

Section 1.0 Purpose, Need, and Scope

1.1 PURPOSE AND NEED

The Department of the Army is reducing its force structure in response to changing global security requirements, resulting in fewer installations needed to station the smaller force. By 1995, the Army will be reduced to approximately 535,000 active forces and 567,000 reserve components (i.e., Reserve and National Guard). As the Army reduces in size, activities are being realigned and consolidated to the most efficient installations with maximum readiness that are capable of projecting and sustaining combat power in support of national military objectives.

The process to determine installations for closure and/or realignment was established in the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (1990 Base Closure Act), Public Law 101-510. The military services used criteria established by the Secretary of Defense and approved by Congress and a force structure plan provided by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to recommend closure and realignment actions. The criteria evaluated military value, return on investment from cost savings, and environmental and socioeconomic impacts. A consolidated Department of Defense list of recommended actions was submitted by the Secretary of Defense to a bipartisan commission appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (Commission) evaluated the recommendations and sent the findings to the President, who approved and forwarded the recommendations to Congress on July 11, 1991. The Commission's recommendations for base realignments and closure made in 1991 are commonly referred to as BRAC 91. The 1990 Base Closure Act stipulated that the recommendations would be implemented unless Congress disapproved. Congress considered the actions but did not disapprove, and the recommendations are being implemented as required by the act. The 1990 Base Closure Act requires the closure of Fort Ord, California, and the relocation of the 7th Infantry Division (Light) (7th IDL) to Fort Lewis, Washington.

1.2 SCOPE

The 1990 Base Closure Act specifies that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) does not apply to actions of the President, the Commission, or the Department of Defense, except, "(i) during the process of property disposal, and (ii) during the process of relocating functions from a military installation being closed or realigned to another military installation after the receiving installation has been selected but before the functions are relocated."

The 1990 Base Closure Act further specifies that in applying the provisions of NEPA to the process, the Secretary of Defense and the secretaries of the military departments concerned shall not have to consider: "(i) the need for closing or realigning the military installation which has been recommended for closure or realignment by the Commission, (ii) the need for transferring functions to any military installation which has been selected as the receiving installation, or (iii) military installations alternative to those recommended or selected."

Thus, NEPA does not apply to the BRAC 91 deliberation and decision process nor to the closing action itself, but does apply to disposal and reuse of property and to impacts at installations receiving realignments. The Base Closure Act did not specify a time requirement for disposal of excess Fort Ord land.

Following the direction of the Conference Report for House Resolution 2100 (H.R. 2100), the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal years 1992 and 1993, the Army is proceeding with an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the disposal and reuse of excess property, which addresses the socioeconomic effects of relocating the Army from the Fort Ord community. This conference report does not affect the Army requirement to proceed with the realignment of the 7th IDL to Fort Lewis. The Army's environmental assessment evaluating impacts of receiving the 7th IDL at Fort Lewis, Washington, is available.

1.3 ACTIONS ANALYZED

The proposed action and alternatives described in Sections 2.0 and 3.0, respectively, include the disposal of excess property made available by the closure of Fort Ord, with the retention of a reserve center and establishment of the Presidio of Monterey (POM) annex; the socioeconomic impacts of relocating the active Army from the Fort Ord community; and identification and evaluation of reasonable uses of the property after disposal. The processes associated with disposal and reuse are shown in Figure 1-1.

1.4 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Preparation of the EIS is designed to involve the public in the federal decision making process. In preparing this EIS, comments from concerned individuals, agencies, and organizations are welcome at any time throughout the process, but formal opportunities to comment and participate have been established as outlined in the following sections. In addition, a public involvement plan has been established as an integral part of the EIS process to disseminate accurate and timely information to the community about the disposal and reuse process at Fort Ord, develop ongoing two-way communication with the community, encourage community involvement, and monitor and respond to community concerns. The EIS public involvement process is shown in Figure 1-2. Methods to involve the public in this EIS process include the following:

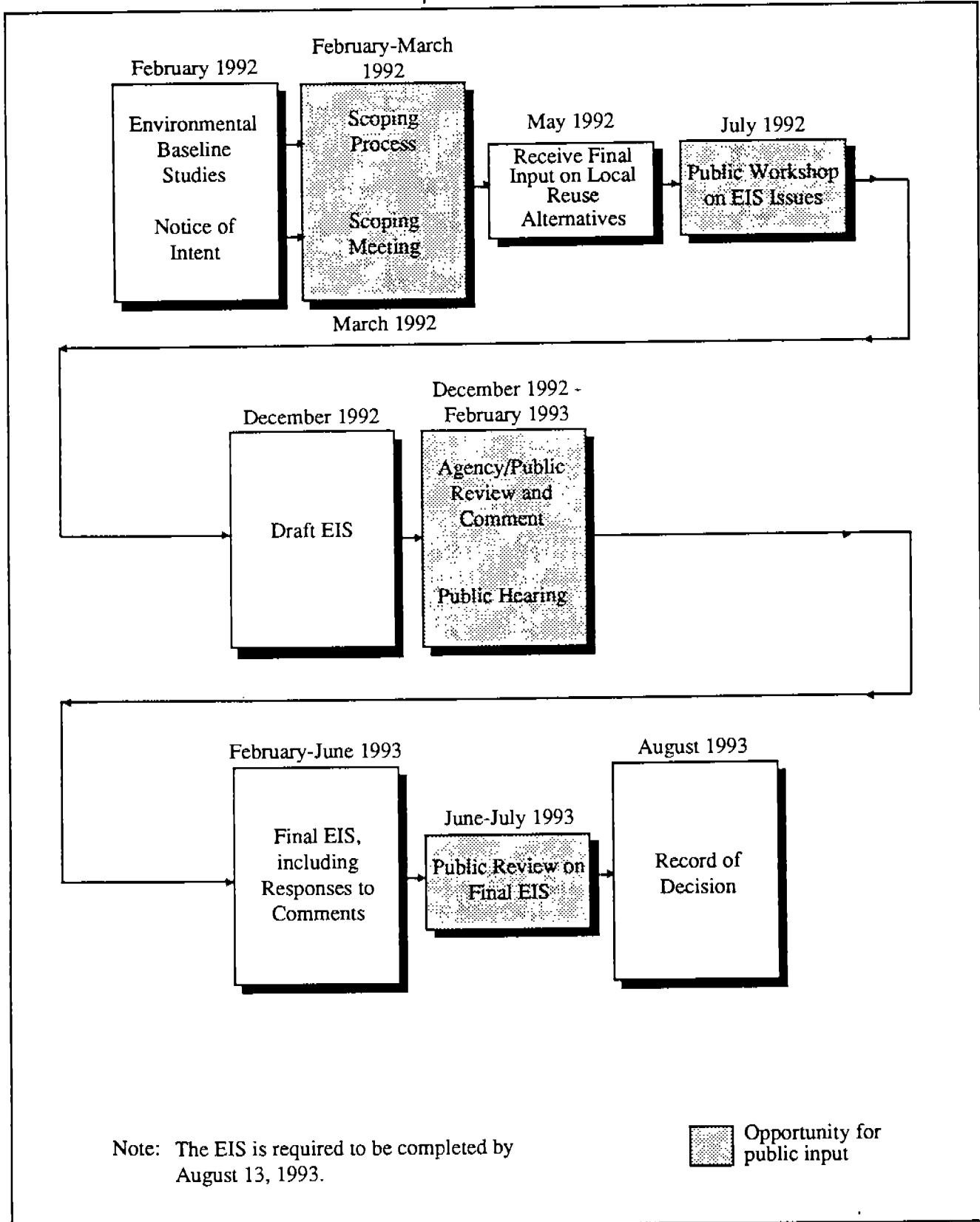
- Designate contact persons to respond to requests for EIS study documents.
- Establish and provide access to technical information in the public repository.
- Conduct periodic public meetings with community members to discuss ongoing activities and provide a forum for expression of concerns; this includes conducting several workshops for local elected officials, representatives of public agencies, public interest groups and associations, and the Fort Ord Task Force (described in Section 2.0, "Proposed Action") and additional workshops for the general public.
- Provide the required public comment period.
- Publish public notice of hearings; mail public announcements; and coordinate media coverage, press releases, and feature articles.
- Create and update a mailing list to disseminate information.
- Prepare and distribute progress reports to parties on the mailing list.

