) 995-2577 or at Kristina.M.Amato@usace.army.mil.

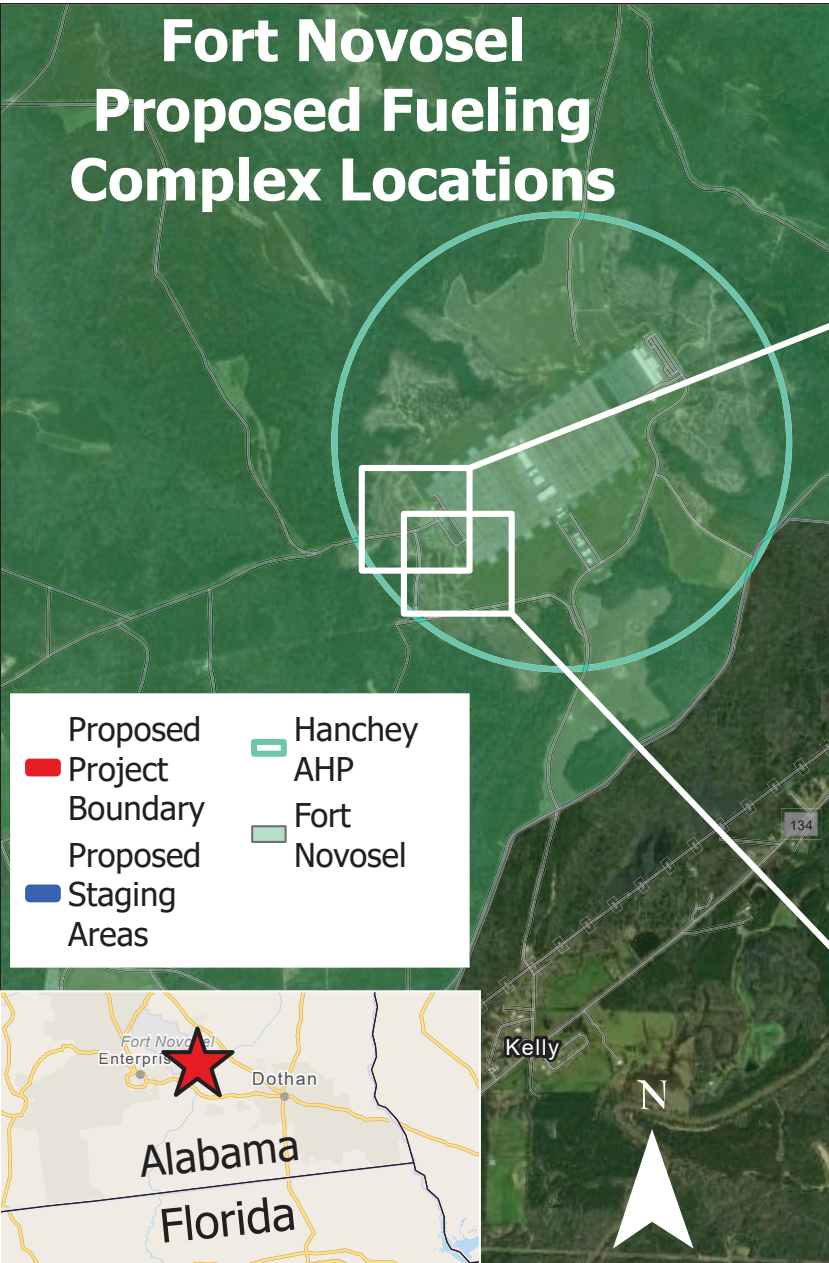
Sincerely,



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosures

Fort Novosel Proposed Fueling Complex Locations



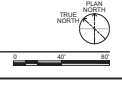


GENERAL SHEET NOTES

1. CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR VERIFYING THE LOCATION OF ALL EXISTING UTILITIES AT THE SITE PRIOR TO ANY EXCAVATIONS.
2. THE LAYOUT SHOWN IS ONLY A CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT AND DOES NOT DEPICT THE EXACT LOCATION OF FUELING COMPONENTS.
3. CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WATER LINES WILL BE REQUIRED TO CREATE A FIRE LOOP AROUND BOTH TANKS TO SERVICE BOTH PROPOSED FIRE HYDRANTS.

PROJECT NO: CONTRACT NO: SHEET NO.:	DATE: SCALE:
DRAWN BY: CHECKED BY: DESIGNED BY: IN CHARGE:	PROJECT NO: CONTRACT NO: SHEET NO.:
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS WASHINGTON, DC 20315 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN	

A1 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 40'



MILCON PLANNING DOCUMENT
 SHEET ID
CS100
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 U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
 WASHINGTON, DC 20315
 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN
 PROJECT NO:
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 DATE:
 SCALE:



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSEL AL 36362-1100

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Director of Wildlife and Fisheries Division, Montgomery Office
Attention: Mr. Chuck Sykes
64 North Union Street
Montgomery, AL 36130-1457

SUBJECT: Scoping for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Novosel Installation

Dear Mr. Sykes:

The Omaha District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is in the process of conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) on behalf of the U.S. Department of the Army (DA) to assess the overall effects of the proposed construction of a new fuel tank storage complex at Hanchey Army Heliport (AHP) within the Fort Novosel Installation. Fort Novosel averages 17 miles long by 9 miles wide and is located approximately 25 miles northwest of Dothan, Alabama, between the cities of Daleville, Enterprise, and Ozark in the counties of Coffee and Dale. Fort Novosel serves as the headquarters for U.S. Army Aviation, comprised of aviation base fields, stage fields, remote training sites, unit training areas, small arms ranges, and cantonment area.

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[REDACTED] Historically, disruptions to fuel truck delivery schedules impact the fuel supply at Hanchey AHP, ultimately affecting mission support. Additionally, mechanical failures at the existing fuel storage facility contribute to supply disruptions. Increasing the total fuel capacity at Hanchey AHP will improve fuel supply planning and forecasting for Fort Novosel.

Two locations are being considered for construction of the new fuel storage facility. Preliminary review has suggested that the first course of action (COA 1) would be the most feasible, cost efficient, and least environmentally impactful. The area for COA 1 has been

previously disturbed and currently consists of concrete pads and abandoned infrastructure that would need to be removed near the southwest corner of Hanchey AHP. Additionally, COA 1 is within proximity to the existing fuel storage facility and is located within the cantonment area. The second course of action (COA 2) is directly northwest of COA 1 and located outside of the cantonment area. The location for COA 2 consists of steep grades not ideal for construction and would require new security fencing and more tree clearing and grubbing compared to COA 1. Proposed project area maps and plan sheets for both courses of action are enclosed for reference.

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If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Ms. Kristina Amato at (402) 995-2577 or at Kristina.M.Amato@usace.army.mil.

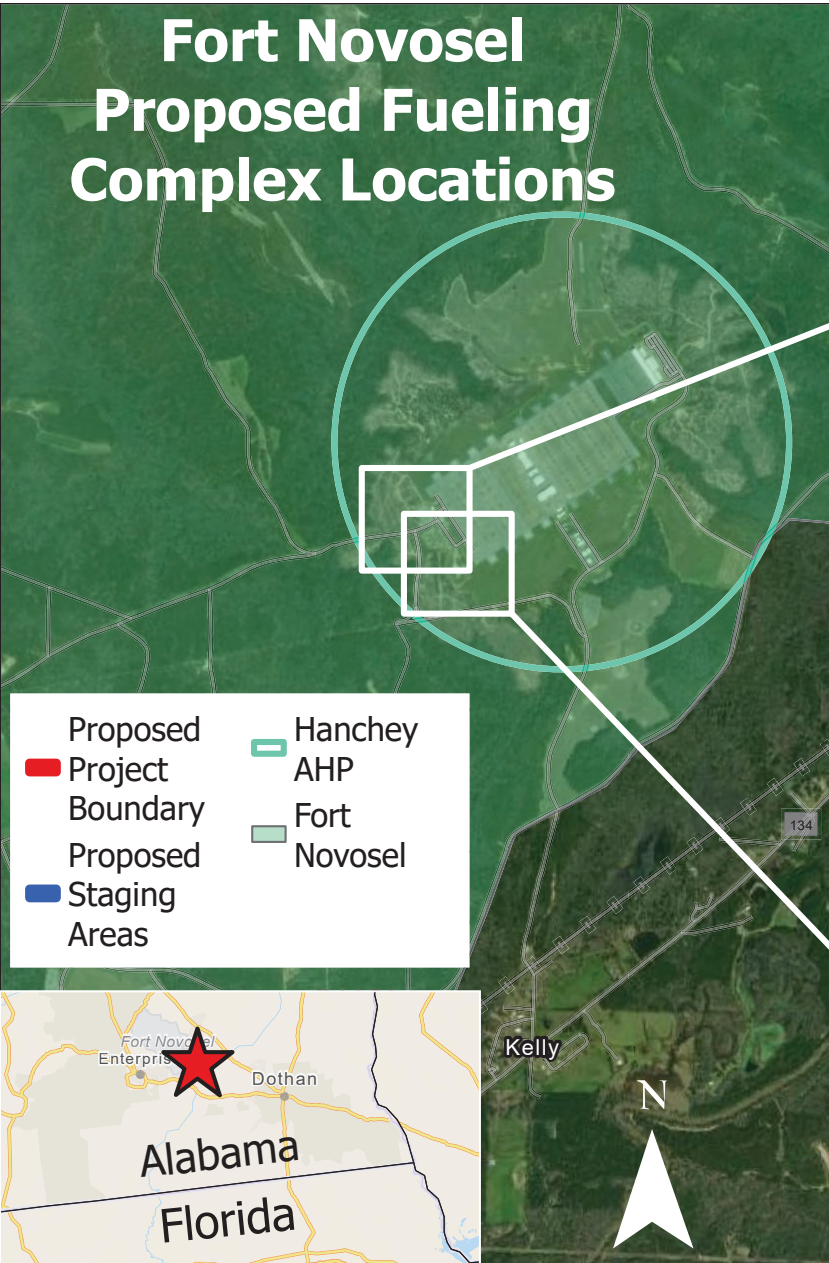
Sincerely,



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosures

Fort Novosel Proposed Fueling Complex Locations






A1 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 40'

GENERAL SHEET NOTES


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 US Army Corps of Engineers	<p>PROJECT: MILCON PLANNING DOCUMENT</p> <p>CONTRACT NO.: W534 AM 821025</p> <p>CONTRACT DATE: 10/05/10</p> <p>CONTRACTOR: HOK</p> <p>DESIGNER: HOK</p> <p>DATE: 10/05/10</p>	<p>DATE: 10/05/10</p> <p>BY: [Signature]</p> <p>CHECKED BY: [Signature]</p> <p>SCALE: 1" = 40'</p>	<p>PROJECT BY: [Signature]</p> <p>DESIGNED BY: [Signature]</p> <p>CHECKED BY: [Signature]</p> <p>SCALE: 1" = 40'</p>
<p>U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS WASHINGTON FIELD WASHINGTON, DC 20315 WASHINGTON, DC 20315</p>		<p>CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN</p>	
<p>SHEET ID</p> <p>CS100</p>		<p>MILCON PLANNING DOCUMENT</p>	



A1 COURSE OF ACTION 2
SCALE: 1" = 40'

- GENERAL SHEET NOTES**
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US Army Corps of Engineers

PROJECT TITLE: DRAWN BY: CHECKED BY: DESIGNED BY: DATE:	PROJECT NUMBER: CONTRACT NUMBER: SHEET NUMBER: SHEET TOTAL:	DATE:
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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
 WASHINGTON, DC 20315
 WASHINGTON, DC 20315

HANCOCK FIELD
 HANCOCK FIELD STATION
 COURSE OF ACTION 2

SHEET ID
COA 2

IPRB



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSEL AL 36362-1100

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Alabama Natural Resource Conservation Services
Attention: Mr. Ben Malone
3381 Skyway Drive
Auburn, AL 36830-6443

SUBJECT: Scoping for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Novosel Installation

Dear Mr. Malon:

The Omaha District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is in the process of conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) on behalf of the U.S. Department of the Army (DA) to assess the overall effects of the proposed construction of a new fuel tank storage complex at Hanchey Army Heliport (AHP) within the Fort Novosel Installation. Fort Novosel averages 17 miles long by 9 miles wide and is located approximately 25 miles northwest of Dothan, Alabama, between the cities of Daleville, Enterprise, and Ozark in the counties of Coffee and Dale. Fort Novosel serves as the headquarters for U.S. Army Aviation, comprised of aviation base fields, stage fields, remote training sites, unit training areas, small arms ranges, and cantonment area.

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[REDACTED] Historically, disruptions to fuel truck delivery schedules impact the fuel supply at Hanchey AHP, ultimately affecting mission support. Additionally, mechanical failures at the existing fuel storage facility contribute to supply disruptions. Increasing the total fuel capacity at Hanchey AHP will improve fuel supply planning and forecasting for Fort Novosel.

Two locations are being considered for construction of the new fuel storage facility. Preliminary review has suggested that the first course of action (COA 1) would be the most feasible, cost efficient, and least environmentally impactful. The area for COA 1 has been previously disturbed and currently consists of concrete pads and abandoned infrastructure that

would need to be removed near the southwest corner of Hanchey AHP. Additionally, COA 1 is within proximity to the existing fuel storage facility and is located within the cantonment area. The second course of action (COA 2) is directly northwest of COA 1 and located outside of the cantonment area. The location for COA 2 consists of steep grades not ideal for construction, and would require new security fencing and more tree clearing and grubbing compared to COA 1. Proposed project area maps and plan sheets for both courses of action are enclosed for reference.

Because COA 1 is currently the favored course of action, specific construction details have been discussed and considered in greater depth than COA 2 up to this point in project planning. Construction for COA 1 would require demolition of existing facilities, earthwork, relocation of an existing waste fuel tank, and establishing utilities and connections. The two [REDACTED] vertical above-ground fuel tanks would be constructed adjacent to the existing fueling complex and would include two concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets. Additional construction will include a pump shelter adjacent to the proposed tanks, two truck offload equipment skids, two bulk fill stands, two offload position canopies, two fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical, and control equipment. Two potential staging areas are currently proposed for construction under COA 1, directly adjacent to the proposed project boundary.

Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning (IICEP) is a federally mandated process for informing and coordinating with other governmental agencies regarding federal actions. Through the IICEP process, the DA notifies relevant federal, state, and local agencies and allows them sufficient time to make known their environmental concerns specific to a proposed action. Comments and concerns submitted by these agencies during the IICEP process are subsequently incorporated into the analysis of potential environmental impacts conducted as part of the EA. This coordination fulfills requirements under EO 12372 (superseded by 12416 and subsequently supplemented by EO 13132), which requires federal agencies to cooperate with and consider state and local views in implementing a federal proposal. It also constitutes the IICEP process for the EA. USACE is requesting your agency provide us with any comments within 30 days receipt of this letter so they may be considered in the analysis.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Ms. Kristina Amato at (402) 995-2577 or at Kristina.M.Amato@usace.army.mil.

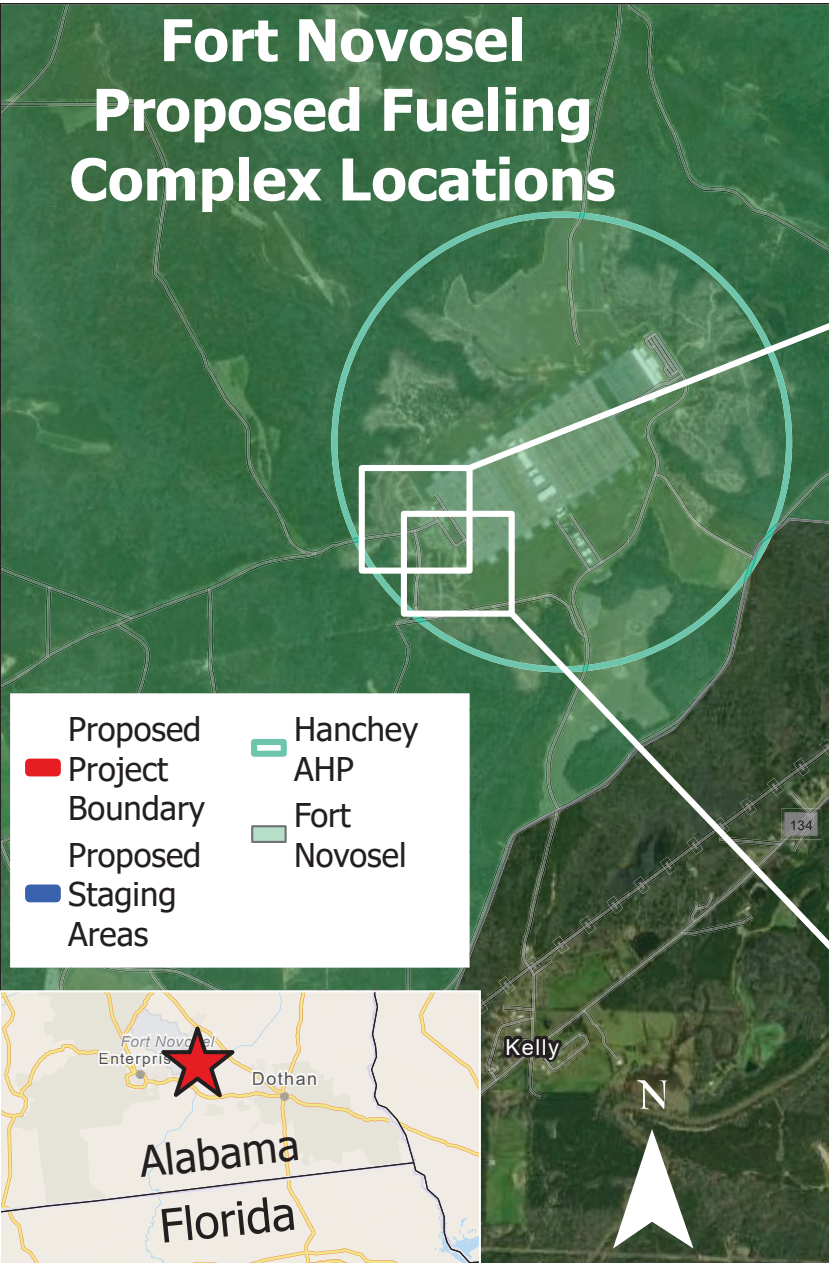
Sincerely,



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

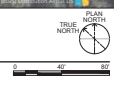
Enclosures

Fort Novosel Proposed Fueling Complex Locations





A1 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 40'



GENERAL SHEET NOTES

1. CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR VERIFYING THE LOCATION OF ALL EXISTING UTILITIES AT THE SITE PRIOR TO ANY EXCAVATIONS.
2. THE LAYOUT SHOWN IS ONLY A CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT AND DOES NOT DEPICT THE EXACT LOCATION OF FUELING COMPONENTS.
3. CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WATER LINES WILL BE REQUIRED TO CREATE A FIRE LOOP AROUND BOTH TANKS TO SERVICE BOTH PROPOSED FIRE HYDRANTS.



DATE	DESCRIPTION

PROJECT NO.	18-334 AM 821225
CONTRACT NO.	
CONTRACT DATE	
DESIGN NO.	
DATE	
BY	
CHECKED BY	
DATE	
BY	
CHECKED BY	
DATE	

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
 WASHINGTON FIELD
 1000 CHAMBERS STREET
 WASHINGTON, DC 20542
 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

SHEET ID
CS100



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSEL AL 36362-1100

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4
NEPA Program Office
Attention: Kajumba Ntale
61 Forsyth Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

SUBJECT: Scoping for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Novosel Installation

Dear Kajumba Ntale:

The Omaha District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is in the process of conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) on behalf of the U.S. Department of the Army (DA) to assess the overall effects of the proposed construction of a new fuel tank storage complex at Hanchey Army Heliport (AHP) within the Fort Novosel Installation. Fort Novosel averages 17 miles long by 9 miles wide and is located approximately 25 miles northwest of Dothan, Alabama, between the cities of Daleville, Enterprise, and Ozark in the counties of Coffee and Dale. Fort Novosel serves as the headquarters for U.S. Army Aviation, comprised of aviation base fields, stage fields, remote training sites, unit training areas, small arms ranges, and cantonment area.

The DA is the lead federal agency and the decision-maker for the NEPA process. The EA will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 et seq.); Environmental Protection and Enhancement Army Regulation (AR) 200-1; and Environmental Analysis of Army Actions (AR200-2), 32 CFR Part 651.

The purpose of this project is for the DA to construct a new fuel storage complex, consisting of two [REDACTED] above ground fuel storage tanks, [REDACTED] of Jet A fuel to be utilized by Fort Novosel at Hanchey AHP. Fort Novosel serves as a refueling point for response teams during adverse weather and natural disasters in the region. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Historically, disruptions to fuel truck delivery schedules impact the fuel supply at Hanchey AHP, ultimately affecting mission support. Additionally, mechanical failures at the existing fuel storage facility contribute to supply disruptions. Increasing the total fuel capacity at Hanchey AHP will improve fuel supply planning and forecasting for Fort Novosel.

Two locations are being considered for construction of the new fuel storage facility. Preliminary review has suggested that the first course of action (COA 1) would be the most feasible, cost efficient, and least environmentally impactful. The area for COA 1 has been

previously disturbed and currently consists of concrete pads and abandoned infrastructure that would need to be removed near the southwest corner of Hanchey AHP. Additionally, COA 1 is within proximity to the existing fuel storage facility and is located within the cantonment area. The second course of action (COA 2) is directly northwest of COA 1 and located outside of the cantonment area. The location for COA 2 consists of steep grades not ideal for construction and would require new security fencing and more tree clearing and grubbing compared to COA 1. Proposed project area maps and plan sheets for both courses of action are enclosed for reference.

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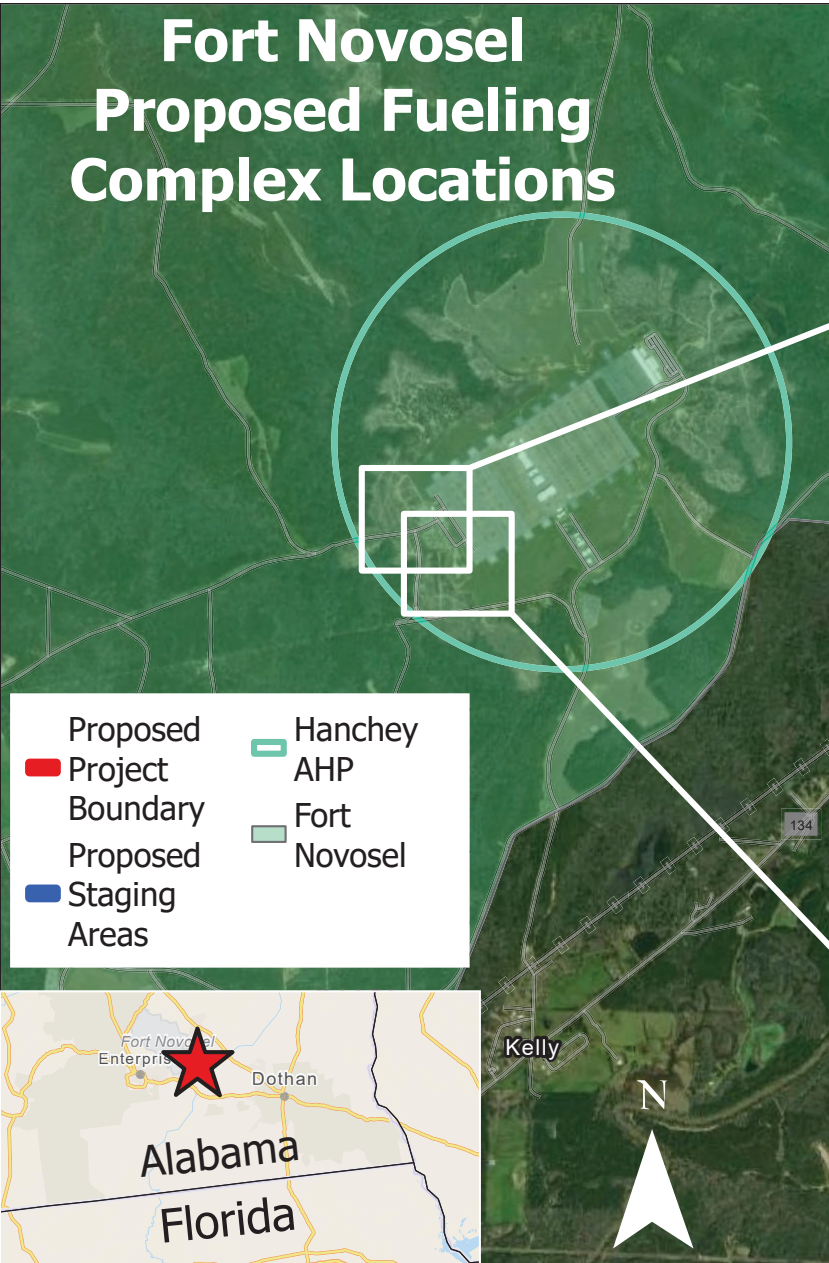
Sincerely,



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
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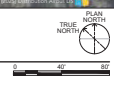
Enclosures

Fort Novosel Proposed Fueling Complex Locations





A1 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 40'



- GENERAL SHEET NOTES**
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 3. CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WATER LINES WILL BE REQUIRED TO CREATE A FIRE LOOP AROUND BOTH TANKS TO SERVICE BOTH PROPOSED FIRE HYDRANTS.



DATE	DESCRIPTION

DESIGNED BY	DATE
CHECKED BY	
APPROVED BY	

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
 DISTRICT OFFICE
 1000 CHESAPEAKE BLVD
 FORT MONROE, VA 23046-5000

SHEET ID
CS100



A1 COURSE OF ACTION 2
SCALE: 1" = 40'

GENERAL SHEET NOTES

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DATE	12/21/19
BY	J. J. JONES
FOR	CONSTRUCTION
PROJECT	12251 FM J2B22
NO.	0005
REV.	0005
DATE	12/21/19
BY	J. J. JONES
FOR	CONSTRUCTION
PROJECT	12251 FM J2B22
NO.	0005
REV.	0005
DATE	12/21/19
BY	J. J. JONES
FOR	CONSTRUCTION
PROJECT	12251 FM J2B22
NO.	0005
REV.	0005

DESIGNED BY	J. J. JONES
CHECKED BY	J. J. JONES
DATE	12/21/19
PROJECT	12251 FM J2B22
NO.	0005
REV.	0005
DATE	12/21/19
BY	J. J. JONES
FOR	CONSTRUCTION
PROJECT	12251 FM J2B22
NO.	0005
REV.	0005

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
 DISTRICT OFFICE
 12251 FM J2B22
 COURSE OF ACTION 2

SHEET ID
COA 2



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Alabama Ecological Services Field Office
1208 B Main Street
Daphne, AL 36526-4419
Phone: (251) 441-5181 Fax: (251) 441-6222
Email Address: alabama@fws.gov

In Reply Refer To:

02/18/2026 17:25:35 UTC

Project code: 2025-0098137

Project Name: Fort Rucker Fuel Tank Construction Environmental Assessment

Federal Nexus: yes

Federal Action Agency (if applicable): Army

Subject: Federal agency coordination under the Endangered Species Act, Section 7 for 'Fort Rucker Fuel Tank Construction Environmental Assessment'

Dear Kristina Amato:

This letter records your determination using the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system provided to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) on February 18, 2026, for 'Fort Rucker Fuel Tank Construction Environmental Assessment' (here forward, Project). This project has been assigned Project Code 2025-0098137 and all future correspondence should clearly reference this number. **Please carefully review this letter. Your Endangered Species Act (Act) requirements may not be complete.**

Ensuring Accurate Determinations When Using IPaC

The Service developed the IPaC system and associated species' determination keys in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA; 87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) and based on a standing analysis. All information submitted by the Project proponent into IPaC must accurately represent the full scope and details of the Project.

Failure to accurately represent or implement the Project as detailed in IPaC or the Northern Long-eared Bat and Tricolored Bat Range-wide Determination Key (DKey), invalidates this letter. ***Answers to certain questions in the DKey commit the project proponent to implementation of conservation measures that must be followed for the ESA determination to remain valid. Note that conservation measures for northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat may differ. If both bat species are present in the action area and the key suggests more conservative measures for one of the species for your Project, the Project may need to apply the most conservative measures in order to avoid adverse effects. If unsure which conservation measures should be applied, please contact the appropriate Ecological Services Field Office.***

Determination for the Northern Long-Eared Bat and Tricolored Bat

Based on your IPaC submission and a standing analysis completed by the Service, you determined the proposed Project will have the following effect determinations:

Species	Listing Status	Determination
Northern Long-eared Bat (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>)	Endangered	NLAA

Unless the Service advises you within 15 days of the date of this letter that your IPaC-assisted determination was incorrect, this letter verifies that consultation on the Action is complete for northern long-eared bat and/or tricolored bat and no further action is necessary unless either of the following occurs:

- new information reveals effects of the action that may affect the northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat in a manner or to an extent not previously considered; or,
- the identified action is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect to the northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat that was not considered when completing the determination key.

