

RECORD OF DECISION  
*ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
AIRSPACE OPTIMIZATION FOR READINESS  
AT MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE, IDAHO*

## INTRODUCTION

The Department of the Air Force (DAF) is issuing this Record of Decision (ROD) to implement actions to achieve Special Use Airspace (SUA) optimization at Mountain Home Air Force Base (AFB), based on the *Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Airspace Optimization for Readiness at Mountain Home AFB, Idaho*, March 2023 (Federal Register [FR], Vol. 88, No. 42, page 13443, March 3, 2023). The decision to achieve airspace optimization considered the information, analyses, and public comments contained in the FEIS, along with other relevant factors.

This ROD is prepared in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) at Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 1505.2 (*Record of decision in cases requiring environmental impact statements*)<sup>1</sup> and 32 CFR Part 989, implementing the DAF Environmental Impact Analysis Process. The DAF is the lead agency and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is a cooperating agency for this FEIS.

Specifically, this ROD documents the following:

- The DAF's decision;
- The alternatives considered by the DAF in reaching the decision and the alternative considered to be environmentally preferable;
- Relevant factors that were considered among the alternatives and how those factors entered its decisions;
- Whether all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the selected alternative have been adopted, and if not, why they were not adopted; and
- Adoption and summary of a Mitigation Plan and summary of applicable mitigations.

The FAA is responsible for evaluating, processing, and charting airspace. The airspace associated with the Proposed Action and alternatives lies within the jurisdiction of the FAA Salt Lake Air Route Traffic Control Center. FAA Order 7400.2K presents the FAA's procedures for handling airspace changes. The DAF will request FAA, as a Cooperating Agency, to consider and adopt, in whole or in part, the FEIS as the required NEPA documentation to support FAA decisions on the modification of SUA. The DAF will request the FAA to issue its ROD and chart the Mountain Home airspace as soon as practicable after the DAF issues its ROD.

## DECISION SYNOPSIS

The DAF has selected Alternative 1: 100-Foot Above Ground Level (AGL) (for subsonic operations) Floor Across All Military Operations Areas (MOAs) and Alternative B: 10,000-Foot AGL Supersonic Floor Across All MOAs, which are also the Preferred Alternatives. Based on this decision, the DAF will request FAA to modify the subsonic low-altitude floors and supersonic altitude floors to be consistent across all the MOAs in the Mountain Home SUA. The DAF

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<sup>1</sup> Note: this EIS was ongoing prior to the September 14, 2020, effective date of the Council on Environmental Quality's final rule updating its regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA. Accordingly, the new regulations were not used for this action, pursuant to 40 CFR 1506.13.

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considered five alternatives (as discussed in the Alternatives Considered section of this ROD) to support optimization efforts for operations at Mountain Home AFB.

## **BACKGROUND**

Mountain Home AFB, located in southwestern Idaho, provides training in the SUA for combat air power and combat support to United States (U.S.) forces and allies. Training operations at Mountain Home AFB primarily involve different versions of the F-15E Strike Eagle aircraft. The Mountain Home Range Complex and the SUA associated with Mountain Home AFB support unit-level and larger force combat skills training. In addition, mission activities, such as search and rescue training, survival training, convoy escort training, and ground-based air defense Radio Detection and Ranging threat simulation, occur on the land areas of the Mountain Home Range Complex. The airspace and ranges primarily support Idaho-based units from Mountain Home AFB and Air National Guard units from Gowen Field in Boise, Idaho, as well as other DAF- and Department of Defense-approved users.

The Mountain Home SUA consists of six MOAs (Paradise North, Paradise South, Owyhee North, Owyhee South, Jarbidge North, and Jarbidge South) and two Restricted Areas (R-3202 and R-3204) with associated ranges for inert weapons use (Saylor Creek Range and Juniper Butte Range). The airspace overlies portions of Idaho, Nevada, and Oregon. Military Training Routes (MTRs) are identified as Visual Routes and Instrument Routes and currently support navigation training down to 100 feet AGL for subsonic operations, including areas within Jarbidge South, Owyhee South, Paradise North, and Paradise South MOAs. MTRs have limitations that prevent realistic combat training, such as one-way traffic (i.e., aircraft are not allowed to fly toward one another within an MTR or reverse direction), no maneuvers more than 90 degrees (i.e., reversing direction or similar combat maneuvering in response to threats), and limited, specific entry and exit points.

