

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE BARRY M. GOLDWATER RANGE LAND WITHDRAWAL AND PROPOSED GILA BEND ADDITION LAND WITHDRAWAL

DRAFT LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

JANUARY 2021



LEAD AGENCIES:

U.S. Department
of the Air Force

U.S. Department of the
Navy, U.S. Marine Corps



COOPERATING AGENCIES:

U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land
Management

Fish and Wildlife
Service

Arizona Game
and Fish
Department



Executive Summary

Introduction

(Refer to draft LEIS Section 1.1)

The Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR), located in southwestern Arizona (Figure ES-1), has served as a military training range since it was first established to train United States (U.S.) pilots and other aircrew members during World War II. As the nation's fourth largest land-based range, and the largest at which tactical aviation training is the predominant mission, the BMGR remains indispensable to the ability of the U.S. Armed Forces to produce the combat-ready aircrews needed to defend the nation and its interests. The range is also vital for preparing other personnel and units that perform a wide diversity of missions relevant to the air-ground battlefield and is routinely used for operational testing activities (also referred to as "operational test" or "testing and evaluation").

The BMGR boundary encompasses approximately 1,743,428 acres, of which about 1,659,365 acres of federal public land are withdrawn from public use and reserved for military training and testing, approximately 1.5 acres are non-federally owned inholdings, and approximately 84,062 acres are Department of Defense (DoD)-acquired lands. Although the BMGR has been in operation since it was established in 1941, authorization for the range is not permanent and requires periodic extensions. Most recently, the Military Lands Withdrawal Act (MLWA) of 1999 (Public Law 106-65) extended authorization for the BMGR for 25 years. The MLWA of 1999 withdrew the federal public land that comprises more than 95 percent of the BMGR as one military range but reserved the eastern and western portions of the range for separate use by the Secretaries of the Air Force and Navy, respectively. The eastern and western portions of the range are designated as BMGR East and BMGR West (Figure ES-1).

The MLWA of 1999 provides that the lands withdrawn for the BMGR are reserved for:

- An armament and high-hazard testing area
- Training for aerial gunnery, rocketry, electronic warfare, and tactical maneuvering and air support
- Equipment and tactics development and testing
- Other defense related purposes

The U.S. Air Force (Air Force) is the administrator and primary user of BMGR East, and the U.S. Marine Corps (Marine Corps), a component of the Department of the Navy, is the administrator and primary user of BMGR West. BMGR East encompasses approximately 60 percent of the total range, and BMGR West includes the remaining 40 percent (Figure ES-1). BMGR East is administered by the Air Force, Air Education and Training Command, 56th Fighter Wing, which is also the host command at Luke Air Force Base, Glendale, Arizona. The 56th Fighter Wing Range Management Office manages and operates BMGR East. BMGR West is administered by Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, in Yuma, Arizona. The Marine Corps Air Station Yuma Range Management Department manages and operates BMGR West.

In accordance with the MLWA of 1999, the current land withdrawal and reservation of the BMGR will terminate on October 4, 2024. The MLWA also provides that the Secretaries of the Air Force and Navy shall notify Congress and the Secretary of the Interior, by no later than October 2021, concerning whether the Air Force or Department of the Navy will have a continuing military need for part or all of the BMGR after the current withdrawal terminates. The Secretaries of the Air Force and Navy have determined that both BMGR East and BMGR West will remain indispensable for developing and maintaining warfighting skills of Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy, U.S. Army (Army), National Guard, and allied nations' aviation forces. Secretaries of the Air Force and Navy provided notice of the continuing military need for the BMGR to Congress and the Secretary of the Interior in December 2017.

The process to keep the BMGR available for national defense purposes after October 2024 was continued through the submission of an Application for Withdrawal Extension by the Secretaries of the Air Force and Navy to the Secretary of the Interior in December 2018. A companion land withdrawal application for an addition to BMGR East of approximately 2,366 acres of public land was submitted by the Secretary of the Air Force to the Secretary of the Interior in April 2019.