15-Day Review Period

As indicated above, the Service will notify you within 15 calendar days if we determine that this proposed Action does not meet the criteria for a “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” (NLAA) determination for the northern long-eared bat and/or tricolored bat. If we do not notify you within that timeframe, you may proceed with the Action under the terms of the NLAA concurrence provided here. This verification period allows the identified Ecological Services Field Office to apply local knowledge to evaluation of the Action, as we may identify a small subset of actions having impacts that we did not anticipate when developing the key. In such cases, the identified Ecological Services Field Office may request additional information to verify the effects determination reached through the Northern Long-eared Bat and Tricolored Bat DKey.

Other Species and Critical Habitat that May be Present in the Action Area

The IPaC-assisted determination key for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat does not apply to the following ESA-protected species and/or critical habitat that also may occur in your Action area:

- Alligator Snapping Turtle *Macrochelys temminckii* Proposed Threatened
- Choctaw Bean *Obovaria choctawensis* Endangered
- Fuzzy Pigtoe *Pleurobema strodeanum* Threatened
- Gulf Sturgeon *Acipenser oxyrinchus (=oxyrhyinchus) desotoi* Threatened
- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* Proposed Threatened
- Southern Kidneyshell *Ptychobranhus jonesi* Endangered
- Southern Sandshell *Hamiota australis* Threatened
- Tapered Pigtoe *Fusconaia burkei* Threatened

You may coordinate with our Office to determine whether the Action may affect the species and/or critical habitat listed above. Note that reinitiation of consultation would be necessary if a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the identified action before it is complete.

If you have any questions regarding this letter or need further assistance, please contact the Alabama Ecological Services Field Office and reference Project Code 2025-0098137 associated with this Project.

Action Description

You provided to IPaC the following name and description for the subject Action.

1. Name

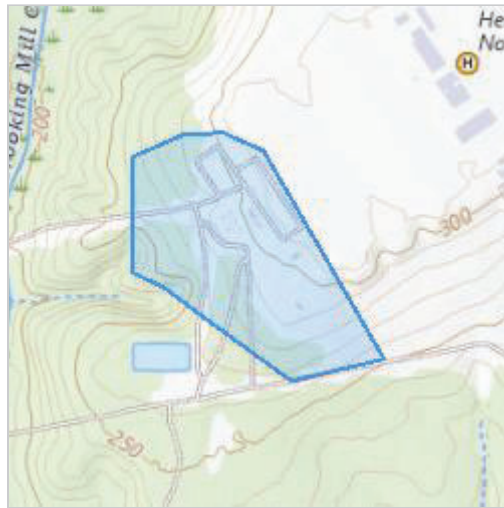
Fort Rucker Fuel Tank Construction Environmental Assessment

2. Description

The following description was provided for the project 'Fort Rucker Fuel Tank Construction Environmental Assessment':

Two above ground fuel storage tanks will be constructed on Hanchey Air Heliport.

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@31.342573,-85.65964857651943,14z>



DETERMINATION KEY RESULT

Based on the answers provided, the proposed Action is consistent with a determination of “may affect, but not likely to adversely affect” for a least one species covered by this determination key.

QUALIFICATION INTERVIEW

1. Does the proposed project include, or is it reasonably certain to cause, intentional take of listed bats or any other listed species?

Note: Intentional take is defined as take that is the intended result of a project. Intentional take could refer to research, direct species management, surveys, and/or studies that include intentional handling/encountering, harassment, collection, or capturing of any individual of a federally listed threatened, endangered or proposed species?

No

2. Is the action area wholly within Zone 2 of the year-round active area for northern long-eared bat and/or tricolored bat?

Automatically answered

Yes

3. Your project overlaps with Zone 2 of the area where northern long-eared bats and tricolored bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Do you understand that your project may impact bats at any time during the year?

Yes

4. Does any component of the action involve leasing, construction or operation of wind turbines? Answer 'yes' if the activities considered are conducted with the intention of gathering survey information to inform the leasing, construction, or operation of wind turbines.

No

5. Is the proposed action authorized, permitted, licensed, funded, or being carried out by a Federal agency in whole or in part?

Note for projects in Pennsylvania: Projects requiring authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act would be considered as having a federal nexus. Since the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has issued the Pennsylvania State Programmatic General Permit (PASPGP), which may be verified by the PA Department of Environmental Protection or certain Conservation Districts, the need to receive a Corps authorization to perform the work under the PASPGP serves as a federal nexus. As such, if proposing to use the PASPGP, you would answer ‘yes’ to this question.

Yes

6. Is the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding or authorizing the proposed action, in whole or in part?

No

7. Are you an employee of the federal action agency or have you been officially designated in writing by the agency as its designated non-federal representative for the purposes of Endangered Species Act Section 7 informal consultation per 50 CFR § 402.08?

Note: This key may be used for federal actions and for non-federal actions to facilitate section 7 consultation and to help determine whether an incidental take permit may be needed, respectively. This question is for information purposes only.

Yes

8. Is the lead federal action agency the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Federal Communications Commission (FCC)? Is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Federal Communications Commission (FCC) funding or authorizing the proposed action, in whole or in part?

No

9. Is the lead federal action agency the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)?

No

10. [Semantic] Is the action area located within 0.5 miles of a known bat hibernaculum or winter roost? Note: The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your state wildlife agency.

Automatically answered

No

11. Does the action area contain any winter roosts or caves (or associated sinkholes, fissures, or other karst features), mines, rocky outcroppings, or tunnels that could provide habitat for hibernating bats?

No

12. Does the action area contain (1) talus or (2) anthropogenic or naturally formed rock shelters or crevices in rocky outcrops, rock faces or cliffs?

No

13. Will the action cause effects to a bridge?

Note: Covered bridges should be considered as bridges in this question.

No

14. Will the action result in effects to a culvert or tunnel at any time of year?

No

15. Are trees present within 1000 feet of the action area?

Note: If there are trees within the action area that are of a sufficient size to be potential roosts for bats answer "Yes". If unsure, additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

Yes

16. Does the action include the intentional exclusion of bats from a building or building-like structure? **Note:** Exclusion is conducted to deny bats' entry or reentry into a building. To be effective and to avoid harming bats, it should be done according to established standards. If your action includes bat exclusion and you are unsure whether northern long-eared bats or tricolored bats are present, answer "Yes." Answer "No" if there are no signs of bat use in the building/structure. If unsure, contact your local Ecological Services Field Office to help assess whether northern long-eared bats or tricolored bats may be present. Contact a Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator (NWCO) for help in how to exclude bats from a structure safely without causing harm to the bats (to find a NWCO certified in bat standards, search the Internet using the search term "National Wildlife Control Operators Association bats"). Also see the White-Nose Syndrome Response Team's guide for bat control in structures.

No

17. Does the action involve removal, modification, or maintenance of a human-made building-like structure (barn, house, or other building) **known or suspected to contain roosting bats?**

No

18. Will the action cause construction of one or more new roads open to the public?

For federal actions, answer 'yes' when the construction or operation of these facilities is either (1) part of the federal action or (2) would not occur but for an action taken by a federal agency (federal permit, funding, etc.).

No

19. Will the action include or cause any construction or other activity that is reasonably certain to increase average night-time traffic permanently or temporarily on one or more existing roads? **Note:** For federal actions, answer 'yes' when the construction or operation of these facilities is either (1) part of the federal action or (2) would not occur but for an action taken by a federal agency (federal permit, funding, etc.). .

No

20. Will the action include or cause any construction or other activity that is reasonably certain to increase the number of travel lanes on an existing thoroughfare?

For federal actions, answer 'yes' when the construction or operation of these facilities is either (1) part of the federal action or (2) would not occur but for an action taken by a federal agency (federal permit, funding, etc.).

No

21. Will the proposed Action involve the creation of a new water-borne contaminant source (e.g., leachate pond, pits containing chemicals that are not NSF/ANSI 60 compliant)?

Note: For information regarding NSF/ANSI 60 please visit <https://www.nsf.org/knowledge-library/nsf-ansi-standard-60-drinking-water-treatment-chemicals-health-effects>

No

22. Will the proposed action involve the creation of a new point source discharge from a facility other than a water treatment plant or storm water system?

No

23. Will the proposed action involve blasting or drilling?

No

24. Will the action involve military training (e.g., smoke operations, obscurant operations, exploding munitions, artillery fire, range use, helicopter or fixed wing aircraft use at night)?

Yes

25. Your project overlaps with an area where northern long-eared and tricolored bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Will the military training affect suitable northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat habitat?

Note: Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

No

26. Will the proposed action involve the use of herbicides or pesticides (e.g., fungicides, insecticides, or rodenticides)?

No

27. Will the action include or cause activities that are reasonably certain to cause chronic or intense nighttime noise (above current levels of ambient noise in the area) in suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat during the active season?

Chronic noise is noise that is continuous or occurs repeatedly again and again for a long time. Sources of chronic or intense noise that could cause adverse effects to bats may include, but are not limited to: road traffic; trains; aircraft; industrial activities; gas compressor stations; loud music; crowds; oil and gas extraction; construction; and mining.

Note: Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

No

28. Does the action include, or is it reasonably certain to cause, the use of permanent or temporary artificial lighting within 1000 feet of suitable northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat roosting habitat?

Note: Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

Yes

29. Will the action cause an increase in the extent of suitable forested habitat exposed to artificial lighting?

No

30. Will the action include tree cutting or other means of knocking down or bringing down trees, tree topping, or tree trimming?

Yes

31. Is the project related to the production of coal, including projects that support the mining of coal, as well as the production and/or distribution of energy produced from coal?

No

32. Will the proposed action occur exclusively in an already established and currently maintained utility right-of-way?

No

33. Does the action include emergency cutting or trimming of hazard trees in order to remove an imminent threat to human safety or property? See hazard tree note at the bottom of the key for text that will be added to response letters

Note: A "hazard tree" is a tree that is an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety, or improved property.

No

34. Does the project intersect with the 0- 9.9% forest density category?

Automatically answered

No

35. Does the project intersect with the 10.0- 19.9% forest density category map?

Automatically answered

No

36. Does the project intersect with the 20.0- 29.9% forest density category map?

Automatically answered

No

37. Does the project intersect with the 30.0- 100% forest density category map?

Automatically answered

Yes

38. Will the action cause trees to be cut, knocked down, or otherwise brought down across an area greater than 100 acres in total extent?

No

39. Will the proposed action result in the use of prescribed fire?

Note: If the prescribed fire action includes other activities than application of fire (e.g., tree cutting, fire line preparation) please consider impacts from those activities within the previous representative questions in the key. This set of questions only considers impacts from flame and smoke.

No

40. Does the action area intersect the northern long-eared bat species list area?

Automatically answered

Yes

41. [Semantic] Is the action area located within 0.5 miles of radius of an entrance/opening to any known NLEB hibernacula or winter roost? **Note:** The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your State wildlife agency.

Automatically answered

No

42. [Semantic] Is the action area located within 0.25 miles of a culvert that is known to be occupied by northern long-eared or tricolored bats? **Note:** The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your State wildlife agency.

Automatically answered

No

43. [Semantic] Is the action area located within 150 feet of a documented northern long-eared bat roost site?

Note: The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your State wildlife agency. Have you contacted the appropriate agency to determine if your action is within 150 feet of any documented northern long-eared bat roosts?

Note: A document with links to Natural Heritage Inventory databases and other state-specific sources of information on the locations of northern long-eared bat roosts is available [here](#). Location information for northern long-eared bat roosts is generally kept in state natural heritage inventory databases – the availability of this data varies by state. Many states provide online access to their data, either directly by providing maps or by providing the opportunity to make a data request. In some cases, to protect those resources, access to the information may be limited.

Automatically answered

No

44. Your project overlaps with an area where northern long-eared bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round. Is suitable northern long-eared bat habitat present within 1000 feet of project activities?

Yes

45. Your project overlaps with an area where northern long-eared bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Has a presence/absence survey for the northern long-eared bat following the Service's [Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern Long-Eared Bat Survey Guidelines](#) been conducted within the project area? If unsure, answer "No."

No

46. Are any of the trees proposed for cutting or other means of knocking down, bringing down, topping, or trimming suitable for northern long-eared bat roosting (i.e., live trees and/or snags ≥ 3 inches dbh that have exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, and/or cavities)?

Note: Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

Yes

47. Will any tree cutting/trimming or other knocking or bringing down of trees occur during the **Summer Occupancy season** for northern long-eared bats in the action area? **Note:** Bat activity periods for your state can be found in Appendix 2 of the Service's [Northern long-eared Bat and Tricolored Bat Voluntary Environmental Review Process for Development Projects](#).

No

48. Do you have any documents that you want to include with this submission?

Yes

SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS

- 20260218_Uploaded to IPaC_Appendix B_Biological Assessment.pdf <https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/FCHPGBCG6NE5DB6OYCCZGAIFD4/projectDocuments/176985435>

PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE

Enter the extent of the action area (in acres) from which trees will be removed - round up to the nearest tenth of an acre. For this question, include the entire area where tree removal will take place, even if some live or dead trees will be left standing.

2.5

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Army Corps of Engineers
Name: Kristina Amato
Address: 8901 South 154th Street
City: Omaha
State: NE
Zip: 68138
Email: kristina.m.amato@usace.army.mil
Phone: 4028960896

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Army
Name: Brent Waters
Email: brent.waters3.civ@army.mil

From: [Collins, Evan R](#)
To: [Amato, Kristina M CIV \(USA\)](#)
Cc: [Bailey, Justin Michael CIV USARMY CENWO \(USA\)](#); brent.waters3.civ@army.mil; [Podkowka, Rebecca L CIV USARMY CENWO \(USA\)](#)
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: Follow up/Technical Assistance Requested for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Rucker Installation
Date: Tuesday, November 25, 2025 2:35:03 PM

Good afternoon, Kristina. My apologies for the delay in responding back to you. Thank you for providing the additional information! Given that air traffic will experience a negligible change if at all, it is unlikely that northern long-eared bats would be affected by new or increased traffic patterns.

