



B

Agency Consultation



Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act Consultation

The Department of the Air Force (DAF) consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for the Proposed Action. **Section 3.4** contains further information regarding the outcome of the consultation with USFWS. A copy of the consultation letter is on the following pages. USFWS is not required to concur or provide comments on a no effect determination. On August 16, 2023, USFWS informed DAF they have no comments on this determination.

Consultation letter sent to USFWS (June 2023)



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
47TH FLYING TRAINING WING
LAUGHLIN AIR FORCE BASE TEXAS**

6 June 2023

Laura M. Frerich, DAF
Environmental Chief, 47th Civil Engineer Squadron
47 CES/CEIE
251 Fourth Street
Laughlin AFB, TX 78843-5126

Ms. Karen Myers
ES Project Lead
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1505 Ferguson Lake
Austin, TX 78754

Dear Ms. Myers:

The United States Department of the Air Force (DAF) is proposing to recapitalize its flight training program at Laughlin Air Force Base (AFB), Texas, with newer and more capable T-7A "Red Hawk" aircraft. Recapitalization is the phased acquisition of the new generation T-7A aircraft and construction and upgrade of specific facilities to support the training, operation, and maintenance of the T-7A aircraft. To consider various environmental concerns, DAF is engaging early with the appropriate resource and regulatory agencies as it formulates the undertaking. DAF is also preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act to evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with T-7A recapitalization at Laughlin AFB. Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 USC 1531–1544), DAF has determined that T-7A recapitalization at Laughlin AFB *will have no effect on* the 11 federally listed, proposed, or candidate species with potential to occur on Laughlin AFB (**Attachment 1**). This letter replaces the consultation letter we emailed to your office on May 9, 2023 and reflects the requested revisions and feedback received during our conference call with Ms. Christina Williams held on May 15, 2023.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would entail the phased introduction of T-7A aircraft and phased reduction of the T-38C aircraft currently operating from Laughlin AFB, new intensities of flight operations at Laughlin AFB, and changes to the number of personnel assigned to Laughlin AFB. Additionally, construction for six military construction (MILCON) projects and seven facilities sustainment, restoration, and modernization (FSRM) projects would occur at Laughlin AFB to provide modern facilities and infrastructure to support the T-7A aircraft's maintenance, training, and operational requirements. The MILCON and FSRM projects include new building construction and renovation of existing facilities on Laughlin AFB. **Attachment 2, Figures 1 and 2** shows the locations of the MILCON and FSRM project areas.

All terrestrial aspects of the Proposed Action would occur in or near previously disturbed or highly developed areas of Laughlin AFB. Most vegetative cover in the areas of proposed construction consists of regularly maintained nonnative grass species including bermudagrass (*Cynodon dactylon*), St. Augustine (*Stenotaphrum secundatum*), Lehmann lovegrass (*Eragrostis lehmanniana*), and King Ranch bluestem (*Bothriochloa ischaemum*). No potential wetlands are within the MILCON and FSRM project locations. The nearest potential wetland to a MILCON or FSRM project is approximately 250 feet distance.

After departing from Laughlin AFB, T-7A flight operations would occur within established Special Use Airspace (SUA) currently used for T-38C operations, and no changes to established SUA configurations (i.e., size, shape, or location) would occur. Current aircraft operations within this SUA do not effect any listed species; therefore, the proposed operations with the T-7A also would not effect any listed species. This determination is supported by bird/wildlife aircraft strike hazard (BASH) data and wildlife surveys that have taken place on Laughlin AFB between 1993 and 2022. Additionally, noise modeling performed as part of the EIS found that T-7A aircraft noise in the SUA would not exceed 65 decibels at any location on the ground due to a combination of infrequent and high-altitude (i.e., greater than 500 feet aboveground level) operations. Therefore, no effect on any species with potential to occur in the SUA would occur. **Attachment 2, Figure 3** shows the SUA proposed for T-7A flight operations.

Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species and Critical Habitat

The Laughlin AFB Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) System report for Laughlin AFB were reviewed to determine if any federally listed, proposed, or candidate species or their habitats could potentially occur in the vicinity of the Proposed Action (see **Attachment 3** for the IPaC report). The INRMP and IPaC reports indicated that seven federally listed species (i.e., Golden-cheeked Warbler [*Setophaga chrysoparia*], Piping Plover [*Charadrius melodus*], Red Knot [*Calidris canutus rufa*], Devils River minnow [*Dionda diaboli*], Mexican blindcat [*Prietella phreatophila*], Texas hornshell [*Popenaias popeii*], and Tobusch fishhook cactus [*Sclerocactus brevihamatus* spp. *Tobuschii*]); one proposed endangered species (i.e., the tricolored bat [*Perimyotis subflavus*]); one species with an experimental population (non-essential) (i.e., Rio Grande silvery minnow [*Hybognathus amarus*]); one species that is petitioned to be listed as threatened or endangered (i.e., Tamaulipan spot-tailed earless lizard [*Holbrookia subcaudalis*]); and one candidate species (i.e., monarch butterfly [*Danaus plexippus*]) that could be listed within the timeframe of the Proposed Action have the potential to occur on Laughlin AFB (**Attachment 1**). According to the INRMP, two of these species—the tricolored bat and the Tamaulipan spot-tailed earless lizard—have been documented during routine rare species surveys. During herpetofaunal surveys conducted between 2015 and 2021, 103 Tamaulipan spot-tailed earless lizard observations were recorded within Laughlin AFB with observances of this species occurring every year the surveys were conducted. During acoustic bat monitoring surveys from April 18 to July 30, 2017, the tricolored bat was detected each night of surveys at Laughlin AFB. No other listed species or critical habitats have been recorded at the installation.

These eleven species have the potential to occur on Laughlin AFB and could potentially be impacted by the proposed activities at the installation, such as the MILCON and FSRM

projects; landings, takeoffs, and touch-and-goes at the Laughlin AFB airfield; and increased noise levels on and near the installation. While the Piping Plover and Red Knot were identified in the IPaC report as having the potential to occur within Laughlin AFB, these species are only considered for wind energy projects and, therefore, are omitted from further consideration in this letter. The remaining nine species are evaluated as follows:

- The Golden-cheeked Warbler prefers Ashe juniper and oak woodlands and edges of cedar brakes. No suitable habitat for the Golden-cheeked Warbler occurs at the MILCON and FSRM project areas or at the Laughlin AFB airfield. Additionally, no observations of Golden-cheeked Warblers at Laughlin AFB have occurred during annual bird monitoring between 1993 and 2022. The nearest observations recorded in the eBird database have been in Brackettville, Texas, which is approximately 20 miles from Laughlin AFB. Therefore, it is unlikely this species would be on Laughlin AFB and be affected by construction, aircraft noise, or aircraft operations.
- The tricolored bat prefers live and dead leaf clusters of live or recently dead deciduous hardwood trees. Tricolored bats have been observed roosting during the summer among pine needles, eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), and within artificial roosts such as barns; beneath porch roofs, bridges, and concrete bunkers; and rarely within caves. While this species has been documented on Laughlin AFB during acoustic monitoring surveys, BASH data does not indicate the bat occupies any refugia on the base, and no impacts to suitable trees and other habitats are proposed to occur due to the Proposed Action. Additionally, there would be no increase in nighttime flights when this species is mobile and, therefore, would not expect to result in an increase in BASH incidents for the tricolored bat.
- The monarch butterfly is found in fields, roadside areas, open areas, wet areas, and urban gardens, and milkweed and flowering plants are needed for monarch habitat. Milkweed plants are an obligate for the monarch butterfly species life cycle, and the Zizotes milkweed (*Asclepias oenotheroides*) has been observed near the airfield. Suitable habitat is not present at the MILCON and FSRM project areas as these areas are either actively maintained or xeriscaped. No impacts to native vegetation are proposed to occur near the airfield and vegetation maintenance techniques, timing, and duration are not proposed to be changed due to the Proposed Action.
- The Tamaulipan spot-tailed earless lizard inhabits moderately open prairie-brushland regions, particularly fairly flat areas free of vegetation or other obstructions along with mesquite-prickly pear associations. While this species has been observed annually on Laughlin AFB, current aircraft operations do not impact this species and, therefore, we do not foresee any impacts on this species from the proposed T-7A operations. Additionally, this lizard is motile and would likely relocate to avoid construction and aircraft noise.