There are three MOA exclusion areas within the Mountain Home AFB airspace that will remain in place for all the alternatives considered in the *Airspace Optimization for Readiness* FEIS (Volume I, §1.1.2, Pg 1-6, Figure 1.1-2) they include:

- Exclusion Area 1: Airspace floor for subsonic operations is no lower than 1,500 feet AGL;
- Exclusion Area 2: Airspace floor for subsonic operations is no lower than 2,000 feet AGL; and
- Exclusion Area 3: Airspace floor for subsonic operations is no lower than 500 feet AGL.

Other flight constraints are delineated in various agreements and include seasonal, altitude, and locational restrictions implemented to reduce overflight noise effects to recreationists and certain wildlife species during specified times of the year. The agreements and associated flight constraints are discussed in the FEIS (Vol. I, §1.1.2, Pgs. 1-5 through 1-9 and Figure 1.1-3 on Pg 1-7) and will be included in the Mitigation Plan to be developed after signature of this ROD.

The *Airspace Optimization for Readiness* FEIS was developed to address the current Mountain Home AFB SUA limitations that threaten mission readiness. The Jarbidge North and Owyhee North MOAs have subsonic operational floors at 100 feet AGL, but do not have the diversity of terrain to accommodate the terrain-masking element of low-altitude training (LOWAT). The other four MOAs (Jarbidge South, Owyhee South, Paradise North, and Paradise South) have subsonic

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operational floors at 10,000 feet mean sea level (MSL) or 3,000 feet AGL, whichever is higher. Over mountainous terrain, such as in the Paradise South MOA, the floor for training can be 13,000 feet MSL or higher. The high floor in these MOAs creates unrealistic airspace “shelves” (*FEIS, Vol. I, §1.1.2, Pg 1-8, Figure 1.1-4*) that prevent aircrew from becoming proficient in low-altitude ingress, threat reactions, and egress. Additionally, in the Jarbidge North and Owyhee North MOAs, supersonic aircraft flights above 10,000 feet AGL are permitted; however, the other four MOAs have a 30,000-foot MSL supersonic floor, which does not provide for realistic supersonic operations in four of the six MOA airspaces.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The DAF considered five action alternatives (*FEIS, Vol. I, §2.3*) to support optimization efforts for consistent low altitude floors at Mountain Home AFB.

### **Alternative 1: 100-Foot AGL Floor Across All MOAs**

(*FEIS, Vol. I, §2.3.1, Tables 2.3-1 through 2.3-4, and Figure 2.3-1*)

All MOAs in the SUA associated with Mountain Home AFB would have 100-foot AGL subsonic operational floors. The Owyhee North and Jarbidge North MOAs already have 100-foot AGL subsonic operational floors. In the Paradise North, Paradise South, Owyhee South, and Jarbidge South MOAs, operational floors of 10,000 feet MSL or 3,000 feet AGL, whichever is higher, would change to 100 feet AGL. While this alternative would not directly involve increases in annual flights and sorties for Mountain Home AFB-based aircraft, it is likely that the number of sorties by other users throughout the airspace would increase over time due to the increased capability for conducting LOWAT. The lower operational floors may also result in the capability to conduct more large-scale exercises. To account for this in the analysis, other users’ activities in the SUA are projected to increase by 5 percent over the baseline. This projected increase is based on the average annual increase in sorties by other users between fiscal years 2014 and 2018. There is no proposed increase in the amount of chaff and flare use by local aircraft, but the analysis considered a potential 5 percent increase in the amount of chaff and flare use by other users corresponding to a projected 5 percent increase in sorties conducted by other users.

### **Alternative 2: 300-Foot AGL Floor Across Four MOAs; Continued 100-foot AGL Floor in Two MOAs**

(*FEIS, Vol. I, §2.3.1, Tables 2.3-1 through 2.3-3 and Figure 2.3-2; and §2.3.2, Table 2.3-6*)

The Paradise North, Paradise South, Owyhee South, and Jarbidge South MOA subsonic operational floors of 10,000 feet MSL or 3,000 feet AGL, whichever is higher, would change to 300 feet AGL. Owyhee North and Jarbidge North MOAs would continue to have a 100-foot AGL subsonic operational floor for LOWAT. While this alternative would not directly involve increases in annual flights and sorties for Mountain Home AFB-based aircraft, it is likely that the number of sorties by other users throughout the airspace would increase over time due to the increased capability for conducting LOWAT. The lower operational floors may also result in the capability to conduct more large-scale exercises. To account for this in the analysis, other users’ activities in the SUA are projected to increase by 5 percent over the baseline. This projected increase is based on the average annual increase in sorties by other users between fiscal years 2014 and 2018. There is no proposed increase in the amount of chaff and flare use by local aircraft, but the analysis

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considered a potential 5 percent increase in the amount of chaff and flare use by other users corresponding to projected 5 percent increase in sorties conducted by other users.