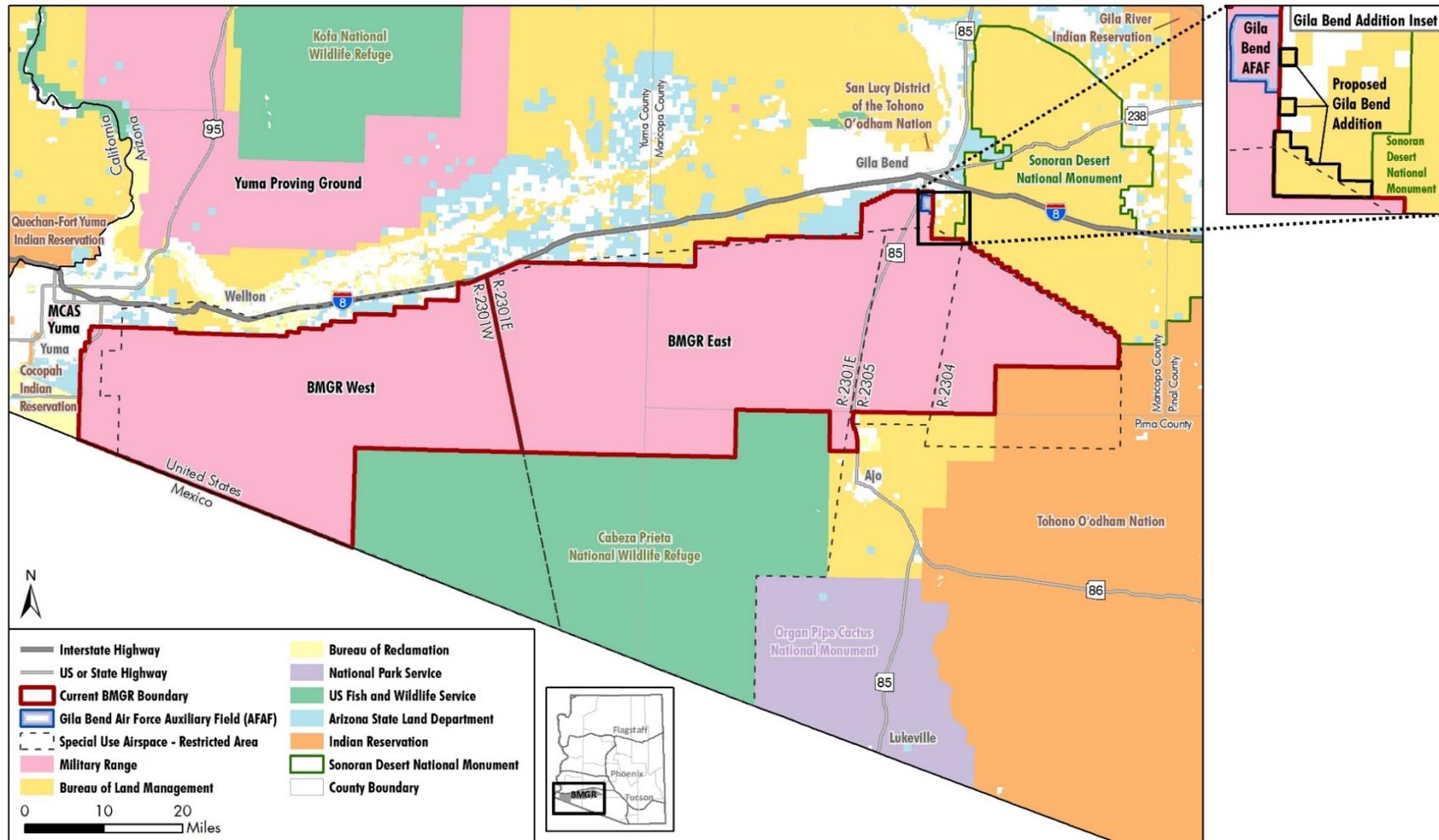
Decisions to Be Made

Congress will be asked to make two decisions, which are addressed as proposed actions in this Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (LEIS), regarding the continuing military need for the BMGR after the expiration of the current land withdrawal and reservation. Congress will be asked to:

- Extend the use of the BMGR for the same military training and testing purposes for which it is currently withdrawn and reserved
- Expand BMGR East through the addition of about 2,366 acres of public land adjacent to Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Airfield (AFAF) (hereafter, Gila Bend Addition), if military use of the BMGR is extended

Congress may authorize continued use of the BMGR for tactical air combat training and other defense-related purposes by extending the existing land withdrawal and reservation for either a defined or indefinite period of time. Congress could also keep the BMGR available for national defense purposes by transferring administrative jurisdiction for the public land in the range from the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretaries of the Air Force and Navy. This action would keep the BMGR in service, without either a predetermined termination date or requirement for future congressional action, until such time that the military need for the range ends.