I wanted to confirm that the approach you outlined is appropriate and advisable. The dKeys available in IPaC are designed to assist action agencies with their determinations and expedite the regulatory review process. With that said, don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything else from our office!

Regarding the acceptable tree removal thresholds: the Service has produced a national-scale forest cover dataset with four forest cover percent classes. Each class has a clearing threshold that specifies the amount of tree clearing (in acres) that can be conducted before adverse effects to bat species would be expected. The IPaC dKey cross references the forest cover dataset with the user input project delineation and, as you noted, asks the user to input the acreage to be cleared. If your project exceeded the threshold, the dKey would have indicated that adverse effects to bats were likely. I hope that helps!

Let me know if you need anything else!

Best,
Evan

--

Evan Collins
Fish and Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Alabama Ecological Services Field Office
1208-B Main Street
Daphne, AL 36526
251-206-0498 (phone)
251-441-6222 (fax)
evan_collins@fws.gov

NOTE: This email correspondence and any attachments to and from this sender is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.

From: Amato, Kristina M CIV (USA) <Kristina.M.Amato@usace.army.mil>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 10:21 AM
To: Collins, Evan R <evan_collins@fws.gov>
Cc: Bailey, Justin Michael CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Justin.M.Bailey@usace.army.mil>; brent.waters3.civ@army.mil <brent.waters3.civ@army.mil>; Podkowka, Rebecca L CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Rebecca.L.Podkowka@usace.army.mil>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] RE: Follow up/Technical Assistance Requested for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Rucker Installation

Good Morning Evan,

Thank you for the response and guidance!

We forwarded your questions out to the team and received a response: To summarize, daily air traffic is not anticipated to increase or affect/change daily air traffic flow or pattern in any way. There is a requirement to coordinate with G3 Air during the design phase to ensure that the project complies with height/distance limitations and does not affect/change training flight patterns. The only “traffic” changes that may increase would be increased roadway fuel truck traffic but this would be on an already established route and should not encroach on wooded areas.

After reviewing the USFWS recommendations you provided, we plan to move forward with a “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” determination for the NLEB and incorporate the recommended conservation measure you outline in the previous email. I completed the D-Key on IPaC and the responses generated a MANLAA determination. It appears we have the option to submit the D-Key on IPaC for an automatic concurrence if no response is received within 15 days. The draft Environmental Assessment (EA) includes an integrated BA with discussion on each species with potential to be in the area and associated effects analysis. The NLEB is the only species with a MANLAA determination. All other species will have a “no effect” determination. When the draft EA is ready, I plan to upload the EA/integrated BA document to the D-Key before submitting online. **If you have any concerns with this approach please let me know.**

I also had an additional question. I am not quite grasping what “acceptable tree removal acreage thresholds” are in this context? The group of trees and vegetation to be removed will be all within an approximate 0.5-acre space within the project area. I input this acreage into the D-Key and did not see any mention of “acceptable tree removal acreage thresholds.” Could you please elaborate on this for my general understanding?

Thank you again for your assistance,

Kristina Amato
Environmental Resource Specialist
US Army Corps of Engineers-Omaha District
1616 Capitol Avenue
Omaha, NE 68102
Desk: (402) 995-2577
Cell: (402) 899-9108

From: Collins, Evan R <evan_collins@fws.gov>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 5:22 PM
To: Amato, Kristina M CIV (USA) <Kristina.M.Amato@usace.army.mil>
Cc: Bailey, Justin Michael CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Justin.M.Bailey@usace.army.mil>; brent.waters3.civ@army.mil
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: Follow up/Technical Assistance Requested for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Rucker Installation

Good afternoon, Kristen. My apologies. The tricolored bat was incorrectly substituted for the northern long-eared bat in the letter our office provided to you. The IPaC species list is correct and the northern long-eared bat should be considered in your environmental review process. We provide the following comments and recommendations for that species below.

Northern long eared bat

Suitable summer habitat for Northern long-eared bat (NLEB) consists of a wide variety of forested/wooded habitats where they roost, forage, and travel. Although they may also traverse habitat adjacent and interspersed with forest habitat, such as emergent wetlands and field edges, they are predominantly found in forest/wooded habitat. This includes forests and woodlots containing potential roosts including live trees and/or snags ≥ 3 inches (7.6 centimeters) dbh that have exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, and/or cavities, as well as linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors. These wooded areas may be dense or loose aggregates of trees with variable amounts of canopy closure. NLEB often prefer intact mixed-type forests with small gaps (ie., forest trails, small roads, or forest-covered creeks) in forest with sparse or medium vegetation for foraging and commuting rather than fragmented habitat or areas that have been clear cut. Individual trees may be considered suitable habitat when they exhibit the characteristics of a potential roost tree and are located within 1,000 feet (305 meters) of other forested habitat.

We recommend that any tree clearing for this project occur during the protective window of July 16 to March 14. Further, if your project falls within the acceptable tree removal acreage thresholds*, direct adverse effects from tree clearing can be avoided. If this timing is not achievable and no other measures to avoid adverse effects are possible, then we recommend that the project proponent proceed to acoustic and/or mist-netting surveys to determine presence or probable absence of northern long-eared bats at the project site in accordance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *2024 Range-wide Indiana Bat & Northern Long-eared Bat Survey Guidelines*:

<https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>

Please note that our recommended tree clearing window is narrower for this species than for the tricolored bat.

*The determination keys for bats available in IPaC will likely be the best way to assess tree removal acreage thresholds.

I do have a couple additional questions, would this project result in increased air traffic? If so, would the air traffic be directed closely to forest features matching the description of habitat provided above?

Thanks!

Evan

--

Evan Collins
Fish and Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Alabama Ecological Services Field Office
1208-B Main Street
Daphne, AL 36526
251-206-0498 (phone)
251-441-6222 (fax)
evan_collins@fws.gov

NOTE: This email correspondence and any attachments to and from this sender is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.

From: Amato, Kristina M CIV (USA) <Kristina.M.Amato@usace.army.mil>

Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 12:43 PM

To: Collins, Evan R <evan_collins@fws.gov>

Cc: Bailey, Justin Michael CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Justin.M.Bailey@usace.army.mil>;
brent.waters3.civ@army.mil <brent.waters3.civ@army.mil>

Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] RE: Follow up/Technical Assistance Requested for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Rucker Installation

Good Afternoon Evan,

I am reaching out to follow up on the request for clarification regarding the scoping response letter from USFWS, dated August 18, 2025 (see email below dated August 18, 2025), and technical assistance request per the email below dated August 1, 2025. These requests are associated with IPaC Project Code: 2025-0098137.

Please let me know if there is any additional information I can provide or if you have any questions.

Thank you for your assistance!

Kristina Amato
Environmental Resource Specialist
US Army Corps of Engineers-Omaha District
1616 Capitol Avenue
Omaha, NE 68102
Desk: (402) 995-2577
Cell: (402) 899-9108

From: Carter, Phillip E <phillip_carter@fws.gov>

Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 12:09 PM

To: Amato, Kristina M CIV (USA) <Kristina.M.Amato@usace.army.mil>

Cc: Bailey, Justin Michael CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Justin.M.Bailey@usace.army.mil>;
brent.waters3.civ@army.mil; Alabama, FW4 <alabama@fws.gov>

Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: Follow up/Technical Assistance Requested for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Rucker Installation

Forwarded to the biologist assigned (POC at the bottom of the letter)

Phillip Carter
Administrative Assistant
US Fish & Wildlife Service
Alabama Ecological Services Field Office
1208-B Main Street, Daphne, AL 36526
Office (251)441-5184

From: Amato, Kristina M CIV (USA) <Kristina.M.Amato@usace.army.mil>
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 12:04 PM
To: Carter, Phillip E <phillip_carter@fws.gov>
Cc: Bailey, Justin Michael CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Justin.M.Bailey@usace.army.mil>; brent.waters3.civ@army.mil <brent.waters3.civ@army.mil>; Alabama, FW4 <alabama@fws.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Follow up/Technical Assistance Requested for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Rucker Installation

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Hi Phillip,

Thank you for sending over the USFWS response letter this morning. We really appreciate the comments and response!

I noticed that the response letter contains information on the Tri-Colored Bat (TCB) and does not mention the Northern Long-eared Bat (NLEB). The most recent IPaC species list I have generated includes NLEB to potentially be in the area and does not include the TCB.

I am wondering whether the IPaC list I have generated and have been referencing is accurate or if we need to omit consideration of the NLEB and focus on the TCB instead? (Please reference the email below sent Aug. 1st) I want to make sure we consider the correct species in our analyses.

Thanks again for the assistance on this project!

Kristina Amato
Environmental Resource Specialist

US Army Corps of Engineers-Omaha District
1616 Capitol Avenue
Omaha, NE 68102
Desk: (402) 995-2577
Cell: (402) 899-9108

From: Amato, Kristina M CIV (USA)

Sent: Friday, August 1, 2025 2:07 PM

To: Alabama@fws.gov

Cc: Bailey, Justin Michael CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Justin.M.Bailey@usace.army.mil>; brent.waters3.civ@army.mil

Subject: Follow up/Technical Assistance Requested for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Rucker Installation

Good Afternoon,

I am reaching out to follow up on a scoping letter, dated June 18, 2025, sent by US Army Garrison Fort Rucker (formerly known as Fort Novosel) to the Alabama Ecological Services Field Office. The Omaha District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is in the process of conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) on behalf of the Department of the Army (DA) to assess the overall environmental effects of the proposed construction of the new fuel tank storage complex within the Installation. The scoping letter and associated letter attachments include project-specific information and is attached for reference.

I am specifically reaching out to gather information regarding the potential presence and possible beneficial or adverse effects of the proposed project on the listed species in the area. I have attached the IPaC species list (updated July 7, 2025) for reference (IPaC Project Code: 2025-0098137).

Given the location, scope, and scale of this project, the species that I have focused most of my initial assessment on is the northern long-eared bat (NLEB). The monarch butterfly has not been documented within the Installation, according to the Installation's 2024 Natural Resource Management Plan, and all other species within the generated IPaC species list are aquatic. There is no suitable habitat present within the proposed project location at Hanchey Heliport for aquatic species, as this project will be located in a previously disturbed, upland area within the Heliport. If there are concerns we should be aware of regarding the monarch butterfly or aquatic species in the species list, please let me know, and I will appropriately take them into account.

Regarding the potential effects to the northern long-eared bat:

Activities that could potentially impact the NLEB (if present) would be tree removal and demolition of existing structures; however, the likelihood of their presence is low at

this location due to its proximity to Heliport operations during the daytime and nighttime, the overall noise levels in the area, and the lack of quality habitat present on site. The project location is within a Noise Zone III which consists of areas where the PK15(met) decibels (dB) are greater than 104, the A-weighted day-night level is greater than 75 dB, or the C-weighted day-night level is greater than 70 dB. Additionally, nighttime operations occur for flight training at Hanchey Heliport. The vegetation to be removed and trailer to be demolished are within the attached photos and outlined in the attached aerial. Most of the trees are either dead or dying. The smaller polygon in the middle contains smaller shrubs/vegetation. There are a few trees surrounding the trailer to be demolished and a few trees within the longer, linear rectangle polygon on the left that could meet the criteria of suitable habitat due to its proximity to contiguous forest within 1000 feet of the area. However, the trees within the immediate vicinity, outside of the project area at this location experienced a forest fire due to a lightning strike so trees are significantly more sparse within the immediate vicinity than they used to be. Overall, the trees, shrubs, and structures for demolition are within the Noise Zone III as described above, in close proximity to flight operations, and assumed to be less than desirable by a NLEB. **A “No effect” determination is currently being considered for NLEB.**

Regarding migratory birds and bald/golden eagles:

- A similar assessment was made for migratory bird, bald eagle, and golden eagle presence/effects as described above for the NLEB. It is unlikely the tree at this location would be a desirable location for any of these birds due to noise and flight operations; however, the EA will mention that tree removal should be avoided between March 1st to September 15th. This date range was determined using the IPaC species list migratory bird breeding season timeframes.
- Within the EA, language will be incorporated that says if a bald eagle nest is known to be located within 0.5 miles of the vicinity of the project, USFWS would be contacted regarding next steps.

This is an initial assessment for potential effects to listed species and species of concern for this area. For the northern long-eared bat, I am requesting technical assistance regarding any additional considerations that should be made, if any, for the NLEB. If there are concerns with the potential no effect determination for the NLEB or any other content within this emails please let me know and we can discuss to ensure appropriate considerations are made.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss.

Thank you for the assistance and have a great weekend.

Kristina Amato
Environmental Resource Specialist
US Army Corps of Engineers-Omaha District
1616 Capitol Avenue
Omaha, NE 68102
Desk: (402) 995-2577
Cell: (402) 899-9108



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1208-B Main Street
Daphne, AL 36526

2025-0098137

AUG 18 2025

Ms. Melissa Lowlavar
Environmental and Natural Resource Division
Directorate of Public Works
Omaha District, Corps of Engineers
1616 Capitol Ave
Omaha, NE 68102-4901

Dear Ms. Lowlavar:

Thank you for your letter dated June 18, 2025, requesting comments on the proposed construction of a new fuel tank storage complex at Hanchey Army Heliport (AHP) within the Fort Rucker (formerly Fort Novosel) Installation. We are providing the following information in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 Cr.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

Federally Listed and Proposed to be Listed Species

Based on the information provided in your letter and within our records the following species may occur within or near your project area:

Mammals:

Tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) – Proposed Endangered

Reptiles:

Alligator snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*) – Proposed Threatened

Fishes:

Gulf sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*) - Threatened

Mussels:

Choctaw bean (*Obovaria choctawensis*) – Endangered

Fuzzy pigtoe (*Pleurobema strodeanum*) – Threatened

Southern kidneyshell (*Ptychobranthus jonesi*) – Endangered

Southern sandshell (*Hamiota australis*) – Threatened

Tapered pigtoe (*Fusconaia burkei*) – Threatened

Insects:

Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) – Proposed Threatened

Tricolored bat

On September 14, 2022, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced a proposal to list the tricolored bat as endangered under the ESA. The bat faces extinction due to the impacts of white-

nose syndrome, a deadly disease affecting cave-dwelling bats across the continent. The tricolored bat's status is currently under range-wide review and could be listed in the future. While there are generally no section 7 requirements for proposed species, we encourage all agencies to take advantage of any opportunity they may have to help conserve the species.