**Alternative 3: 500-Foot AGL Floor Across Four MOAs; Continued 100-foot AGL Floor in Two MOAs**

*(FEIS, Vol. I, §2.3.1, Tables 2.3-1 through 2.3-3; and §2.3.3, Table 2.3-8 and Figure 2.3-3)*

The Paradise North, Paradise South, Owyhee South, and Jarbidge South MOA subsonic operational floors of 10,000 feet MSL or 3,000 feet AGL, whichever is higher, would change to 500 feet AGL. Owyhee North and Jarbidge North MOAs would continue to have a 100-foot AGL subsonic operational floor for LOWAT. While this alternative would not directly involve increases in annual flights and sorties for Mountain Home AFB-based aircraft, it is likely that the number of sorties by other users throughout the airspace would increase over time due to the increased capability for conducting LOWAT. To account for this in the analysis, other users' activities in the SUA are projected to increase by 5 percent over the baseline. This projected increase is based on the average annual increase in sorties by other users between fiscal years 2014 and 2018. There is no proposed increase in the amount of chaff and flare use by local aircraft, but the analysis considered a potential 5 percent increase in the amount of chaff and flare use by other users corresponding to projected 5 percent increase in sorties conducted by other users.

**Alternative A: 5,000-Foot AGL Supersonic Floor Across All MOAs**

*(FEIS, Vol. I, §2.3.4, Table 2.3-10 and Figure 2.3-4)*

The supersonic altitude floor would be 5,000 feet AGL in all six MOAs (includes R-3202 and R-3204) with the exception that supersonic operations would continue to be prohibited over the Duck Valley Indian Reservation. In the Paradise North, Paradise South, Owyhee South, and Jarbidge South MOAs, the existing supersonic floor of 30,000 feet MSL would change to 5,000 feet AGL. In the Owyhee North and Jarbidge North MOAs, the existing supersonic floor of 10,000 feet AGL would become 5,000 feet AGL.

**Alternative B: 10,000-Foot AGL Supersonic Floor Across All MOAs**

*(FEIS, Vol. I, §2.3.5, Table 2.3-12 and Figure 2.3-5)*

The supersonic altitude floor would be 10,000 feet AGL in all six MOAs (includes R-3202 and R-3204), with the exception that supersonic operations, would continue to be prohibited over the Duck Valley Indian Reservation. In the Paradise North, Paradise South, Owyhee South, and Jarbidge South MOAs the existing supersonic floor of 30,000 feet MSL would change to 10,000 feet AGL. The Owyhee North and Jarbidge North MOAs would continue to have a supersonic floor of 10,000 feet AGL.

**No Action Alternative**

*(FEIS, Vol. I, §2.2, Tables 2.2-1 through 2.2-4, and Figure 2.2-1)*

The Mountain Home AFB airspace subsonic operational floors would remain at 100 feet AGL in the Owyhee North and Jarbidge North MOAs and 10,000 feet MSL or 3,000 feet AGL (whichever is higher) in the Paradise North, Paradise South, Owyhee South, and Jarbidge South MOAs. No supersonic flights are allowed where Owyhee North and Owyhee South MOAs overlie the Duck Valley Indian Reservation. Supersonic flights would continue to occur in the Owyhee North and

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Jarbidge North MOAs or ATCAAs above 10,000 feet AGL (except over the Duck Valley Indian Reservation). Supersonic operations would remain at or above 30,000 feet MSL over the other four MOAs (except over the Duck Valley Indian Reservation). Under the No Action Alternative, the current airspace constraints would continue.

### **ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Of the alternatives considered in the FEIS, the No Action Alternative is identified as the environmentally preferred alternative. The No Action Alternative represents a comparatively lower impact on various receptors under the airspace because the operational floors of the MOAs would not change and there would be no increases in noise levels.

### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Public involvement was integral to the development of the FEIS. Public and agency comments were received and considered, including those received during the scoping period, at the Draft EIS (DEIS) public hearings, and during the public comment period on the DEIS. The DAF summarized the substantive comments received during scoping in Appendix B of the FEIS (*Vol. II, Appendix B, §B.1.3, Table B-1*). A summary of concerns raised during the DEIS public comment period is included in the FEIS (*Vol. I, §1.6.3.4*). Summaries of substantive comments received on the DEIS and DAF's responses are also provided in Appendix B of the FEIS (*Vol. II, Appendix B, §B.2.6.1*).

The FAA, as a Cooperating Agency on this FEIS, submitted to the DAF all comments it received from circularization of the Mountain Home airspace optimization proposal and the summation of consultations on the results of the air traffic aeronautical studies (*FEIS, Vol. II, Appendix B, §B.2.7*).

The DAF provided the following public notices, public review periods, and meetings during the EIS process:

- *Notice of Intent*: Published October 16, 2019, in the FR, Vol. 84, No. 200, pages 55290-55291.
- *Scoping Period*: Initiated October 16, 2019, through November 25, 2019. During this time, the DAF held four scoping meetings in Boise, Grandview, and Mountain Home, Idaho, as well as McDermitt, Nevada.
- *DEIS Notice of Availability (NOA)*: Published July 9, 2021, in the FR, Vol. 86, No. 129, EIS No. 20210092, page 36280, with associated public media announcements.
  - *Public Comment and Review Period*: A 45-day comment period was initiated on July 9, 2021 with the NOA publication in the FR and scheduled to end on August 23, 2021; however, the comment period was extended once to September 22, 2021 (FR, Vol. 86, No. 154, EIS No. 20210092, page 44712) and then was extended again to October 25, 2021 (FR, Vol. 86, No. 183, EIS No. 20210092, page 53054), resulting in a 108-day review and comment period.
  - *Public Hearings*: During the public comment and review period the DAF hosted a total of four public hearings. Due to the ongoing national health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent federal guidelines for public gatherings, the DAF shifted the format of one public hearing from in-person to virtual. The DAF

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held three of the four hearings in-person in Grand View and Boise, Idaho, as well as the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley Reservation Tribal Headquarters on the Idaho-Nevada border. The fourth hearing was a virtual meeting on the Webcast platform.

- *Government-to-Government Meetings*: The DAF held five meetings with leaders and representatives of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation, one meeting with the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribes of the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation, and one meeting with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation.
- *FEIS NOA*: Published in the FR on March 3, 2023, Vol. 88, No. 42, FEIS No. 20230035, page 13443. This initiated the mandatory 30-day waiting period prior to ROD signature.

After publication of the FEIS on March 3, 2023, and during the 30-day waiting period, the DAF received 1,109 unsolicited submittals. Additionally, two submittals were received after the 30-day waiting period ended but were still considered. In total, the DAF received 1,094 emails, 1,076 of which were based on a form letter which was determined to be mostly non-substantive. Substantive content in the form letter concerned how the FEIS considered impacts to wilderness, wildlife, waterways, recreation, cultural sites, and local communities throughout the training area and it expressed opposition to the Proposed Action.

The remaining 34 submittals including emails, comment submittals via the project website, mailed letters, and one phone call consisted of unique content. Upon review of the unique content, the DAF identified 83 substantive comments. Most of the substantive comments repeated concerns that were expressed in comments received on the DEIS and responded to by the DAF in the FEIS.

New concerns about the FEIS were related to noise, suggested actions to include in the cumulative impacts analysis, biological resources (e.g., ingestion risk of chaff, clarification of bird seasonal residency and nesting patterns, bird and bat migration patterns, data source of sage-grouse habitat areas, clarification of cheatgrass and invasive annual grasses dominance over sagebrush after fires), suggestions for habitat restoration as proposed mitigation measures, questioning the use of AGL to define operational floors, and a multitude of new studies provided by one commenter for the DAF to consider. Although fully considered and made a part of the administrative record, none of the submittals received during the 30-day waiting period or new concerns identified issues that would change the findings in the analysis or conclusions made in the FEIS that would impact the decision made in this ROD.