Figure ES-1. BMGR Vicinity



A decision to allow the current withdrawal and reservation to expire would require military use of the BMGR land surface to cease after October 4, 2024. Although the airspace overlying the BMGR could continue to be used for some military aviation training and test activities, the loss of the land withdrawal and reservation would severely impact the abilities of the Air Force and Marine Corps to support the training necessary to prepare U.S. Armed Forces to fight effectively and decisively in air-ground warfare. The Air Force, Department of the Navy, and Marine Corps would be responsible for decommissioning range infrastructure, including Gila Bend AFAF, and decontaminating and cleaning up the expired BMGR in accordance with applicable law. Ultimately, the expired rangelands would likely be returned to Department of the Interior and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administration to plan and manage follow-on civil land use consistent with applicable law, environmental conditions, and public safety.

A congressional decision to approve the Gila Bend Addition to BMGR East would make this area available to support military operations at the Gila Bend AFAF and in other contiguous portions of BMGR East. The additional withdrawal would also have the effect of eliminating land use encroachment that may conflict with military uses. If Congress declines to authorize the Gila Bend Addition, the subject public lands would remain under Department of the Interior jurisdiction and continue to be managed by BLM for non-military purposes.

Process for Reauthorizing the BMGR

Reauthorizing the BMGR for military use and expanding BMGR East to include the Gila Bend Addition involves interconnected processes that are guided by the MLWA of 1999, Defense Withdrawal Act of 1958, Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 as implemented in accordance with 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Subpart 2310, and National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

The Air Force and Marine Corps prepared this LEIS as co-lead agencies to address the potential environmental impacts of the proposed renewal of the land withdrawal for the BMGR. The final LEIS, which will address comments received on the draft, will be forwarded to Congress as part of the case file that will be submitted for congressional action on the proposed extension of the BMGR withdrawal and reservation and the addition to BMGR East.

Purpose of and Need for the BMGR

(Refer to draft LEIS Section 1.2)

The primary purpose of securing the BMGR for continuing national defense use after October 2024 is to maintain the readiness of the nation's air forces by retaining one of its premier ranges for training tactical air combat aircrews and other personnel to fight, survive, and win in the air-ground battlespace. Combat flying and other essential aircrew skills can be effectively developed and maintained only through ongoing training programs that are realistic and relevant to the tactical missions that aircrews are expected to perform. Likewise, continuous operational aviation testing is necessary to maintain and advance the capabilities of the tools available to aviators in combat. U.S. warfighting doctrine also

recognizes that success in the air-ground battlespace can only be achieved through an integrated and well-coordinated partnership between air and ground forces.

The BMGR, as one of the most capable and productive tactical aviation ranges available to U.S. Armed Forces, is needed to continue to provide essential support to U.S. Armed Forces both now and into the foreseeable future. The nation's investments in new types of tactical aircraft and the development of infrastructure to support tactical aviation training and other military purposes indicate that there is no foreseeable end to the continuing military need for the BMGR. The exceptional combination of assets that make the BMGR so valuable in supporting the contemporary and future training requirements of aircrews and associated ground-based combatants include:

- Proximity to military aviation assets and regional Special Use Airspace
- Expansive restricted land and overlying Special Use Airspace
- Year-round flying weather
- Electronic training instrumentation
- Varied terrain

Purpose of and Need for the Gila Bend Addition to BMGR East

(Refer to draft LEIS Section 1.3)

The Gila Bend Addition would serve three distinct purposes to BMGR East. First, the quarter-section adjacent to Gila Bend AFAF (southwest quarter of Section 19) would enhance the security and safety of flight operations at Gila Bend AFAF. Second, the northwest quarter of Section 31 is needed because a portion is within Accident Potential Zone-1 for Runway 17/35 at Gila Bend AFAF. Third, the remaining parcels of the Gila Bend Addition underlie the R-2305 restricted area and would allow the Air Force to control land use and access so that surface activities in these parcels remain compatible with training operations in the overlying airspace (Figure ES-2).

