

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 22, 2014

U.S. Army Environmental Command
ATTN: SPEA Public Comments
2450 Connell Road, Building 2264
Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234-7664

As members of Arizona's congressional delegation, we write in response to the Department of the Army's request for comment on the Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Army 2020 Force Structure Realignment and to call the Army's attention to the critical role that Fort Huachuca plays in protecting our nation and supporting Arizona's economy.

As the Army considers a drawdown in force strength, we believe it must act in a manner that best serves the national security interests of the nation. At the same time, it is important that the Army take into account how the negative socio-economic impacts that would be visited on Fort Huachuca as the result from a drawdown would affect that post's ability to continue serving those vital interests. We strongly support the mission and personnel of Fort Huachuca, and urge the Army to fully consider the severe negative impact on national security and the local and state economy that would result from substantial cuts at Fort Huachuca.

NATIONAL SECURITY

The United States has a profound national security interest in maintaining capabilities and platforms in the areas of cybersecurity; border security and interdiction; and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR). Indeed, Fort Huachuca is known as the "Home of the Future of Modern Warfare". In March 2014, in testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, Secretary of the Army John McHugh said "the capabilities at Huachuca offer advantages that are hard to replicate." In that same hearing, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno told the committee that the Army is increasing its investment and expanding its role in cybersecurity. Indeed, he said that the "capability in Fort Huachuca is one that is very important to [the Army]." Nowhere will the Army find more men and women who have the expertise and institutional knowledge in all aspects of cyber than at Fort Huachuca.

Fort Huachuca contains substantial military value for the Army. It is home to a number of organizations and units including the U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence, the U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command, the Joint Interoperability Test Command, the

U.S. Army Electronic Proving Ground (EPG), the 2-13th Aviation Regiment and many others. Fort Huachuca is also an integral link in regional border security and drug interdiction efforts. With more than 50 training courses, the U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence offers human intelligence training that is the backbone of our current missions worldwide. NETCOM, the Army's Network Enterprise Technology Command, provides worldwide information service and management and defense of the Army's network communications for the Army.

Last year in a statement to the House Armed Service Committee, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey noted that the Army will continue to rely on proven systems such as ISR to "expand our ability to access and assess hard-to-reach targets." Gen. Dempsey affirmed recently that the ISR work done at the Joint Interoperability Test Command at Fort Huachuca will continue to play a critical role in the future security of the nation.

The 2,500 square miles of pristine electromagnetic spectrum found at Fort Huachuca's Electronic Proving Grounds provide the necessary environment for the testing and development of the ISR technologies needed by the Army. Over the past 60 years, Fort Huachuca and EPG have provided the Army indispensable expertise that resulted in technological advances that have saved the lives of countless American warfighters.

We have also witnessed a revolution in unmanned platforms. With nearly 1,000 square miles of open airspace and more than 300 days annually of clear skies, Fort Huachuca and Sierra Vista share the Army's fifth-busiest airfield and the Fort continues to provide the Army with quality UAV pilots. It is unlikely that the Army's role in unmanned flight will diminish. In fact, we will see an increased need for unmanned platform operators and Fort Huachuca is uniquely positioned to meet these needs for the Army.

In summary, substantial cuts at Fort Huachuca would compromise our national security. Fort Huachuca has assets that are impossible to replace, from its pristine electromagnetic spectrum to its large, open and geographically diverse airspace to its highly trained technicians and Intelligence Center of Excellence.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

In addition to its significant value to our national security, Fort Huachuca is an economic engine for Sierra Vista, western Cochise County and the State of Arizona, which together have been united in their support for the Fort for more than 100 years. As of September 2013, the post employed a civilian workforce of more than 7,000 people and nearly 5,000 active-duty soldiers. According to the analysis performed by the Center for Economic Research, Fort Huachuca has already experienced significant job loss since 2012, with more than 1,500 jobs lost in the private

sector that directly support the Fort. New data is being collected now and it is anticipated that the findings will reflect additional jobs lost in 2014.

The post is the single largest employer in Cochise County, and it is one of the largest military economic generators in the state of Arizona. Our state is home to military installations including Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Luke Air Force Base, Yuma Proving Ground, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, the Naval Operational Support Center Tucson, the Arizona Army and Air National Guard and thousands of square miles of training space. No state is as fiercely supportive of the military as Arizona. Substantial additional cuts would have a devastating impact on the local and state economy.

We further believe that some of the data used by the Army in calculating economic impact will not provide the most accurate information to decision-makers. The Army used the entire 6,166 square mile area of Cochise County as the Region of Influence (ROI) when it conducted the SPEA's socio-economic impact. Nearly 100,000 people live in Cochise County communities near the Fort and these residents would be the most impacted, according to Cochise College's Center for Economic Research. While these communities account for 69 percent of the county's population, these cities and towns only account for about twenty percent of Cochise County's total area. We encourage the Army to reconsider its use of the entire County as the Region of Influence and to consider instead a more precise and accurate measurement of the socio-economic impact in the areas immediately surrounding the installation. Finally, we agree with the Cochise College's Center for Economic Research recommendation that the appropriate ROI would be one that is uniform with that of the other installations.

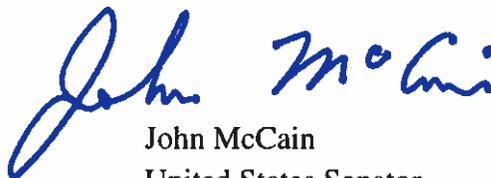
We fully understand the budgetary pressures facing the Army under the Budget Control Act and sequestration. The Army, however, must ensure that it continues to support the missions and installations, like Fort Huachuca, that are essential to protecting our nation today and in the future. Accordingly, we urge the Army to avoid making substantial cut to those capabilities and personnel at Fort Huachuca that support its vital contribution to the nation's defense.

Thank you for your close attention and consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



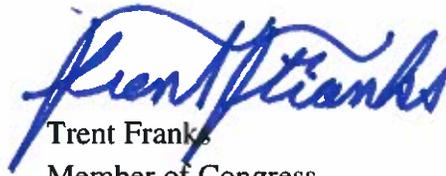
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