## **COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION**

The DAF consulted and coordinated with federal and state agencies and federally recognized tribes (tribes) throughout the EIS process. The DAF considered all substantive public, agency, and tribal comments received during EIS development. Key consultation and coordination letters are reproduced in the FEIS (*Vol. II, Appendix B, Public Coordination and Review; Appendix E, Biological Resources Consultation Documentation; Appendix F, Cultural Resources Consultation*).

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the DAF has completed consultations with State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) from Idaho, Nevada,

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and Oregon (*FEIS, Vol. II, Appendix F, §F.1*), the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation, the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribes of the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation, and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation (*FEIS, Vol. II, Appendix F, §F.2*).

In compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the DAF consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in Idaho, Nevada, and Oregon on the potential effects of the Preferred Alternative to federally listed threatened and endangered species and made the following determinations:

The Preferred Alternative “may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect”:

- Threatened yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*); and
- Proposed threatened whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*).

And that the Preferred Alternative would have “no effect” on:

- Threatened bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*), or its critical habitat;
- Threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkia henshawi*); and
- Endangered Bruneau hot springsnail (*Pyrgulopsis bruneauensis*).

In October 2010, the USFWS issued a Biological Opinion (BO) for the slickspot peppergrass (Consultation number 14420-2010-F-0405) (herein referred to as the “2010 BO”) for ongoing actions at the Juniper Butte Range (USFWS, 2010). The 2010 BO concluded that the use of chaff and flares may affect, and is likely to adversely affect, the slickspot peppergrass and that there would be no effect to slickspot peppergrass proposed critical habitat. The DAF re-affirmed this determination during the Section 7 consultation for this EIS and further determined that the 1.7 percent increase in chaff and flares associated with the Proposed Action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of this species. The USFWS concurred with these determinations in a letter dated July 5, 2022 (*Vol. I, §3.5.4.4.3* and *Vol. II, Appendix E, USFWS letter dated July 5, 2022*).

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Aircraft overflight noise associated with Alternative 1 has the potential to startle people, cause momentary pain, and interfere with activities, such as conversation, sleeping, or working (*FEIS, Vol. I, §3.3.3.4.1*). The highest C-weighted day-night average sound levels (CDNLs) associated with Alternative B are well below the 62 dB CDNL land use compatibility threshold (*FEIS, Vol. I, §3.3.3.8.2*). People in areas affected by increased CDNL would be more likely to be annoyed by the noise. The risk of structural damage would continue to be low but would increase slightly with increasing sonic boom intensity compared to baseline conditions (*FEIS, Vol. I, §3.3.3.8.2*). The likelihood of structural damage is low and would not result in adverse effects to architectural historic properties (*FEIS, Vol. I, §3.6.4.4*).

Noise level increases could be perceived by some people as significant regarding impacts on solitude and quietness, important qualities for remote outdoor recreational experiences. This degree of change would cause minor changes in conditions affecting diverse land uses in the region (*FEIS, Vol. I, §3.4.4.9*).

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Wildlife exposed to low-level overflights may experience stress and behavioral modifications with the initial increase in the soundscape and may exhibit mild-to-severe startle responses from peak noise levels. However, long-term behavioral effects are not expected because exposure would be brief and infrequent, allowing animals periods of time between exposure to recover. Any location on the ground would be overflown relatively infrequently and the likelihood is low that individuals would be repeatedly exposed to high noise levels (*FEIS, Vol. I, §3.4.4.1*). USFWS provided their concurrence with impacts to protected species in a letter dated July 5, 2022.

## MITIGATION

The DAF has adopted all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the alternatives selected. However, some adverse impacts cannot be avoided, and could be perceived as adverse or annoying to affected individuals.

The DAF has developed discretionary mitigations to address concerns expressed in comments provided by the public and governmental agencies and based on the results of the analyses in the FEIS. These mitigations were summarized in the FEIS (*Vol. I, §2.9, Table 2.9-1*). All mitigations identified in the FEIS will be implemented and included in a post-ROD Mitigation Plan.

Mitigation by avoidance is achieved by having been incorporated into Alternative 1 and Alternative B as part of the airspace proposal and will therefore be implemented automatically as part of the FAA airspace approval and charting process and how operations will take place.