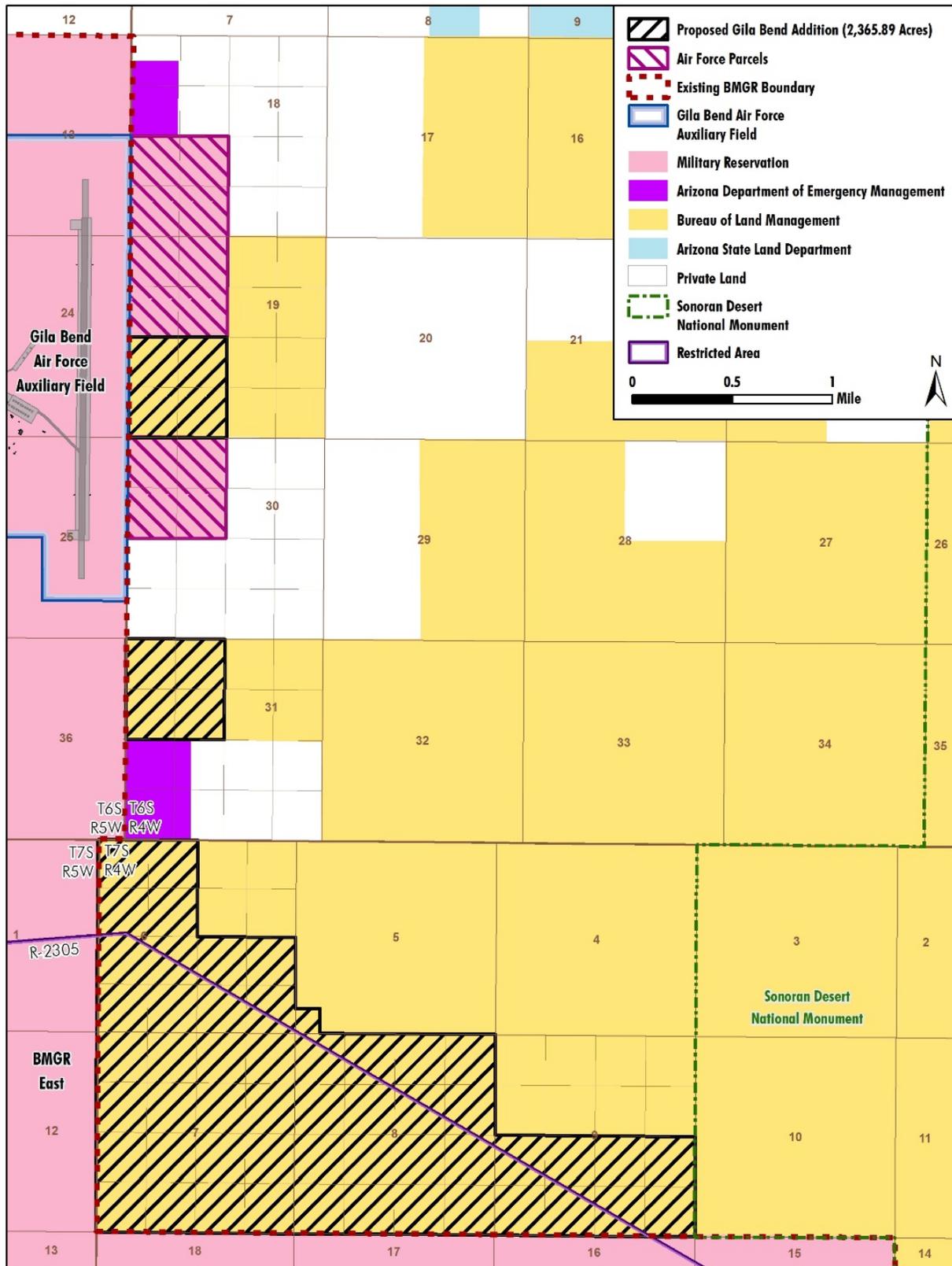
Public Scoping Process and Comments

(Refer to draft LEIS Chapter 6)

Preparation of an LEIS need not have a scoping process, per 40 CFR Section 1506.8(b)(1), but the Air Force and Marine Corps elected to provide for a public scoping period and announced this in the March 18, 2020, Federal Register Notice of Intent (NOI). While the planned public scoping meetings were cancelled because of the March 13, 2020 Presidential Proclamation declaring a national crisis due to COVID-19, a virtual version was provided by placing the scoping materials on the project website. Using an amended NOI and other notices, the public was encouraged to review project materials. The 77-day comment period extended through June 3, 2020.

During the scoping period, the Air Force and Marine Corps supported BLM in hosting two virtual public meetings on the land withdrawal application. Comments submitted on the proposed action to extend the land withdrawal and to expand the land withdrawal by about 2,366 acres as well as comments submitted to BLM on the withdrawal applications and land segregation process were considered in this LEIS.

Figure ES-2. Proposed Gila Bend Addition



Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives

(Refer to draft LEIS Chapter 2)

The proposed actions addressed in this LEIS include reauthorizing the BMGR for continued military use after the current land withdrawal and reservation expires in October 2024 and expanding BMGR East to include the Gila Bend Addition. Two sets of four alternatives are considered for implementing these proposed actions. The four alternatives in one set would each reauthorize the existing BMGR without changes to its land area or boundary. The four alternatives in the second set would each reauthorize the existing land area of the range and would also extend the boundary of BMGR East to incorporate the Gila Bend Addition. The four alternatives within each of the two sets differ from each other in terms of the duration for which the BMGR land withdrawal and reservation would be extended (25 years, 50 years, or indefinitely) or as a result of transferring administrative jurisdiction for BMGR East and BMGR West from the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretaries of the Air Force and Navy, respectively.