1.4.1 Notice of Intent

The public was notified of the Army's intent to prepare this EIS by publishing a notice of intent (Volume III, Appendix A) in the February 13, 1992 issue of the *Federal Register*. A public notice was published in two local newspapers; press releases were sent to 65 news media; and announcements were sent to public agencies, public interest groups, and individuals known or thought to have an interest in the

Figure 1-2

Environmental Impact Statement Public Involvement Process



disposal and reuse of Fort Ord (Volume III, Appendix B). At that time, local, state, and federal legislative bodies were contacted by mail to notify them of the planned EIS preparation (663 notices were mailed). The notices announced a planned scoping meeting in Monterey, California, and invited written scoping comments.

1.4.2 Scoping Process

The first step in the preparation of the EIS is to scope, or identify, the issues to be addressed in the analysis and documentation. At the beginning of the analysis, often little is known about the impacts and public and agency participation are solicited to assist in identifying the critical issues to be analyzed as early as possible.

A public scoping meeting was held on March 5, 1992, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Monterey, California, to receive public input on critical issues to be addressed in this EIS. The meeting was recorded by a court reporter, in the form of a public transcript, and on audio and video tape. Comment letters were subsequently received, which were accepted after the established response period had ended.

Approximately 78 individuals, including Army representatives, various media representatives, and members of the public, attended (Volume III, Appendix C). Twenty-two individuals registered to comment and 22 attendees spoke. The major concerns and questions raised at the scoping meeting centered on the following:

- socioeconomic (regional):
 - concerns about socioeconomic impacts and adequate documentation of impacts;
 - analysis of socioeconomic impacts on businesses, such as theaters, bowling alleys, and health clubs that provide recreational activities;
 - documentation of the supply of housing that will become available;
 - adequate documentation of impacts in economic base of the community;
 - concerns about impacts on schools; and
 - concerns about impacts on water supply and wastewater service;
- direct and indirect effects of changes to support the POM annex and reserve center:
 - concerns about the configuration of the POM annex and reserve center; analysis of full impacts of POM annex and reserve center;
 - concerns about impacts on water supply;
 - request for EIS to include maps of boundaries of communities, spheres of influence, water districts, and groundwater contamination sites;
 - discussion of use of nonpotable or reclaimed water for the golf course and landscaping; and
 - analysis of capacity of and impacts on the wastewater system;
- issues associated with disposal of real property:
 - concerns about the objectives and methodology of disposal;
 - concerns about disposal and protection of Stilwell Hall;
 - analysis and consideration of mitigation and protection of plant and wildlife species and sensitive habitat;
 - identification of cultural resources and impacts;
 - documentation of potential risks of hazardous sites;
 - statement of when remedial investigation/feasibility statement will be complete;
 - concerns about vandalism and lack of weekend patrols;

- analysis of loss of recreational facilities at installation; and
 - concerns about disposal of Army-owned utilities.
- issues associated with reuse alternatives:
 - impacts on federally protected plants and wildlife; disturbance to sensitive plants and wildlife;
 - comments of concern for and adequate documentation of protection of plants and wildlife;
 - discussion of impacts on vegetation from sheep grazing;
 - discussion of lead pollution of plants and wildlife in the dunes area;
 - assessment of erosion damage and rates;
 - degradation of water quality and changes in hydrology;
 - analysis of effects on seawater intrusion project;
 - consideration of reclamation and ponding;
 - discussion of what measures should be taken to protect groundwater from contamination;
 - changes in circulation patterns and traffic congestion on communities;
 - concerns about related effects on bus, rail, and air traffic;
 - general concerns about air quality impacts; evaluation of consistency with air quality management plan;
 - concerns about noise parameters;
 - documentation of potential impacts of soil and water contamination from hazardous waste;
 - concerns about safety and cleanup of contaminated areas; restoration of dunes and wildlands;
 - impacts on cultural resources;
 - consideration of federal, state, and local agency requirements;
 - consideration of impacts on all public services;
 - description of impacts on schools, especially effects on enrollment;
 - documentation of potential additional landfill capacity;
 - evaluation of sewage and storm drain outfall along coastal zone;
 - discussion of potential conversion to individual meters for installation houses;
 - concern about impacts, including outpatient and pharmacy services;
 - changes in population, housing, and employment;
 - concerns about impacts, assumptions, and methodology changes in population, housing, and employment;
 - documentation of changes in local jobs/housing balance (and any imbalance), assumptions, and methodology; and
 - clear analysis and documentation of the impacts on regional economy.

