

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY
COMBAT SURVIVAL TRAINING
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO**

Description: Interested parties are hereby notified that a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)/Draft Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) have been prepared for the Proposed Action described below.

Authority: This notice is being issued to all interested parties in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 United States Code 4321, et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508), the Air Force Environmental Impact Analysis Process (32 CFR Part 989), Executive Order (EO) 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*, and EO 11988, *Floodplain Management*.

Proposed Action: The United States (U.S.) Air Force (USAF) proposes to implement a Combat Survival Training (CST) program at the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA). Under the Proposed Action, the USAFA would construct and operate facilities to support water survival and emergency parachute training on the installation, including a tower and lateral drift apparatus, an emergency parachute training facility, and equipment storage facilities. The USAF is considering three alternatives: the Preferred Alternative; Alternative 2; and the No Action Alternative, which would not implement the Proposed Action but provides a comparative baseline for potential impacts as required under CEQ regulations.

The Draft EA evaluates the potential impacts on the environment from implementing the Proposed Action. The evaluation concludes there would be no significant impact, either individually or cumulatively, as a result of implementing the Proposed Action, which includes compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations, including consultation and permitting, and routine best management practices.

The Preferred Alternative may indirectly impact off-site wetlands and negligibly impact a 500-year floodplain. While the USAFA designed the Preferred Alternative to avoid floodplain impacts to the extent feasible, because the Preferred Alternative involves working within and adjacent to a lake, there is no practicable alternative to working near wetlands and floodplains.

Public Review: The Draft EA and Draft FONSI/FONPA will be available between December 13, 2023, and January 12, 2024, for a 30-day public comment period. The Draft EA, Draft FONSI/FONPA, and supporting documents were published digitally on the USAFA website at <https://www.usafa.af.mil>. Printed copies of the Draft EA and Draft FONSI/FONPA are also available at the Pikes Peak Library District – Library 21c located at 1175 Chapel Hills Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920 for public review.

Comments: The public may obtain information and submit comments on the Draft EA and Draft FONSI/FONPA during the review period via U.S. mail to Barry Schatz, Environmental Element Chief, 8120 Edgerton Drive, USAFA, CO 80840, or via email to 10CES.CENPP.Planning_Programming@us.af.mil. Comments must be received by January 12, 2024.