Transferring administrative jurisdiction would make the BMGR a permanent DoD facility equivalent to the status of military bases. Like all permanent DoD facilities and installations, the BMGR would be retained until it is no longer needed for military purposes, at which time the range would be closed and transferred back to the Department of Interior. Transferring administrative jurisdiction would provide sustained, operational support for aviation and training, allow access to additional budgeting and DoD administrative processes, provide full accountability for the sustainable management of the land, and eliminate the expensive and time-consuming process of extending the reservation in the future.

Eliminating the need to process land withdrawal extensions for the BMGR would not reduce other ongoing and frequent processes for reassessing the continuing military need for the range including Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) updates, periodic Public Reports that document military changes and proposed management actions, and NEPA documents when new actions are proposed. Existing natural and cultural resource protection, conservation, and management measures would continue to apply. Likewise, opportunities for tribal, intergovernmental, and public review and comment on either the continuing need for the range or the quality of stewardship afforded to its resources would remain, including the Intergovernmental Executive Council that offers a collaborative forum for natural and cultural resource management concerns.

The alternatives analyzed in this LEIS include:

- Alternative 1: Extend the existing land withdrawal and reservation of the BMGR for 25 years (until 2049) with no boundary changes. The Secretary of the Air Force and the Secretary of the Navy would continue to manage the withdrawn public lands in BMGR East and BMGR West and consult the Secretary of the Interior before using the BMGR for non-reserved purposes.
- Alternative 1A: Implement Alternative 1, except the withdrawal would be for 50 years.
- Alternative 1B: Implement Alternative 1, except the withdrawal would be for an indefinite period until the BMGR is no longer needed by the Air Force and the Department of the Navy.

- Alternative 1C: Permanently transfer administrative jurisdiction of the lands currently comprising BMGR East and BMGR West from the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretary of the Air Force and the Secretary of the Navy, respectively.
- Alternative 2: Extend the existing land withdrawal and reservation of the BMGR for 25 years, but the BMGR East boundary would be extended to include the Gila Bend Addition. Management of the withdrawn public lands in the BMGR would continue as described for Alternative 1.
- Alternative 2A: Implement Alternative 2, except the withdrawal would be for 50 years.
- Alternative 2B: Implement Alternative 2 except the withdrawal would be for an indefinite period until the BMGR is no longer needed by the Air Force and Department of the Navy.
- Alternative 2C: Permanently transfer administrative jurisdiction of the public lands comprising BMGR East and the Gila Bend Addition from the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretary of the Air Force and BMGR West to the Secretary of the Navy.

This LEIS also considers the No Action Alternative, which would allow the current land withdrawal to terminate in October 2024, as provided by the MLWA of 1999. The No Action Alternative would be implemented if Congress decides the BMGR is no longer needed and chooses to neither extend the land withdrawal and reservation for the range nor transfer administrative jurisdiction for the public lands in the range from the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretaries of the Air Force and Navy. As previously stated, military use of the BMGR land surface would cease upon the expiration of the current withdrawal and reservation in October 2024, although military aviation training and test activities in the restricted airspace over the BMGR and Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge (CPNWR)/Cabeza Prieta Wilderness (CPW) could continue. The Gila Bend Addition would not be needed.

Existing Conditions

(Refer to Chapter 3)

The existing environment of the BMGR was inventoried so that the effects of the alternatives and scenarios could be assessed for their effect on the environment. Data collection included military airspace and range operations, civil air transportation, non-military and perimeter land use, utilities, ground transportation, traffic and traffic circulation, public access and recreation, earth resources, water resources, air quality, climate change, biological resources, cultural resources, noise, visual resources, hazardous materials and waste, public health and safety, socioeconomics, and environmental justice. This information describes the existing condition of these resources on the BMGR and Gila Bend Addition and provides a basis of comparison for determining and describing potential impacts.

Environmental Impacts

(Refer to Chapter 4)

Section 4 of the LEIS describes the potential environmental consequences for the considered alternatives. Table ES-1, Summary of Impacts, provides a brief description of the potential impacts associated with each alternative. Impacts that would occur under Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C to the

renewal of the BMGR land withdrawal equally apply as a result of Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C, respectively. Consequently, the Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B and 2C column in Table ES-1 only reflects the impacts associated with the withdrawal of the Gila Bend Addition.