All agency and individual comments are contained in the *Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Report Disposal and Reuse of Fort Ord, California* (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District 1992f), available for review at the information repository located at Seaside Branch Library, 550 Harcourt Avenue, Seaside, California 93955, 408/899-2055.

The Secretary of Defense proposed closing of Fort Ord in January 1990. The Army held a scoping meeting in September 1990. This closure action was discontinued when the 1990 Base Closure Act established a new commission. This EIS considers comments received in the 1990 scoping meeting.

1.4.3 Public Workshops

On July 7, 1992, the Army conducted a public workshop at Oldemeyer Center in Seaside, California. The purpose of the workshop was to present the EIS timeframe, provide an overview of the environmental baseline studies that were prepared to provide baseline information for various resource categories and

identify environmental issues to be analyzed in the EIS, discuss disposal and real estate issues, and present the Army action and alternatives. The workshop was a participatory session with an information presentation followed by a breakout session in which the workshop attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions of the workshop participants.

The workshop was announced in the local newspaper; a press release was released to 65 media organizations; and 663 notices were mailed to agencies, organizations, and interested individuals. The workshop was recorded by video camera.

1.4.4 Coordination with Reuse Committees

The reuse development process is described in detail in Section 2.0, "Proposed Action".

From February 1992 to March 1993, 12 meetings were conducted by the Army with representatives of Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission; Monterey County; the Cities of Del Rey Oaks, Marina, Monterey, Sand City, and Seaside; the Fort Ord Task Force; and the Fort Ord Reuse Group.

The Army met with the City of Marina and its consultant and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on March 18, 1993, to discuss the city's proposal for transfer of Fritzsche Army Airfield to a general aviation airport.

These meetings were used to work cooperatively with the surrounding local agencies and the task force to develop a reasonable range of reuse alternatives for the Army to analyze in the EIS, as well as brief the local agencies and task force on the EIS status. The local agencies and task force reviewed and provided local input on the EIS.

The meetings provided an update on federal screening decisions, presented real estate leases and outgrants and discussed the effect on them because of the Army disposal process, and discussed vision plans or changes to existing vision plans of surrounding local jurisdictions and conflicts with existing vision plans of surrounding jurisdictions.

1.4.5 Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The public, along with concerned organizations and agencies, was invited to review and comment on the draft EIS. A notice of availability was published in the *Federal Register* on December 31, 1992. The public comment period (December 23, 1992-February 22, 1993) provided an opportunity for the public to review the issues addressed in the impact analysis, as well as offer appropriate comments on any aspect of the process. The Army had compiled a mailing list of those agencies, groups, and individuals interested in the proposed action. At the beginning of the comment period, 598 copies of the EIS had been distributed and a notice of the document's availability to another 112 entities, including news media. Some of these entities responded by requesting copies of the draft EIS. By the close of the review period, 710 copies of the EIS had been circulated.

1.4.6 Public Hearing

During the period of public review and comment of the draft EIS a public hearing was held on February 11, 1993, at the Monterey Conference Center in Monterey, California, to formally receive oral and written comments and recommendations. The hearing was announced in the local news media. The public hearing was attended by approximately 66 persons. Twenty-three persons spoke at the hearing. Their comments were recorded by a certified court reporter and video and audio tape. By the close of the review period, sixty four entities had submitted letters of comment. The hearing record was held open for 10 days following the hearing to receive written comments from individuals and organizations unable to attend.

1.4.7 Final Environmental Impact Statement

This final EIS, that incorporates and responds to comments received on the draft EIS, was furnished to all who commented on the draft document and is available to anyone requesting a copy. A notice of availability has been published in the *Federal Register*.

1.4.8 Contaminated Site Remediation

Remediation or cleanup of contaminated sites under the Army's Hazardous, Toxic, and Radiological Waste Program includes public involvement. This program is separate from, but often confused with, the EIS process because the actions usually occur simultaneously. Studies and reports for remediation actions are made available at the public information repository located at the Seaside Branch Library. Remedial actions under the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act include formal opportunities for public participation in reviewing documents and public hearings. This EIS analysis addresses the sites under investigation by describing the nature and extent of the contamination in an overall environmental context and referring to the remedial studies. (Refer to Sections 4.10 and 5.10, "Hazardous and Toxic Waste Site Remediation", and Volume II.) The public will be informed about the studies as they become available and will be invited to participate in public meetings for those actions.