

FINAL

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FNSI)

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR APPROVAL OF
THE CONNECTICUT TRAINING CENTER REAL PROPERTY MASTER PLAN
CONNECTICUT ARMY NATIONAL GUARD**

1. Introduction

The Connecticut Army National Guard (CTARNG) prepared a Real Property Master Plan (RPMP) for the Connecticut Training Center (CTC) consistent with the requirements of US Department of Defense (DoD) Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) 2-100-01, *Installation Master Planning*, which provides guidance for developing RPMPs for DoD installations. The CTC comprises three installations—Stones Ranch Military Reservation, Camp Niantic, and East Haven Rifle Range—all of which are in southern Connecticut.

The CTARNG prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the potential environmental, socioeconomic, and cultural effects of the Proposed Action, which is approving the UFC 2-100-01-compliant RPMP, and the No Action Alternative. The EA was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (Title 42 of the *United States Code* § 4321 *et seq.*); the Council on Environmental (CEQ) *Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA* (Title 40 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] Parts 1500–1508); *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions* (32 CFR Part 651); *The Army National Guard NEPA Handbook*; and the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA). As set forth in DOD's Directive 5105.77, *National Guard Bureau* (NGB), the NGB is a joint activity of the DoD and as such must comply with the NEPA.

2. Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action. The Proposed Action is the CTARNG's Preferred Alternative. It consists of approving the CTC RPMP consistent with the military use of the CTC and the goals and objectives established in UFC 2-100-01. The CTC RPMP includes a Vision Plan, an Installation Development Plan, Installation Planning Standards, a Development Program, and a Plan Summary. The CTC RPMP will inform future planning and programming decisions for real property construction, renovation, maintenance, and repair at the CTC over the near term (within 5 years) and long term (20 years) planning horizons.

The *purpose* of the Proposed Action is to be in compliance with the UFC 2-100-01, consider long-term mission requirements and identify development and training projects that further support the CTARNG mission. ARNG issued a

memorandum to the ARNG Construction and Facility Management Officers, in December 2015, outlining requirements for the preparation of UFC 2-100-01 compliant RPMPs for 48 specified training installations by 1 October 2018. The CTARNG prepared the CTC RPMP to comply with the December 2015 memorandum, and to incorporate the vision of the CTARNG Adjutant General and the facility requirements of all units and organizations assigned to or supported by the CTC. The RPMP serves as a path to ensure that planning for CTC considers the long term mission requirements and identifies major development and training projects proposed for execution over the next 20 years that will further meet the requirements and support the missions of the CTARNG. The CTC RPMP is needed to fulfill DoD Master Planning policy, as well as, to guide the CTARNG through the development of the CTC in a clear, sustainable manner that supports current missions, preserves long-term military capabilities, supports the DoD's mission, and enriches the community it serves. Additionally, the format and standards prescribed by UFC 2-100-01 ensures that CTARNG's installation planning is consistent with other DoD components, and uses the latest techniques in planning.

The EA does not discuss the specific effects of CTC RPMP potential future construction or other activities in detail. The CTARNG would conduct site-specific NEPA analysis prior to implementing CTC RPMP potential future projects.

Alternatives Considered. The CTARNG evaluated potential alternatives against screening criteria it developed and selected two alternatives for detailed analysis: the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative.

For the RPMP, the Proposed Action Alternative, the approval of the UFC 2-100-01 compliant RPMP alternative was carried forward for further analysis as it would fulfill UFC 2-100-01 master planning policies and implements a comprehensive approach to developing the CTC using planning strategies that reinforce capabilities to support the ARNG's mission, promote quality of life, and enhance sustainability and environmental viability on the installation. The approval of a combination of ARNG Installation Master Plans alternative was eliminated from consideration as it does not meet DoD's, Army's, or NGB's current master planning policies.

Inclusion of a No Action Alternative is prescribed by the CEQ Regulations and serves as a benchmark against which proposed Federal actions are evaluated. Under the No Action Alternative, the CTARNG would not approve the CTC RPMP. This alternative would include managing the CTC under the current planning processes, without a UFC-compliant RPMP.

3. Environmental Analysis

The potential environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action are fully described in the EA. The EA identifies the environmental resources that could be affected by the Proposed Action, and determines the significance of the impacts, if

any, to each of these resources. Based on the detailed analysis contained in the EA, the CTARNG has determined that approving the CTC RPMP would not result in any significant adverse impacts on the human or natural environment. Because the Proposed Action involves future planning for projects that may occur within the near-term (within five years) and long-term (20 years), the CTARNG will review this NEPA-compliant analysis, in consultation with ARNG's Installations and Environment Directorate (ARNG-I&E), to ensure no substantial changes have occurred to environmental resources, regulatory requirements, or anticipated project descriptions since the completion of this EA. If such changes have occurred, and after coordination with ARNG-I&E, the CTARNG will prepare an updated NEPA analysis (e.g., a Supplemental EA or tiered Categorical Exclusion) if appropriate.

Mitigation. No mitigation measures would be necessary to reduce adverse impacts to below significant levels. The CTARNG would, however, implement any mitigation measures identified through future project-specific NEPA analysis. For example, the CTARNG would submit flood management plans to the State, conduct Federal Coastal Consistency Determinations, and consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer and US Fish and Wildlife Service as necessary during project-specific NEPA analysis and would implement any mitigation measures required by those agencies or permits issued by them or other regulatory agencies. In addition, at an appropriate time, the CTARNG would coordinate with the Connecticut Department of Transportation and the Town of East Lyme to conduct any needed studies to design the access control points to mitigate any potential adverse impacts on traffic on US Highway 1.

4. Regulations

The Proposed Action will not violate NEPA; the CEQ Regulations; 32 CFR Part 651; CEPA; or any other Federal, State, or local environmental regulations.

5. Commitment to Implementation

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) and the CTARNG affirm their commitment to implementing this EA in accordance with NEPA and CEPA. Implementation is dependent on funding. The CTARNG and the Army National Guard's (on behalf of NGB) Installations and Environment and Training Directorates will ensure that adequate funds are requested in future years' budgets to achieve the goals and objectives set forth in this EA.

6. Public Review and Comment

The CTARNG invited Federal agencies, Federally recognized Tribes, and State and local agencies to contribute to this EA through the Interagency/Intergovernmental Coordination of Environmental Planning (IICEP) process, which assisted the CTARNG in determining the appropriate scope for this EA. Following the IICEP scoping period, a

Notice of Availability published in the *New London Day* and *Hartford Current* announced the availability of the Final EA and Draft FNSI for a 45-day public review period, from 2 June to 19 July, 2019. During that period, the Final EA and Draft FNSI were available at locations listed in the public notice. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) was the only party that provided comments during that period. A matrix indicating how each of CTDEEP's comments were responded to is provided as **Attachment 1**.

For further information, contact Mr. Robert Dollak by mail at 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105; by email at robert.f.dollak.nfg@mail.mil; or by telephone at (860) 524-4945.

7. Finding of No Significant Impact

After careful review of the EA, I have concluded that implementing the Proposed Action would generate no significant controversy and would have no significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. This analysis fulfills the requirements of the NEPA and CEPA Regulations. An Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary and will not be prepared, and the NGB is issuing this FNSI.

Oct 22, 2019
Date

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