Table ES-1. Summary of Impacts

Resource	Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C	Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C	No Action
Military Range and Airspace Operations	No changes in the use of the military land and airspace (major, beneficial, direct effect).	The Gila Bend Addition would allow full use of existing restricted airspace and prevent encroachment on Gila Bend AFAP (major, beneficial, direct impact).	All ground-based military operations would cease (major, adverse, direct impact). Military use of the airspace that does not require use of the range surface could continue (no impact). Testing/training would be relocated affecting other locations and increasing costs for travel (major indirect adverse impact).
Civil Air Transportation	No changes to regional airspace, air traffic control or flight procedures, or civil aviation access (no impact).	Same effects as Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C (no impact).	No changes to regional airspace, air traffic control or flight procedures, or civil aviation access (no impact). Changes in the use of the BMGR Special Use Airspace (unknown effect).

Resource	Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C	Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C	No Action
<p>Non-Military and Perimeter Land Use</p>	<p>No changes to existing non-military land uses within the BMGR. Existing INRMP processes would continue (no impact).</p> <p>Alternative 1C, the BLM would be relieved of its administrative obligations at the BMGR. The Department of the Interior would remain involved in the development and updates to the BMGR INRMP and in regional collaborative efforts including the BMGR Executive Council and Intergovernmental Executive Council (no impact).</p>	<p>Land management transfer to Air Force (no impact).</p> <p>Alternative 2C, administrative jurisdiction would transfer to the Air Force. Managed through the INRMP and Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) (no impact).</p> <p>Grazing could continue until permit expiration. No other appropriative land uses allowed (negligible, adverse, direct effect).</p>	<p>Management by BLM in accordance with FLPMA and a resource management plan (no impact).</p>
<p>Utilities</p>	<p>No direct or indirect impact to existing utilities would occur.</p> <p>DoD would not have the authority to pursue energy development under Alternatives 1, 1A, and 1B but could under Alternative 1C (no impact).</p> <p>Utilities cannot site facilities on BMGR which could result in additional costs (minor, adverse, indirect effect).</p>	<p>No utilities occur on the Gila Bend Addition (no impact).</p> <p>All other impacts same as Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C.</p>	<p>Utility projects allowable at BLM discretion (nature and intensity of impact cannot be determined at this time).</p>

Resource	Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C	Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C	No Action
<p>Ground Transportation, Traffic, and Traffic Circulation</p>	<p>There would be no changes to road use, traffic patterns, or public travel restrictions (no impact). Future development of public or private transportation systems precluded. Changes in technology could change in the hazard areas/use of publicly accessible roads (minor, adverse, direct impact).</p>	<p>The 5.72 miles of unpaved roads within the Gila Bend Addition would be closed to public travel except for grazing management (negligible, adverse, direct impact).</p>	<p>Current traffic patterns/public travel restrictions on former BMGR during decontamination (no impact). Future changes would be determined through the BLM planning process (nature and intensity of the impact cannot be determined at this time).</p>
<p>Public Access and Recreation</p>	<p>Existing public access and recreation would continue with a valid permit (no impact). Management of public access and recreational opportunities in accordance with the INRMP (no impact).</p>	<p>Recreational use of the Gila Bend Addition, if any, is minimal but would no longer be permitted (negligible, adverse, direct impact). Little to no change in demand because of abundant, higher quality recreational opportunities nearby (negligible, adverse, indirect impact).</p>	<p>Once decommissioned, access to new recreational areas may be available after all necessary decontamination (beneficial direct impact).</p>
<p>Earth Resources</p>	<p>Less than 9 percent of BMGR subject to surface disturbance and most ground disturbance resulting in erosion is low intensity (minor, adverse indirect impact). Approximately 11 percent of the range was considered disturbed in the 1999 LEIS. The current 9 percent disturbance is due to the reduction in the Explosive Ordnance Disposal clearance areas and closure of roads. While mining is precluded from the BMGR, no rare earth elements with high potential to occur at the BMGR (negligible, adverse, direct impact).</p>	<p>Limited driving on unpaved roads could contribute to erosion on the Gila Bend Addition (negligible, adverse, indirect impact). No mineral extraction would be allowed (negligible, adverse, direct impact).</p>	<p>Substantial ground disturbance associated with decommissioning (minor to major, adverse direct impact). Other ground-disturbing uses could be permitted including mineral extraction (nature and intensity of these future impacts cannot be determined at this time).</p>