Compliance with laws and regulations administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other regulatory and/or state environmental quality agencies are mandated and some have mitigating effects. These laws and regulations are non-discretionary with respect to DAF decision making and will be implemented.

To track all mitigations, the DAF will develop a Mitigation Plan after signature of this ROD that identifies principal and subordinate organizations with responsibility for oversight and execution of specific actions. In no case will an impact-inducing action be taken or implemented prior to the applicable mitigation measure (defined below) being funded and put in place.

The Mitigation Plan will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Identification of the specific actions;
- Identification of the responsible organization for each action; and
- Timing for execution of the actions.

Mitigation measures are organized by resource area. Land Use (includes Wilderness); Aesthetics and Visual Resources; Socioeconomics; Cultural Resources; and Environmental Justice. Resource areas that have the same mitigation measures are grouped together.

Land Use / Aesthetics and Visual Resources / Socioeconomics (*FEIS, Vol. I, §3.4.4.10, §3.8.4.10, and §3.10.4.5*)

- The DAF will continue to adhere to all existing flight constraints in the Jarbidge North and Owyhee North MOAs in Idaho, which are described in the FEIS (*Vol. I, §1.1.2*). These existing flight constraints are standard operating procedures. The following mitigation measures are specific to MOAs in Oregon (Paradise North MOA) and Nevada (Paradise South, Owyhee South, and Jarbidge South MOAs).



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- Seasonal avoidance for the Jarbidge Wilderness Area: On Friday through Monday during the months of April, May, and June, military aircraft will be restricted to above 5,000 feet AGL for subsonic operations over Jarbidge Wilderness Area in the Jarbidge South MOA in Nevada. There are no designated Wilderness Areas under the Paradise North MOA in Oregon and there are no designated Wilderness Areas in Paradise South and Owyhee South MOAs in Nevada. This flight restriction will continue, absent compelling national security circumstances, military contingencies, or hostilities.
- Seasonal avoidance for peak recreation during holidays: No operations will be conducted during weekends associated with Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Labor Day. The training airspace managed by Mountain Home AFB will be closed to military training activities, except for transiting aircraft during weekends associated with Memorial Day, Labor Day, and the 4th of July holidays. This flight restriction will continue, absent compelling national security circumstances, military contingencies, or hostilities.
- Seasonal avoidance for floating season: During April, May, and June, the DAF will coordinate with BLM and National Park Service (NPS) to implement flight restrictions for peak floating timeframes on Wild and Scenic Rivers in Oregon and Nationwide Rivers Inventory in Nevada listed in the FEIS (*Vol. I, §3.4.3, Table 3.4-4*). In Oregon, this includes North Fork Owyhee Wild and Scenic River, Owyhee Wild and Scenic River, and Little West Owyhee Wild and Scenic River. In Nevada, this includes Nationwide Rivers Inventory segments of the West Fork Jarbidge River, North Fork Little Humboldt River, Mary's River, and South Fork Owyhee River.

Peak floating season varies greatly based on spring rains and snow melts; therefore, the DAF will consult with BLM and NPS to identify peak usage of each river segment in Oregon and Nevada. Once identified in coordination with BLM and NPS, the following flight restrictions will be implemented:

- Low-altitude flights over specified canyons will be limited to 1,000 feet AGL and at that level will only cross perpendicular to the canyons.
- Parallel flights within one mile of specified canyon rims will be limited to 5,000 feet AGL. Any flights that occur parallel to canyon rims during April, May, and June will occur above 5,000 feet AGL.

Cultural Resources / Environmental Justice (*FEIS, Vol. I, §3.6.4.5 and §3.11.4.5*)

- The DAF will establish an avoidance area over the Fort McDermitt city limits and Indian Reservation.
  - No military operations will occur below 4,500 feet AGL, whether operating in the MOA or MTRs.
  - There will be no supersonic operations over the avoidance area.

**DECISION**

After considering the potential environmental consequences of the proposed actions; comments and concerns of the public, regulatory and other agencies, Native American Tribes, and other key

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stakeholders, as well as other factors related to national defense, current military operational needs and other issues addressed in the FEIS, the DAF has selected the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 1, and Alternative B, and adopt mitigations as discussed above. The DAF will request FAA to review and adopt the FEIS and to take those actions necessary to implement this decision by modifying and establishing the requisite airspace.

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ROBERT E. MORIARTY, P.E., SES  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force  
(Installations)

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Date