Suitable summer habitat for the tricolored bat may be present in the site. Based on the best scientific information available at this time, suitable tricolored bat habitat consists of a wide variety of forested/wooded habitats where they roost, forage, and travel and may include some adjacent and interspersed non-forested habitats such as emergent wetlands and adjacent edges of agricultural fields, old fields, and pastures. This includes forests and woodlots containing trees with potential roost substrate (i.e., live and dead leaf clusters of live and recently dead deciduous trees, Spanish moss, and beard lichen, as well as linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors. Occasional summer roosts also include clusters of dead pine needles of large live pines, eastern red cedar, abandoned gray squirrel nests, and under exfoliating birch bark. Tricolored bats will roost in a variety of tree species, especially oaks (*Quercus* spp.), and often select roosts in tall, large diameter trees, but will roost in smaller diameter trees when potential roost substrate is present (e.g., 4-inch dbh). Tricolored bats commonly roost in the mid to upper canopy of trees although males will occasionally roost in dead leaves at lower heights (e.g., < 16 feet from the ground) and females will occasionally roost in Spanish moss of understory trees. They seem to prefer foraging along forested edges of larger forest openings, along edges of riparian areas, and over water and avoid foraging in dense, unbroken forests, and narrow road cuts through forests. Tricolored bats also roost in human-made structures, such as bridges and culverts, and occasionally in barns or the underside of open-sided shelters (e.g., porches, pavilions); therefore, these structures should also be considered potential summer habitat. This species occupies similar forest habitats in the spring, summer, and fall (i.e., non-hibernating seasons) but in the southern portion of the range, where they exhibit shorter torpor bouts and remain active and feed year-round, they may roost in culverts, bridges, cavities in live trees, live and dead leaf clusters, and/or Spanish moss during the winter. Tricolored bats may roost and forage in forested areas near anthropogenic structures and buildings (e.g., suburban neighborhoods, parks, etc.). However, highly developed urbanized areas generally devoid of native vegetation (including isolated trees surrounded by expansive anthropogenic development) are considered unsuitable habitat (e.g., parking lots, industrial buildings, shopping centers).

If tree clearing is not required or if it is and occurs during the protective window of July 16 to April 30, and if your project falls within the acceptable tree removal acreage thresholds (as indicated in the Service's determination key for bats available at the Information for Planning and Consultation website), direct adverse effects will be avoided. If this timing is not achievable and no other measures to avoid adverse effects are possible, then we recommend that the project proponent proceed to acoustic and/or mist-netting surveys to determine presence or probable absence of tricolored bats at the project site in accordance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *2024 Range-wide Indiana Bat & Northern Long-eared Bat Survey Guidelines*:

<https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>

Aquatic species

The specified fish, mussels, and reptile are all aquatic species that depend on excellent water quality and quantity. Therefore, it is essential that adequate best management practices (BMPs) be implemented and maintained to prevent sedimentation and turbidity in nearby tributaries of the Choctawhatchee River. Activities that would result in degraded water quality, including increased turbidity, water temperature changes, channel realignments, substrate impacts, or stream bank alterations, should be avoided. Please consider incorporating the following measures into the project design to protect water quality in adjacent streams as appropriate:

- Implement BMPs to minimize erosion and prevent sedimentation of drainages in the project area, both during and after construction.
- Install erosion and stormwater control devices prior to construction activities to protect water quality.
- Develop an erosion control plan tailored to the site. All erosion controls should be inspected routinely, especially during and immediately following significant rain events, to ensure no impacts occur to nearby surface waters and aquatic habitat. Immediate corrective action should be taken if erosion or sedimentation is observed.
- Maintain a naturally vegetated buffer adjacent to any ditches or drainages to reduce erosion and protect water quality.
- Immediately revegetate any disturbed areas with a native species or an annual grass.
- To the extent feasible, complete any work that results in exposed earth during periods of low water and when significant rainfall is not predicted.

For more information regarding best management practices, consult the *Alabama Handbook for Erosion Control, Sediment Control and Stormwater Management on Construction Sites and Urban Areas*, available on-line at:

<https://alconservationdistricts.gov/resources/erosion-and-sediment-control/>.

Monarch butterfly

The monarch butterfly is found in a wide range of habitats in the state with abundant nectar sources and host plants (milkweed plants in the genus *Asclepias*). Typically, these habitats are open canopy forests, forest edges, riparian areas, and meadow environments with abundant herbaceous plant species. While the species has been proposed for listing as a threatened species, protections would not apply until the effective date of a final rule to list the species. We encourage project proponents to implement voluntary conservation measures that would promote native plant communities to provide nectar sources for adults and larval host plants. Such measures include:

- Schedule mowing to enhance floral resources.

- Remove plants that are invasive or listed as noxious weeds (by using techniques including targeted herbicide or prescribed burns as appropriate).
- Use buffer areas for forests adjacent to roadways, mow infrequently, and create native plant communities to improve transition zone between forest and roads; and
- Limit insecticide exposure where possible, using established Integrated Pest Management guidance.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed project. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Evan Collins of my staff at evan_collins@fws.gov. Please refer to the reference number located at the top of this letter in future phone calls or written correspondence. Please note, if the proposed work is not carried out in the next six months, it would be prudent to contact this office to determine if any changes have occurred to the status of the proposed species species.

Sincerely,



William J. Pearson
Field Supervisor
Alabama Ecological Services Field Office



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSEL AL 36362-1100

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

United States Fish and Wildlife Services
Alabama Ecological Services Field Office
Attention: Mr. William Pearson
1208 Main Street
Daphne, AL 36526

SUBJECT: Scoping for Construction of Fueling Complex at Hanchey Army Heliport, Fort Novosel Installation

Dear Mr. Pearson:

The Omaha District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is in the process of conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) on behalf of the U.S. Department of the Army (DA) to assess the overall effects of the proposed construction of a new fuel tank storage complex at Hanchey Army Heliport (AHP) within the Fort Novosel Installation. Fort Novosel averages 17 miles long by 9 miles wide and is located approximately 25 miles northwest of Dothan, Alabama, between the cities of Daleville, Enterprise, and Ozark in the counties of Coffee and Dale. Fort Novosel serves as the headquarters for U.S. Army Aviation, comprised of aviation base fields, stage fields, remote training sites, unit training areas, small arms ranges, and cantonment area.

The DA is the lead federal agency and the decision-maker for the NEPA process. The EA will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 et seq.); Environmental Protection and Enhancement Army Regulation (AR) 200-1; and Environmental Analysis of Army Actions (AR200-2), 32 CFR Part 651.

The purpose of this project is for the DA to construct a new fuel storage complex, consisting of two [REDACTED] above ground fuel storage tanks, [REDACTED] of Jet A fuel to be utilized by Fort Novosel at Hanchey AHP. Fort Novosel serves as a refueling point for response teams during adverse weather and natural disasters in the region. [REDACTED]

Historically, disruptions to fuel truck delivery schedules impact the fuel supply at Hanchey AHP, ultimately affecting mission support. Additionally, mechanical failures at the existing fuel storage facility contribute to supply disruptions. Increasing the total fuel

capacity at Hanchey AHP will improve fuel supply planning and forecasting for Fort Novosel.

Two locations are being considered for construction of the new fuel storage facility. Preliminary review has suggested that the first course of action (COA 1) would be the most feasible, cost efficient, and least environmentally impactful. The area for COA 1 has been previously disturbed and currently consists of concrete pads and abandoned infrastructure that would need to be removed near the southwest corner of Hanchey AHP. Additionally, COA 1 is within proximity to the existing fuel storage facility and is located within the cantonment area. The second course of action (COA 2) is directly northwest of COA 1 and located outside of the cantonment area. The location for COA 2 consists of steep grades not ideal for construction, and would require new security fencing and more tree clearing and grubbing compared to COA 1. Proposed project area maps and plan sheets for both courses of action are enclosed for reference.

Because COA 1 is currently the favored course of action, specific construction details have been discussed and considered in greater depth than COA 2 up to this point in project planning. Construction for COA 1 would require demolition of existing facilities, earthwork, relocation of an existing waste fuel tank, and establishing utilities and connections. The two [REDACTED] vertical above-ground fuel tanks would be constructed adjacent to the existing fueling complex and would include two concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets. Additional construction will include a pump shelter adjacent to the proposed tanks, two truck offload equipment skids, two bulk fill stands, two offload position canopies, two fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical, and control equipment. Two potential staging areas are currently proposed for construction under COA 1, directly adjacent to the proposed project boundary.

Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning (IICEP) is a federally mandated process for informing and coordinating with other governmental agencies regarding federal actions. Through the IICEP process, the DA notifies relevant federal, state, and local agencies and allows them sufficient time to make known their environmental concerns specific to a proposed action. Comments and concerns submitted by these agencies during the IICEP process are subsequently incorporated into the analysis of potential environmental impacts conducted as part of the EA. This coordination fulfills requirements under EO 12372 (superseded by 12416 and subsequently supplemented by EO 13132), which requires federal agencies to cooperate with and consider state and local views in implementing a federal proposal. It also constitutes the IICEP process for the EA. **USACE is requesting your agency provide us with any comments within 30 days receipt of this letter so they may be considered in the analysis.**

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, the information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) tool was utilized on June 2, 2025, to generate a species list and determine potential threatened, endangered, or candidate species that may be affected by the proposed project (IPaC Consultation Code: 2025-0098137). IPaC listed the following nine species to have potential presence in the proposed project area:

- Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) – Endangered
- Alligator Snapping Turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*) – Proposed Threatened
- Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*) – Threatened
- Choctaw Bean (*Obovaria choctawensis*) – Endangered
- Fuzzy Pigtoe (*Pleurobema strodeanum*) – Threatened
- Southern Kidneyshell (*Ptychobranthus jonesi*) – Endangered
- Southern Sandshell (*Hamiota australis*) – Threatened
- Tapered Pigtoe (*Fusconaia burkei*) – Threatened
- Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) – Proposed Threatened

Please provide any information of the potential presence and possible beneficial or adverse effects of the proposed project on these species. A response would be appreciated within 30 days of receipt of this letter.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Ms. Kristina Amato at (402) 995-2577 or at Kristina.M.Amato@usace.army.mil.

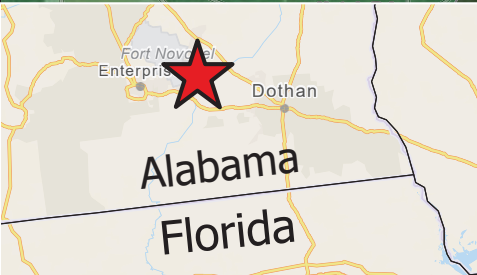
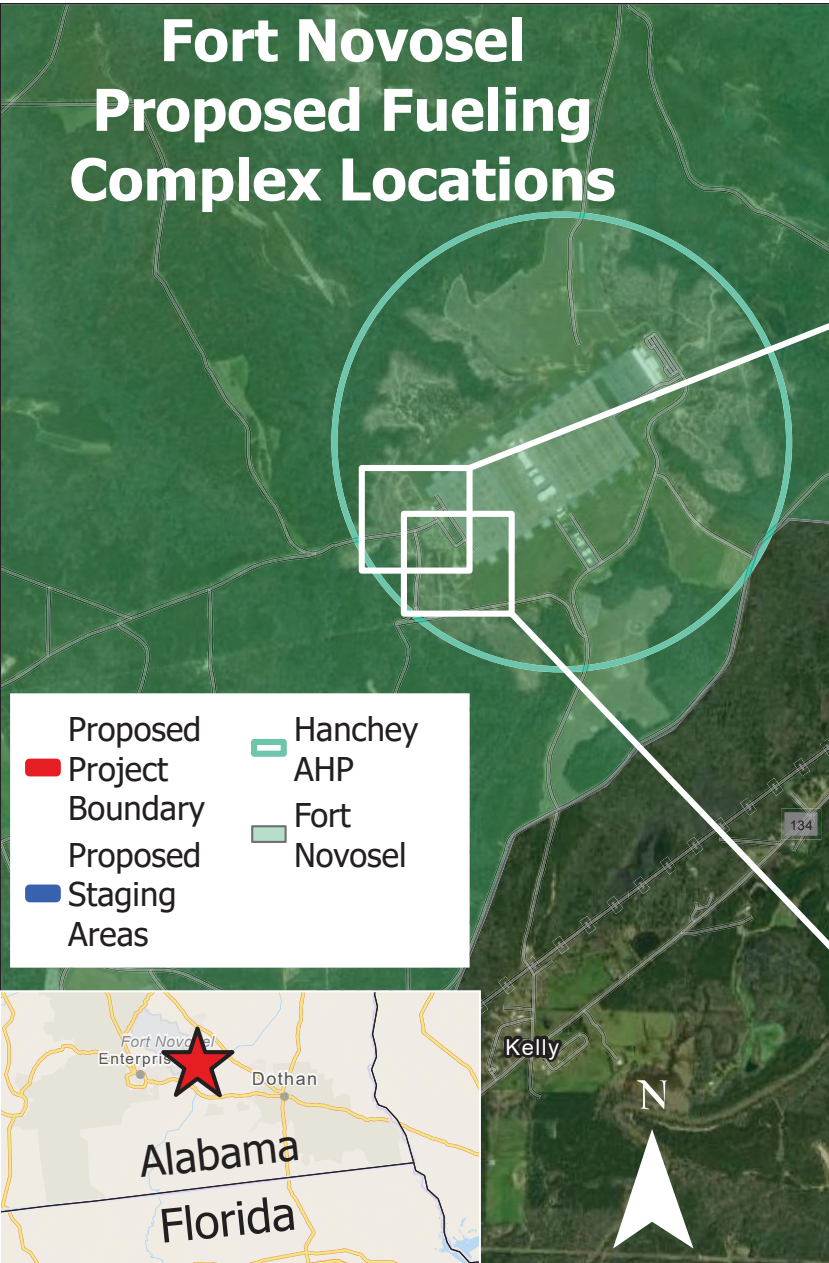
Sincerely,



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

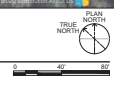
Enclosures

Fort Novosel Proposed Fueling Complex Locations





A1 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 40'



- GENERAL SHEET NOTES**
1. CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR VERIFYING THE LOCATION OF ALL EXISTING UTILITIES AT THE SITE PRIOR TO ANY EXCAVATIONS.
 2. THE LAYOUT SHOWN IS ONLY A CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT AND DOES NOT DEPICT THE EXACT LOCATION OF FUELING COMPONENTS.
 3. CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WATER LINES WILL BE REQUIRED TO CREATE A FIRE LOOP AROUND BOTH TANKS TO SERVICE BOTH PROPOSED FIRE HYDRANTS.