Resource	Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C	Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C	No Action
<p>Water Resources</p>	<p>Ongoing activities contributing to erosion/sedimentation would continue to affect surface water quality (minor, adverse, indirect effect).</p> <p>Potential for groundwater contamination would be unchanged (negligible, adverse, direct impact).</p> <p>Water rights for wildlife management would continue (no impact).</p>	<p>No new activities/infrastructure that would affect water quantity, groundwater, or water rights (no impact).</p> <p>Use of dirt roads could affect surface water quality due to increased sedimentation (negligible, adverse, indirect impact).</p> <p>No new water rights would be sought (no impact).</p>	<p>Military water use would reduce and eventually cease (minor, beneficial, direct impact).</p> <p>Ground disturbance from decommissioning BMGR could result in decreased surface water quality due to sedimentation (major, adverse, indirect impact).</p> <p>Ground-disturbing activities currently precluded may be permitted (nature and intensity of these future impacts cannot be determined at this time).</p> <p>Water rights for wildlife management would continue (no impact).</p>
<p>Air Quality</p>	<p>Current operations to remain the same, including emissions and dust from ongoing operations; no changes in criteria pollutant, hazardous air pollutant, or greenhouse gas emissions would occur (ongoing minor, adverse, direct impact).</p>	<p>No air quality impact associated with the withdrawal of the Gila Bend Addition (no impact).</p>	<p>Military-generated emissions would be reduced. Necessary training relocated to other facilities increasing travel or relocations. Emissions at BMGR would be displaced rather than eliminated. Nature and intensity of these future impacts cannot be determined at this time.</p> <p>New activities could affect air quality in the future (context and intensity of these impacts is also unknown at this time).</p>

Resource	Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C	Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C	No Action
Climate Change	Climate change could exacerbate conditions that affect military training and individual resources (e.g., wildfire risk, extreme temperatures, etc.) (minor, adverse, indirect impact).	While climate change would continue to increase stress on wildlife and vegetation and make soils more vulnerable to erosion within the Gila Bend Addition, such effects would not be the result of withdrawing the land. Because the Air Force proposes no development or use of the land, climate change would have no effect on the proposed action to withdraw it.	Reduction of greenhouse gas emission due to military activities. Determining future use and impacts on or contribution to climate change is speculative (context and intensity of these impacts is also unknown at this time).

Resource	Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C	Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C	No Action
<p>Biological Resources</p>	<p>Military surface use moderately or completely disturbs 33,000 acres of vegetation. Major to complete loss of vegetation is limited to less than 2 percent of the range (minor to major, adverse, direct and indirect impact).</p> <p>Military activities result in mortality, injury, or disturbance to wildlife and their habitat (minor, adverse, direct impact); bird strikes near auxiliary fields/airports (negligible, adverse, direct impact).</p> <p>Military activities disturb, startle, and may injure/kill Sonoran pronghorn; conservation measures developed with USFWS/recovery team reduce the potential for affecting this species (minor, adverse, direct impact).</p> <p>No activity where acuña cactus occurs (no direct impact); fires could affect habitat (negligible, adverse, indirect impact).</p> <p>Limited to no activities in Peirson’s milk-vetch habitat (no impact to negligible adverse direct impact).</p> <p>Training and noise affect flat-tailed horned lizard; impacts managed through conservation agreement (minor adverse direct impact).</p> <p>Military activities can harm/kill Sonoran desert tortoise by disturbing burrows, startling, and direct contact; conservation measures minimize effect (minor, adverse, direct, impact).</p>	<p>No military activity on the Gila Bend Addition; withdrawal would preclude other ground-disturbing activities; grazing would be phased out (negligible, beneficial, indirect impact to vegetation).</p> <p>Cessation of grazing and reduced human activity would benefit the Sonoran pronghorn (negligible, beneficial, indirect impact).</p> <p>Peirson’s milk-vetch, acuña cactus, flat-tailed horned lizard, and Sonoran desert tortoise habitat does not occur (no impact).</p>	<p>Military activities would cease as would military-supported conservation measures supporting wildlife and special-status species which could affect funding to continue these measures. AZGFD maintenance of wildlife resources, including water catchments, hunting programs, and surveying for species would continue (moderate, adverse, direct impact).</p> <p>Decommissioning activities may adversely affect vegetation, wildlife, habitat, and special status species (context and intensity of these impacts is unknown at this time).</p> <p>Potential future use, assuming multiple-use management under the public land laws, would likely have a greater adverse effect on biological resources than military use by impacting land presently in a native desert condition.</p>