DATE	DESCRIPTION

DESIGNED BY	DATE
DRAWN BY	
CHECKED BY	
IN CHARGE	

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
 CIVIL ENGINEERING DIVISION
 WASHINGTON, DC 20315
 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

SHEET ID
CS100



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Alabama Ecological Services Field Office
1208 B Main Street
Daphne, AL 36526-4419
Phone: (251) 441-5181 Fax: (251) 441-6222
Email Address: alabama@fws.gov

In Reply Refer To:

07/07/2025 22:38:54 UTC

Project Code: 2025-0098137

Project Name: Fort Novosel Fuel Tank Construction Environmental Assessment

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Project consultation requests may be submitted by mail or email (Alabama@fws.gov). **Ensure that the Project Code in the header of this letter is clearly referenced in any request for consultation or correspondence submitted to our office.**

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered

species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2) (c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

<https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf>

Migratory Birds: In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts see <https://www.fws.gov/program/migratory-bird-permit/what-we-do>.

It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures see <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/threats-birds>.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/partner/council-conservation-migratory-birds>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. **Ensure that the Project Code in the header of this letter is clearly referenced with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.**

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- USFWS National Wildlife Refuges and Fish Hatcheries
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Alabama Ecological Services Field Office

1208 B Main Street

Daphne, AL 36526-4419

(251) 441-5181

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2025-0098137

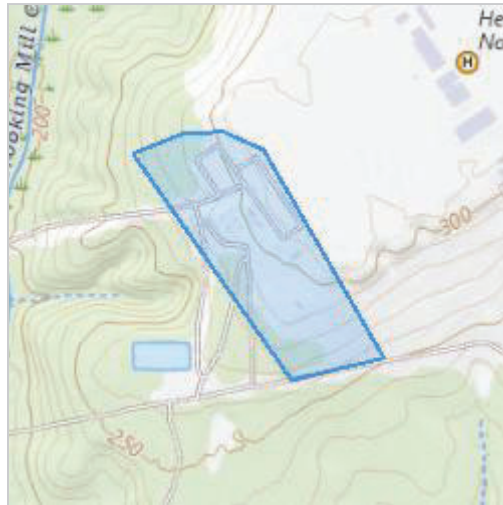
Project Name: Fort Novosel Fuel Tank Construction Environmental Assessment

Project Type: Military Development

Project Description: Two [REDACTED] above ground fuel storage tanks will be constructed on Hanchey Air Heliport.

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@31.34255925,-85.6587815339987,14z>



Counties: Dale County, Alabama

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 9 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Northern Long-eared Bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045	Endangered

REPTILES

NAME	STATUS
Alligator Snapping Turtle <i>Macrochelys temminckii</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4658	Proposed Threatened

FISHES

NAME	STATUS
Gulf Sturgeon <i>Acipenser oxyrinchus (=oxyrhynchus) desotoi</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/651	Threatened

CLAMS

NAME	STATUS
Choctaw Bean <i>Obovaria choctawensis</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5038	Endangered
Fuzzy Pigtoe <i>Pleurobema strodeanum</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3417	Threatened
Southern Kidneyshell <i>Ptychobranthus jonesi</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7539	Endangered
Southern Sandshell <i>Hamiota australis</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2551	Threatened
Tapered Pigtoe <i>Fusconaia burkei</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5046	Threatened

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Proposed Threatened

NAME

STATUS

There is **proposed** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat.

Species profile: <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743>

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

USFWS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE LANDS AND FISH HATCHERIES

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the [National Wildlife Refuge](#) system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

THERE ARE NO REFUGE LANDS OR FISH HATCHERIES WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and Golden Eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act ² and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) ¹. Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to Bald or Golden Eagles, or their habitats, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate avoidance and minimization measures, as described in the various links on this page.

-
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

There are Bald Eagles and/or Golden Eagles in your [project](#) area.

Measures for Proactively Minimizing Eagle Impacts

For information on how to best avoid and minimize disturbance to nesting bald eagles, please review the [National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines](#). You may employ the timing and activity-specific distance recommendations in this document when designing your project/activity to avoid and minimize eagle impacts. For bald eagle information specific to Alaska, please refer to [Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity](#).

The FWS does not currently have guidelines for avoiding and minimizing disturbance to nesting Golden Eagles. For site-specific recommendations regarding nesting Golden Eagles, please consult with the appropriate Regional [Migratory Bird Office](#) or [Ecological Services Field Office](#).

If disturbance or take of eagles cannot be avoided, an [incidental take permit](#) may be available to authorize any take that results from, but is not the purpose of, an otherwise lawful activity. For assistance making this determination for Bald Eagles, visit the [Do I Need A Permit Tool](#). For assistance making this determination for golden eagles, please consult with the appropriate Regional [Migratory Bird Office](#) or [Ecological Services Field Office](#).

Ensure Your Eagle List is Accurate and Complete

If your project area is in a poorly surveyed area in IPaC, your list may not be complete and you may need to rely on other resources to determine what species may be present (e.g. your local FWS field office, state surveys, your own surveys). Please review the [Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#), to help you properly interpret the report for your specified location, including determining if there is sufficient data to ensure your list is accurate.

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to bald or golden eagles on your list, see the "Probability of Presence Summary" below to see when these bald or golden eagles are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

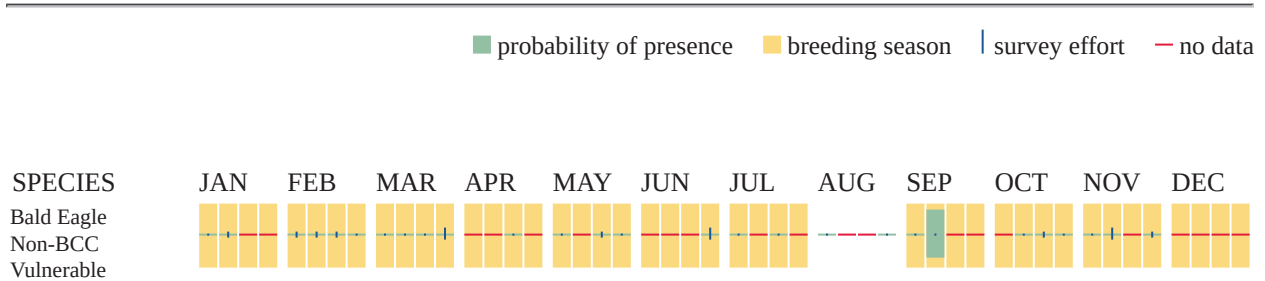
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (-)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide avoidance and minimization measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

MIGRATORY BIRDS

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) ¹ prohibits the take (including killing, capturing, selling, trading, and transport) of protected migratory bird species without prior authorization by the Department of Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

-
1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the "Probability of Presence Summary" below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
<p>American Kestrel <i>Falco sparverius paulus</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9587</p>	Breeds Apr 1 to Aug 31
<p>Bachman's Sparrow <i>Peucaea aestivalis</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6177</p>	Breeds May 1 to Sep 30
<p>Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i></p> <p>This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities.</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626</p>	Breeds Sep 1 to Jul 31
<p>Brown-headed Nuthatch <i>Sitta pusilla</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9427</p>	Breeds Mar 1 to Jul 15
<p>Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406</p>	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25
<p>Chuck-will's-widow <i>Antrostomus carolinensis</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9604</p>	Breeds May 10 to Jul 10
<p>Grasshopper Sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8329</p>	Breeds Jun 1 to Aug 20
<p>Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513</p>	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
<p>Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398</p>	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
<p>Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431</p>	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

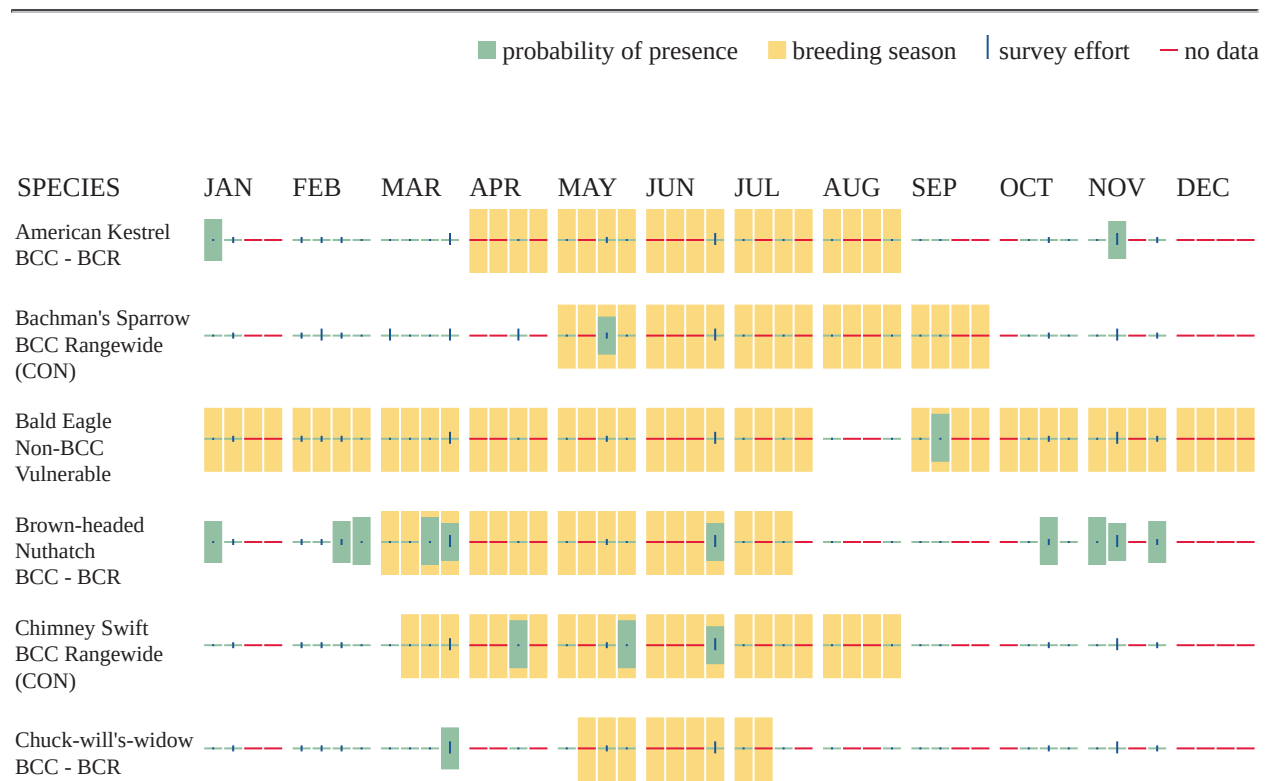
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

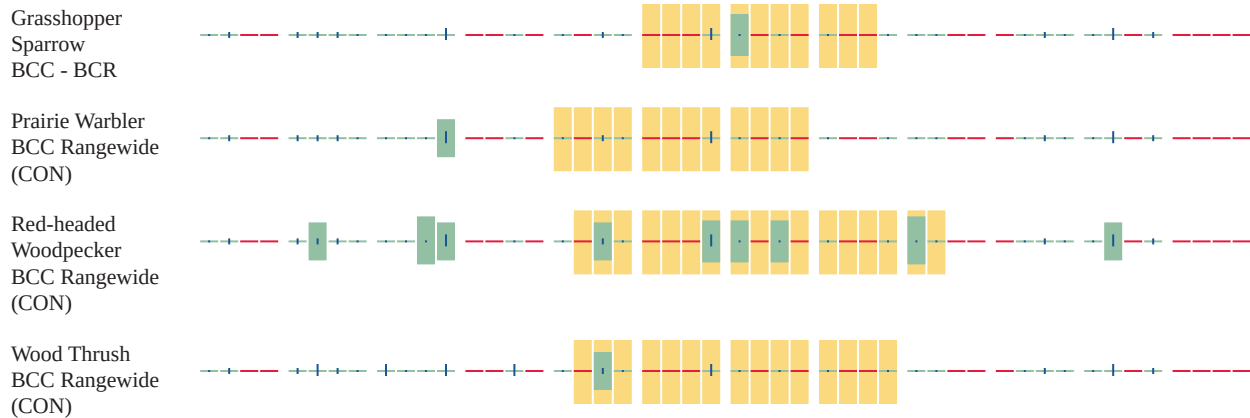
Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (-)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.





Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide avoidance and minimization measures for birds
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

THERE ARE NO WETLANDS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Army Corps of Engineers

Name: Kristina Amato

Address: 8901 South 154th Street

City: Omaha

State: NE

Zip: 68138

Email: kristina.m.amato@usace.army.mil

Phone: 4028960896

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Army



ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

468 South Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900

Lisa D. Jones
Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

Tel: 334-242-3184
Fax: 334-242-1083

July 9, 2025

Wendy Weaver
Corps of Engineers
100 Canal Street
Mobile, AL 36602

Re: AHC 25-0878
US Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Novosel, - proposed fueling complex
Dale County

Dear Ms. Weaver:

Upon review of the above referenced project, we concur that project activities will have no effect on cultural resources eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, we concur with the determination of no effect to historic properties.

Consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office does not constitute consultation with Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, other Native American tribes, local governments, or the public. If archaeological materials are encountered during construction, the procedures codified at 36 CFR 800.13(b) will apply. Archaeological materials consist of any items, fifty years old or older, which were made or used by man. These items include but are not limited to, stone projectile points (arrowheads), ceramic sherds, bricks, worked wood, bone and stone, metal, and glass objects. The federal agency or the applicant receiving federal assistance should contact our office immediately. If human remains are encountered, the provisions of the Alabama Burial Act (*Code of Alabama* 1975, §13A-7-23.1, as amended; Alabama Historical Commission Administrative Code Chapter 460-X-10 Burials) should be followed. This stipulation shall be placed on the construction plans to ensure contractors are aware of it.

We appreciate your commitment to helping us preserve Alabama's historic archaeological and architectural resources. Should you have any questions, please contact Eric Sipes at 334.230.2667 or Eric.Sipes@ahc.alabama.gov. Have the AHC tracking number referenced above available and include it with any future correspondence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Lee Anne Hewett'.

Lee Anne Hewett
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

LAH/EDS/lah



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSEL AL 36362-5105

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Ms. Lisa Jones
State Historic Preservation Officer
Alabama Historical Commission
468 South Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900

Dear Ms. Jones:

The United States Army Aviation Center, Fort Novosel (previously known as Fort Rucker) in Dale County, Alabama, is proposing to construct a fueling complex at Hanchey Heliport that includes two [REDACTED] above ground storage tanks for Jet A fuel, two (2) concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets, one pump shelter adjacent to the proposed tanks, two (2) truck offload equipment skids, two (2) bulk fill stands, two (2) offload position canopies, two (2) fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical and control equipment. Supporting facilities include site preparation, utilities and connections, demolition of existing structures, and the relocation of an existing waste fuel tank (Figure 1).

To comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (Section 106; 54 U.S. Code 306108) and as the lead Federal agency, Fort Novosel has determined that the proposed project is an undertaking as defined in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 800.3(a). This consultation is initiated pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.3 and 36 CFR § 800.10.

According to the Alabama Cultural Resources Online Database (ACROD) there are 22 previously recorded archaeological sites within a one-mile radius of the area of potential effect (APE) for the proposed project. Only one site, 1DA43, a Native American lithic and ceramic scatter, was recommended potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The remaining sites have been recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

A previous phase I cultural resources survey, titled *Cultural Resources Survey of Selected Training Areas on Fort Rucker, Coffee and Dale Counties* (Brockington & Associates, #4058341), was conducted within the APE of the proposed project in 1995. No archaeological sites, historic structures or historic properties were recorded within the proposed project APE.

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The U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Novosel has determined there are **no historic properties affected** by the proposed construction of a fueling complex at Hanchey Heliport. We respectfully request your concurrence on our determination of effects for the proposed construction.

The U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Novosel is committed to making every effort to invite all parties with an interest in the proposed project and those agencies with responsibilities under Section 106 of the NHPA to participate. We have also sent letters to Federally Recognized Tribes and other interested parties. Please send any comments or questions to Attn: Ms. Wendy Weaver, Archaeologist, USACE Mobile District, CESAM-PD-EI, Post Office Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628. Ms. Weaver can also be reached by phone at (251) 604-2690 or wendy.c.weaver@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSSEL AL 36362-1100

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Mr. Bryant J. Celestine
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Alabama-Coushatta Tribes of Texas
571 State Park Road 56
Livingston, Texas 77351

Dear Mr. Celestine:

The United States Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Novosel (previously known as Fort Rucker) in Dale County, Alabama, is proposing to construct a fueling complex at Hanchey Heliport that includes two [REDACTED] vertical above ground storage tanks for Jet A fuel, two (2) concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets, one pump shelter adjacent to the proposed tanks, two (2) truck offload equipment skids, two (2) bulk fill stands, two (2) offload position canopies, two (2) fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical and control equipment. Supporting facilities include site preparation, utilities and connections, demolition of existing structures, and the relocation of an existing waste fuel tank (Figure 1).

To comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (Section 106; 54 U.S. Code 306108) and as the lead Federal agency, Fort Novosel has determined that the proposed project is an undertaking as defined in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 800.3(a). This consultation is initiated pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.3 and 36 CFR § 800.10.

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Sincerely,



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSSEL AL 36362-5105

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Ms. Janice Lowe
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town
PO Box 187
Wetumpka, Oklahoma 74883

Dear Ms. Lowe:

The United States Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Novosel (previously known as Fort Rucker) in Dale County, Alabama, is proposing to construct a fueling complex at Hanchey Heliport that includes two [REDACTED] vertical above ground storage tanks for Jet A fuel, two (2) concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets, one pump shelter adjacent to the proposed tanks, two (2) truck offload equipment skids, two (2) bulk fill stands, two (2) offload position canopies, two (2) fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical and control equipment. Supporting facilities include site preparation, utilities and connections, demolition of existing structures, and the relocation of an existing waste fuel tank (Figure 1).

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Sincerely,



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSSEL AL 36362-5105

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Dr. Ian Thompson
Director, Historic Preservation Department
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
PO Drawer 1210
Durant, Oklahoma 74701

Dear Dr. Thompson:

The United States Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Novosel (previously known as Fort Rucker) in Dale County, Alabama, is proposing to construct a fueling complex at Hanchey Heliport that includes two [REDACTED] vertical above ground storage tanks for Jet A fuel, two (2) concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets, one pump shelter adjacent to the proposed tanks, two (2) truck offload equipment skids, two (2) bulk fill stands, two (2) offload position canopies, two (2) fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical and control equipment. Supporting facilities include site preparation, utilities and connections, demolition of existing structures, and the relocation of an existing waste fuel tank (Figure 1).

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Sincerely



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSSEL AL 36362-5105

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Ms. Linda Langley
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
PO Box 10
Elton, Louisiana 70532

Dear Ms. Langley:

The United States Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Novosel (previously known as Fort Rucker) in Dale County, Alabama, is proposing to construct a fueling complex at Hanchey Heliport that includes two [REDACTED] vertical above ground storage tanks for Jet A fuel, two (2) concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets, one pump shelter adjacent to the proposed tanks, two (2) truck offload equipment skids, two (2) bulk fill stands, two (2) offload position canopies, two (2) fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical and control equipment. Supporting facilities include site preparation, utilities and connections, demolition of existing structures, and the relocation of an existing waste fuel tank (Figure 1).

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Lowlavar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSEL AL 36362-5105

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Ms. Johnna Fisher
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, Louisiana
PO Box 14
Jena, Louisiana 71342

Dear Ms. Fisher:

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Sincerely,



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosures



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSEL AL 36362-5105

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Mr. David Cook
Tribal Administrator
Kialegee Tribal Town, Oklahoma
PO Box 332
Wetumpka, Oklahoma 74883

Dear Mr. Cook:

The United States Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Novosel (previously known as Fort Rucker) in Dale County, Alabama, is proposing to construct a fueling complex at Hanchey Heliport that includes two [REDACTED] vertical above ground storage tanks for Jet A fuel, two (2) concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets, one pump shelter adjacent to the proposed tanks, two (2) truck offload equipment skids, two (2) bulk fill stands, two (2) offload position canopies, two (2) fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical and control equipment. Supporting facilities include site preparation, utilities and connections, demolition of existing structures, and the relocation of an existing waste fuel tank (Figure 1).

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Directorate of Public Works

Enclosure



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U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSSEL AL 36362-5105

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Ms. Melanie Carson
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
PO Box 6010
Choctaw, Mississippi 39350

Dear Ms. Carson:

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Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSSEL AL 36362-5105

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Mr. Robin Soweka
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Muscogee (Creek) Nation
PO Box 580
Okmulgee, Oklahoma 74447

Dear Mr. Soweka:

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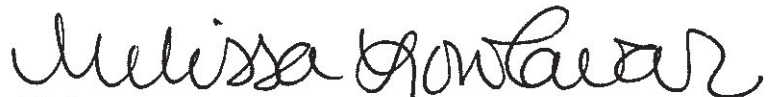
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Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosure



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U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSSEL AL 36362-5105

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Mr. Billy Bailey
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Poarch Band of Creek Indians
5811 Jack Springs Road
Atmore, Alabama 36502

Dear Mr. Bailey:

The United States Army Aviation Center, Fort Novosel (previously known as Fort Rucker) in Dale County, Alabama, is proposing to construct a fueling complex at Hanchey Heliport that includes two [REDACTED] vertical above ground storage tanks for Jet A fuel, two (2) concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets, one pump shelter adjacent to the proposed tanks, two (2) truck offload equipment skids, two (2) bulk fill stands, two (2) offload position canopies, two (2) fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical and control equipment. Supporting facilities include site preparation, utilities and connections, demolition of existing structures, and the relocation of an existing waste fuel tank (Figure 1).

To comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (Section 106; 54 U.S. Code 306108) and as the lead Federal agency, Fort Novosel has determined that the proposed project is an undertaking as defined in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 800.3(a). This consultation is initiated pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.3 and 36 CFR § 800.10.

According to the Alabama Cultural Resources Online Database (ACROD) there are 22 previously recorded archaeological sites within a one-mile radius of the area of potential effect (APE) for the proposed project. Only one site, 1DA43, a Native American lithic and ceramic scatter, was recommended potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The remaining sites have been recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

A previous phase I cultural resources survey, titled *Cultural Resources Survey of Selected Training Areas on Fort Rucker, Coffee and Dale Counties* (Brockington & Associates, #4058341), was conducted within the APE of the proposed project in 1995. No archaeological sites, historic structures or historic properties were recorded within the proposed project APE.

Per the *Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan Update, US Army Aviation Center and Fort Rucker, Fort Rucker, Alabama* (2016), Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) #5 - Inadvertent Discovery of Archaeological Deposits/Cultural Material - will be in effect during construction activities. If anything of a cultural nature (artifacts and features, human remains, or burials) is observed or encountered during construction activities, all ground-disturbing activity will cease, any observations or discoveries will be reported immediately to the unit commander or facility manager, the discovery location(s) secured, and activity may not resume in the area of the discovery until cleared by the Cultural Resources Manager.

The U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Novosel has determined there are **no historic properties affected** by the proposed construction of a fueling complex at Hanchey Heliport. We respectfully request your comments on our determination of effects for the proposed construction.

The U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Novosel is committed to making every effort to invite all parties with an interest in the proposed project and those agencies with responsibilities under Section 106 of the NHPA to participate. Please send any comments or questions to Attn: Ms. Wendy Weaver, Archaeologist, USACE Mobile District, CESAM-PD-EI, Post Office Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628. Ms. Weaver can also be reached by phone at (251) 604-2690 or wendy.c.weaver@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Lowlavar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT NOVOSSEL AL 36362-5105

Directorate of Public Works

JUN 18 2025

Mr. David Frank
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
PO Box 188
Okemah, Oklahoma 74859

Dear Mr. Frank:

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Sincerely,



Melissa Lowlavar
Supervisory Physical Scientist (Environmental)
Environmental and Natural Resources Division
Directorate of Public Works

Enclosure

Fort Rucker New Fuel Storage Facility at Hanchey Army Heliport **Biological Assessment**

Prepared For:

U.S Department of the Army
U.S. Army Garrison Fort Rucker
Fort Rucker, Alabama

Prepared By:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Omaha District

February 2026

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1 Introduction

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Omaha District prepared this Biological Assessment (BA) for the Department of the Army (DA) to determine whether the proposed new fuel storage facility at Hanchey Army Heliport (AHP) within the Fort Rucker Installation, may affect threatened or endangered species under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Section 7 of the ESA states that Federal agencies shall ensure that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or result in destruction or adverse modification to designated critical habitat.

1.1 NEPA Approach

A draft environmental assessment (EA) has been developed for the proposed action to describe the proposed action and alternatives related to the construction and operation of a new fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. The purpose of the EA is to describe the environmental impacts of the proposed action and to comply with the procedural requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 et seq.). The draft EA concludes that implementation of the proposed action under the preferred alternative would not have a significant impact on the natural or human environment either by itself or cumulatively, and therefore a draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been prepared and will be available for a 30-day public review period.

1.2 Background

Fort Rucker’s mission “Provides synchronized and integrated base support for the aviation training mission and quality-of-life services for Soldiers, Civilians, and Family members” (Army, 2025a). Named the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence (AVCOE) in 2008, AVCOE at Fort Rucker generates and develops highly trained, disciplined, and fit Aviation Warfighters while delivering aviation training and education, developing leaders, and driving change by modernizing the Force (Army, 2025b).

In support of the mission, Fort Rucker serves as a refueling point for response teams during adverse weather and natural disasters in the region. One of the crucial fuel storage facilities within the Installation is located within Hanchey AHP.

1.3 Project Location and Description

Fort Rucker averages 17 miles long by 9 miles wide and is located approximately 25 miles northwest of Dothan, Alabama, between the cities of Daleville, Enterprise, and Ozark in the counties of Coffee and Dale. Hanchey AHP is located near the southeast corner of the Installation.

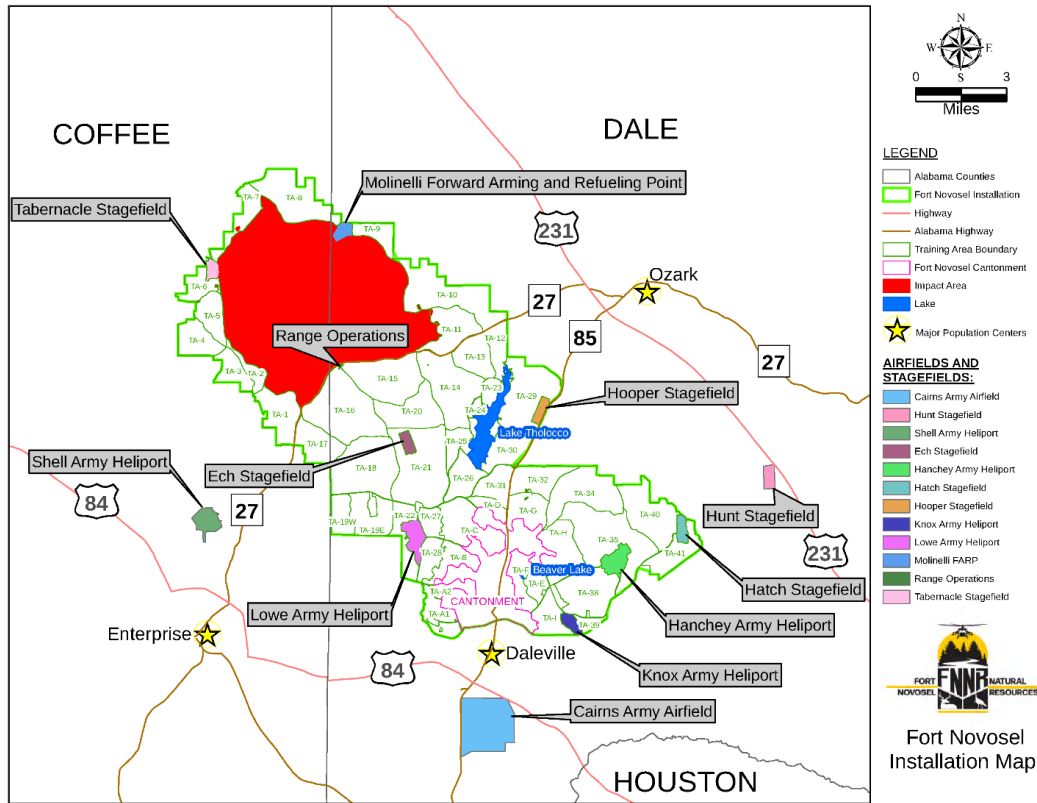


Figure 1. Map of Fort Rucker Installation (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024)

1.3.1 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is to construct a fuel storage facility consisting of two above ground fuel storage tanks, to be utilized by Fort Rucker at Hanchey AHP. Additional construction will include two concrete containment areas with vertical dike walls and low point drainage inlets, one pump shelter, two truck offload equipment skids, two bulk fill stands, two offload position canopies, two fill stand position canopies, and associated pumps, piping, electrical, and control equipment. Construction would require earthwork and designated areas to stage equipment and would take approximately 18 months. Following construction, operation and maintenance activities would occur based on monthly and quarterly inspections. Operation activities of the fuel storage facility would consist of actions such as receiving fuel, fuel dispensing, inventory management, and monitoring. Management activities would include actions such as tank repairs, corrosion protection, venting system maintenance, leak testing, replacement of failing and/or worn-out components, pump and motor maintenance, and containment area inspection and repairs.