Resource	Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C	Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C	No Action
Cultural Resources	<p>No change in treatment of/coordination regarding cultural resources. Disturbance to cultural resources could occur (moderate, adverse, direct impact).</p> <p>Recreational use could result in activities such as vandalism, looting, and parking or camping on sites. Based on a survey of roads in Area B and Bender Springs, approximately 50 percent of cultural sites have been adversely affected by recreational activities (moderate, adverse, indirect impact).</p>	<p>No military operations aside from use of dirt roads would occur; restricted public access limits disruption of resources (minor to moderate beneficial, direct impact).</p> <p>Trampling of intact resources due to grazing could occur (negligible to low, adverse direct impact).</p>	<p>Extent of decontamination and future uses under BLM management are unknown (effect on cultural resources cannot be determined at this time).</p>
Noise	<p>No changes to the existing operational noise footprint; ongoing noise would continue to extend outside the range affecting a residential area (moderate, adverse, direct impact)</p> <p>Use of Military Training Routes would continue (minor, adverse, indirect impact).</p>	<p>No expansion of existing noise footprint (no impact).</p> <p>Withdrawal would inhibit encroachment of incompatible land uses (minor, beneficial, indirect impact).</p>	<p>Aviation training would be reduced; use of Military Training Routes could continue. The noise footprint would be reduced (minor to moderate, beneficial, direct and indirect impact).</p>
Visual Resources	<p>No change in the visual character of BMGR (ongoing minor, adverse, direct impact).</p> <p>Preservation of large tracts of native Sonoran Desert would continue (moderate, beneficial, direct impact).</p>	<p>No change to the landscape of the Gila Bend Addition; withdrawal would preclude other uses that could alter the landscape (minor to moderate, beneficial, direct impact).</p>	<p>Infrastructure would be removed but decommissioning could introduce new roads/disturbance; full rehabilitation to a natural landscape unlikely (minor, beneficial, direct impact).</p> <p>Future permissible activities could affect visual resources (nature and intensity of the impact cannot be determined at this time).</p>

Resource	Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C	Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C	No Action
<p>Hazardous Materials and Waste</p>	<p>Ongoing hazardous waste/material generation, storage, and management would continue, along with the managing programs and practices for safe use, storage, transport, and disposal (no impact based on ongoing practices; minor adverse impact from past or potential accidental releases until fully mitigated).</p> <p>MC releases do not extend off the BMGR; future releases unlikely (ongoing negligible, adverse direct effect).</p>	<p>No hazardous materials or hazardous waste sites present on the Gila Bend Addition; no military use, generation, or storage would occur (no impact).</p>	<p>Hazardous material storage and waste removed during decommissioning (minor, beneficial, direct impact).</p> <p>Future uses permitted could use/generate hazardous materials/waste (nature and intensity of the impact cannot be determined at this time).</p>
<p>Public Health and Safety</p>	<p>Ongoing training and testing and existing environmental hazards that may pose a risk to public health and safety would continue; risks are minor unless the public or border crossers access unauthorized use areas (ongoing minor, adverse direct and indirect impact).</p>	<p>The Gila Bend Addition would enhance the safety of flight operations (moderate, beneficial direct effect).</p>	<p>Military hazards would be reduced (major, beneficial, direct effect), but the extent and effectiveness of decontamination is unknown resulting in an unknown degree of risk. Non-military hazards would continue to exist (ongoing minor, adverse, indirect impact).</p>
<p>Socioeconomics</p>	<p>Growth and urbanization would lead to more diversified regional economy reducing relative BMGR contribution over time. The ongoing employment, economic activity, and services associated with BMGR would continue (major, beneficial, direct and indirect impact).</p>	<p>Gila Bend Addition would not affect the socioeconomics of the area (no impact).</p>	<p>Elimination of the BMGR would affect employment, economic activity, and services in perimeter communities and communities with military installations that regularly use the BMGR (major, adverse, direct and indirect impact).</p>

Resource	Alternatives 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C	Alternatives 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C	No Action
Environmental Justice	<p>Military operations at the Gila Bend AFAF would continue to generate noise levels that affect up to 15 residences in an area with a disproportionate percentage of minority populations. While this is a moderate effect on the residences affected, the overall environmental justice impact is minor because less than 1 percent of the residences in the minority community are affected (minor, adverse, indirect impact).</p>	<p>Gila Bend Addition would not affect the minority population or noise generation (no impact).</p>	<p>Military noise footprint would be greatly diminished and would no longer extend to the minority residential area percentage (minor, beneficial, direct impact). Future uses and associated potential noise are unknown (nature and intensity of the impact cannot be determined at this time).</p>