1.3.2 Alternatives

Two courses of action (COA 1 and COA 2) were assessed to determine the most optimal site for construction of the Proposed Action, with multiple locations considered for staging equipment during construction and the relocation/disposal of the existing fuel tank. Locations for these project components were assessed at a high-level based on

factors such as proximity to the existing fuel facility within Hanchey AHP, need for additional grading and restoration, and general level of impact.

Under the Preferred Alternative, the Proposed Action would occur within the area under COA 1. The location of COA 1 is a currently serviceable area at Hanchey AHP. Existing infrastructure would be removed, and earthwork would occur where the new infrastructure will be constructed. Earthwork will include excavation and surface disturbance, totaling approximately 1,000 cubic yards of material displacement. The existing waste fuel tank within the proposed project boundary would be relocated, and a transfer line would be constructed between the new and existing fuel storage systems. Utilities would be installed from the nearest point of connection. Equipment staging for construction would be located within the footprint of the proposed project boundary.

To compare impacts of the Proposed Action under COA 1 to a baseline, a No Action Alternative was identified. Under the No Action Alternative, the new fuel storage facility would not be constructed, and Fort Rucker would continue to utilize the capacity of the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. This alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the project.

2 Threatened and Endangered Species

The USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) tool was consulted on 7 July 2025 and again on 09 February 2026 to determine the potential for T&E species within the proposed project area. Nine species were generated from IPaC as potential to be in the project area. Species are listed below in Table 2 and species-specific descriptions follow. Project scoping letters were sent to USFWS on 18 June 2025 and a response was received from USFWS on 18 August 2025 that incorporated recommendations. Technical coordination continued with USFWS through 25 November 2025, mostly concerning potential impacts to the northern long-eared bat (NLEB) and clarifying recommendations to avoid impacts.

Table 1. Threatened and Endangered Species Potentially Present in Proposed Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Listing Status
Mammals		
Northern Long-eared Bat	<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Endangered
Reptiles		
Alligator Snapping Turtle	<i>Macrochelys temminckii</i>	Proposed Threatened
Fishes		
Gulf Sturgeon	<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi</i>	Threatened
Clams		
Choctaw Bean	<i>Obovaria choctawensis</i>	Endangered
Fuzzy Pigtoe	<i>Pleurobema strodeanum</i>	Threatened
Southern Kidneyshell	<i>Ptychobranthus jonesi</i>	Endangered
Southern Sandshell	<i>Hamiota australis</i>	Threatened
Tapered Pigtoe	<i>Fusconaia burkei</i>	Threatened
Insects		

Monarch Butterfly	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Proposed Threatened
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2.1 Status of Species

Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*): The NLEB was listed as threatened under the ESA on April 2, 2015, and reclassified as endangered on November 30, 2022 (USFWS 2022). The status of this species remains centered on range-wide impacts of white-nose syndrome (WNS), a deadly disease affecting cave-dwelling bats across the continent. The NLEB is widely distributed throughout the eastern and north central United States, and Canada (USFWS 2016a). The NLEB spends its winters hibernating in caves or mines with areas of constant temperatures, high humidity, and no air currents (USFWS 2016b). During summer, suitable habitat includes forested areas, including adjacent areas such as wetlands, agricultural fields, and pastures. This includes forests or woodlots containing potential roosts including live trees and/or snags ≥ 3 inches (7.6 centimeters) dbh that have exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, and/or cavities, as well as linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors. Individual trees may be considered suitable habitat when they exhibit the characteristics of a potential roost tree are located within 1,000 feet (305 meters) of other forested habitats. Stable populations of NLEB exist within Alabama and are known to be active year-round in forested or wooded habitats. Because the temperature in Alabama is mild year-round, NLEB do not have to rely on caves or mines for hibernation, and they may be less susceptible to WNS (USFWS 2024a).

Alligator Snapping Turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*): The alligator snapping turtle was proposed for listing as a threatened species with a rule issued under section 4(d) of the ESA on November 9, 2021 (86 FR 62434). The alligator snapping turtle is the largest freshwater turtle in the United States and is found in waterways in the Midwest, Southeast, and parts of the Southwest. The greatest threats to the alligator snapping turtle are incidental harm from fishing practices, habitat alteration, nest predators, and parasites (USFWS 2021). The project area falls within the Apalachicola analysis unit where nest predation is the most substantial threat. However, the current distribution of alligator snapping turtle is unknown within Dale County, Alabama (USFWS 2021). The alligator snapping turtle has not been documented at Fort Rucker (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024).

Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*): The gulf sturgeon was listed as a threatened species under ESA on September 30, 1991 (56 FR 49653). Gulf sturgeon spawn in rivers in the spring and fall, spend the summer months in riverine habitat, and swim to marine waters in the winter as adults. The greatest threats to the gulf sturgeon are contaminants, dredging, dams, and climate change (NOAA Fisheries 2025). Approximately 2,783 river kilometers of estuarine and marine habitat within Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi were designated as critical habitat for the species on March 19, 2003 (68 FR 13370). A segment of the Choctawhatchee River designated as critical habitat is approximately 0.5 miles southeast from the Fort Rucker Installation and approximately 1.5 miles from the project area. Gulf sturgeon have not been documented within the Installation (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024).

Choctaw Bean (*Obovaria choctawensis*): The Choctaw bean is a freshwater mussel and was listed as an endangered species with designated critical habitat under ESA on October 10, 2012 (77 FR 61664). Choctaw bean mussels were found to be present in Claybank Creek above

Highway 27 in a mussel survey conducted from 1998-2000 on Fort Rucker and are known to occur in the Choctawhatchee watershed. Fort Rucker was excluded from critical habitat designated due to conservation efforts such as reducing silt, sedimentation, and non-point source pollution as identified in the 2024 INRMP (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). The closest location of critical habitat to the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP is within the Choctawhatchee River, southeast of the Installation. Streams located outside the Hanchey AHP feed into the Choctawhatchee River. Hanchey AHP is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Choctawhatchee River.

Fuzzy Pigtoe (*Pleurobema strodeanum*): The fuzzy pigtoe is a freshwater mussel and was listed as a threatened species with designated critical habitat under ESA on October 10, 2012 (77 FR 61664). Fuzzy pigtoe were found to be present within Steep Head Creek at Alabama Highway 27 in a mussel survey conducted from 1998-2000 on Fort Rucker and are known to occur in the Choctawhatchee watershed. Fort Rucker was excluded from critical habitat designated due to conservation efforts such as reducing silt, sedimentation, and non-point source pollution as identified in the 2024 INRMP (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). The closest location of critical habitat to the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP is within the Choctawhatchee River, southeast of the Installation. Streams located outside the Hanchey AHP feed into the Choctawhatchee River. Hanchey AHP is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Choctawhatchee River.

Southern Kidneyshell (*Ptychobranhus jonesi*): The southern kidneyshell is a freshwater mussel and was listed as an endangered species with designated critical habitat under ESA on October 10, 2012 (77 FR 61664). Southern kidneyshell have not been documented within Fort Rucker but are known to occur within the Choctawhatchee watershed. Fort Rucker was excluded from critical habitat designated due to conservation efforts such as reducing silt, sedimentation, and non-point source pollution as identified in the 2024 INRMP (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). The closest location of critical habitat to the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP is within the Choctawhatchee River, southeast of the Installation. Streams located outside the Hanchey AHP feed into the Choctawhatchee River. Hanchey AHP is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Choctawhatchee River.

Southern Sandshell (*Hamiota australis*): The southern sandshell is a freshwater mussel and was listed as a threatened species with designated critical habitat under ESA on October 10, 2012 (77 FR 61664). Southern sandshell have not been documented within Fort Rucker but are known to occur within the Choctawhatchee watershed. Fort Rucker was excluded from critical habitat designated due to conservation efforts such as reducing silt, sedimentation, and non-point source pollution as identified in the 2024 INRMP (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). The closest location of critical habitat to the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP is within the Choctawhatchee River, southeast of the Installation. Streams located outside the Hanchey AHP feed into the Choctawhatchee River. Hanchey AHP is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Choctawhatchee River.

Tapered Pigtoe (*Fusconaia burkei*): The tapered pigtoe is a freshwater mussel and was listed as a threatened species with designated critical habitat on October 10, 2012 (77 FR 61664). Tapered pigtoe mussels have not been documented within Fort Rucker but are known to occur within the Choctawhatchee watershed. Fort Rucker was excluded from critical habitat designated due to conservation efforts such as reducing silt, sedimentation, and non-point source pollution as identified in the 2024 INRMP (Fort Novosel (Rucker), 2024). The closest location of critical

habitat to the proposed project area at Hanchey AHP is within the Choctawhatchee River, southeast of the Installation. Streams located outside the Hanchey AHP feed into the Choctawhatchee River. Hanchey AHP is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Choctawhatchee River.

Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus Plexippus*): The monarch butterfly was proposed for listing as a threatened species with an accompanying 4(d) rule under the ESA on December 12, 2024 (89 FR 100662 100716). Within the proposal on December 12, 2024, USFWS proposed to designate approximately 4,395 acres of critical habitat within California (USFWS 2024c). The monarch butterfly ranges across the entire United States and can be found in a variety of different landscapes if suitable habitat is present. They can be found in fields, roadside areas, open landscapes, wetlands, urban gardens, etc., where milkweed and flowering plants are present (USFWS 2024b).

2.2 Effects Analysis

2.2.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the project as described under the Proposed Action in Section 1.3.2 would not be implemented and Fort Rucker would continue to rely on the existing fuel storage facility at Hanchey AHP. No adverse impacts to threatened and endangered species would be anticipated under the No Action Alternative.

2.2.2 Preferred Alternative

Threatened and endangered species effect determinations are listed in Table 3 below for the purpose of the integrated BA. Further detail regarding potential impacts to each species follows. The northern long-eared bat Determination Key (D-Key) was completed through IPaC and generated a “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” determination for the NLEB. Automatic concurrence will be generated and become valid after a 15-day review period if no response is received from USFWS. It is recognized that proposed species currently do not have statutory protection under ESA, however, proposed species (alligator snapping turtle and monarch butterfly) were given effect determinations in this analysis in case the listing should change for one or all proposed species in the future.

Table 2. Threatened and Endangered Species Effect Determinations

Common Name	Scientific Name	Effect Determination
Mammals		
Northern Long-eared Bat	<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect
Reptiles		
Alligator Snapping Turtle	<i>Macrochelys temminckii</i>	No Effect
Fishes		
Gulf Sturgeon	<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi</i>	No Effect
Clams		
Choctaw Bean	<i>Obovaria choctawensis</i>	No Effect
Fuzzy Pigtoe	<i>Pleurobema strodeanum</i>	No Effect
Southern Kidneyshell	<i>Ptychobranthus jonesi</i>	No Effect

Southern Sandshell	<i>Hamiota australis</i>	No Effect
Tapered Pigtoe	<i>Fusconaia burkei</i>	No Effect
Insects		
Monarch Butterfly	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	No Effect

Northern Long-eared Bat (NLEB): Under the Preferred Alternative, vegetation within the project area will be cleared to allow for ground disturbing activities and any necessary temporary lighting is expected to be shielded and directed downward. Some of the vegetation to be cleared consists of trees that are ≥ 3 inches dbh and within 1,000 feet of other forested habitat. While some of these trees are dead/dying they could still be considered suitable habitat for the NLEB. However, due to the location and proximity of the existing vegetation within the project area to airfield operations, this location would not be the most desirable for NLEB. Regardless, to avoid any potential impacts to NLEB, tree clearing would only occur during the protective window of July 16th to March 14th. If tree clearing cannot be achieved during this timeframe, Fort Rucker would proceed to acoustic and/or mist-netting surveys to determine presence or probable absence of NLEB at the project site in accordance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s 2024 *Range-wide Indiana Bat & Northern Long-eared Bat Survey Guidelines*.

Alligator snapping turtle, Gulf sturgeon, Choctaw bean, fuzzy pigtoe, southern kidneyshell, southern sandshell, tapered pigtoe: The proposed project area does not include surface waters and therefore does not contain suitable aquatic habitat for federally listed threatened or endangered aquatic species. While suitable habitat does not exist within the proposed project area, these aquatic species depend on excellent water quality and quantity. Indirect project impacts to water resources outside of the project area are addressed in Section 3.2.2. of the EA and discuss how water resources could be indirectly affected by the proposed project due to sediment exposure, erosion, and stormwater runoff from the construction site. With proper BMPs and permitting in place, impacts to water quality from construction activities, operation, and maintenance would be negligible.

Monarch Butterfly: Monarch butterflies could range within the project area and vicinity. However, milkweed and other flowering plants are not known to be present within the project area and existing vegetation is unlikely suitable habitat. No direct nor indirect effects are anticipated to occur to the monarch butterfly under the Preferred Alternative.

2.3 Determination of Effects Conclusion

The DA has determined that the proposed action under the Preferred Alternative would have “no effect” on the alligator snapping turtle, Gulf sturgeon, Choctaw bean, fuzzy pigtoe, southern kidneyshell, southern sandshell, tapered pigtoe, and monarch butterfly, and a “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” (MANLAA) determination was made for the northern long-eared bat. The MANLAA determination for the northern long-eared bat is supported by the implementation of tree clearing during a protective window, as described above under Section 2.2.2.

3 Works Cited

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