Incidental aircraft strikes with the Golden-cheeked Warbler, tricolored bat, monarch butterfly, and Tamaulipan spot-tailed earless lizard could occur during takeoffs, landings, and touch-and-goes at the Laughlin AFB airfield; however, it is unlikely that the Proposed Action would have an increase in incidental strikes compared to the current potential at Laughlin AFB. DAF reviewed T-38C strike data for Laughlin AFB from October 2017 through September 2022,

and 68 strike incidents were recorded during this 5-year span. The species struck in most incidents were identified using visual or DNA methods, and none of these species were identified to be the Golden-cheeked Warbler, tricolored bat, monarch butterfly, or Tamaulipan spot-tailed earless lizard. Continued adherence of the Laughlin AFB BASH Plan would help avoid and minimize the potential for strikes in the event of an incidental occurrence of a federally listed/candidate species. If determined to be necessary, additional mitigation would be implemented or new measures developed to reduce the potential for impacts to occur and the BASH Plan would be updated accordingly. Therefore, T-7A recapitalization at Laughlin AFB *will have no effect* on the Golden-cheeked Warbler, monarch butterfly, tricolored bat, and Tamaulipan spot-tailed earless lizard.

The three fish species and one freshwater mussel are found exclusively in aquatic habitat, and no activities are proposed to affect aquatic resources. The Tobusch fishhook cactus typically inhabits shallow, moderately alkaline, stony clay and clay loams over massive, fractured limestone on level to slightly sloping hilltops. The proposed MILCON and FSRM projects occur on either impervious cover, existing structures, or maintained, non-native grasslands and lawns that do not provide suitable habitat for this species. Therefore, T-7A recapitalization at Laughlin AFB *will have no effect* on these five species.

Although not required by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, we request written concurrence with our determination as part of the informal consultation process. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mr. Darren Johnson via email at darren.johnson.27@us.af.mil or mail at Attn: Laughlin AFB T-7A Recapitalization EIS, 47 CES/CEIE, 251 Fourth Street, Laughlin AFB, TX 78843-5126. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this effort.

Sincerely,

MEYER
FRERICH.LAURA.E.1403
703547

Digitally signed by MEYER
FRERICH.LAURA.E.1403703547
Date: 2023.06.06 12:35:33 -05'00'

LAURA M. FRERICH, DAF
Environmental Chief, 47th Civil Engineer
Squadron

3 Attachments:

1. Federally Listed Species with Potential to Occur on Laughlin AFB and Effects Determination
2. Figures
3. Official Laughlin AFB IPaC Report (Project Code: 2023-0022381)

Attachment 1: Federally Listed Species with Potential to Occur on Laughlin AFB and Effects Determination

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status	Habitat Description and Distribution	Effect Determination and Justification
Mammal				
Tricolored Bat	<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>	Proposed E	During the spring, summer, and fall, this species primarily roosts among live and dead leaf clusters of live or recently dead deciduous hardwood trees. In the southern and northern portions of its range, this species has been observed roosting in Spanish moss (<i>Tillandsia usneoides</i>) and <i>Usnea trichodea</i> lichens. Tricolored bats have been observed roosting during the summer among pine needles, eastern red cedar (<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>), and within artificial roosts such as barns; beneath porch roofs, bridges, and concrete bunkers; and rarely within caves. During the winter, this species hibernates in caves and mines along with road-associated culverts, tree cavities, and abandoned water wells in the southern United States.	No effect - This species has been documented at Laughlin AFB. No impacts to suitable trees or other habitat is proposed. It is unlikely the Proposed Action would increase incidental aircraft strikes with this species given the lack of such strikes documented with the outgoing T-38C aircraft over the past 5 years. Strikes would be minimized by following Laughlin AFB's BASH plan.
Birds				
Golden-cheeked Warbler	<i>Setophaga chrysoparia</i>	E	Woodlands with tall Ashe juniper, oaks, and other hardwood trees provide habitat for the golden-cheeked warbler. In Texas, golden-cheeked warblers are found in the Edwards Plateau and locally north to Palo Pinto County.	No effect - Suitable habitat is not located on or near the proposed MILCON and FSRM projects or near the airfield at Laughlin AFB; therefore, it is unlikely this species would be affected by construction or aircraft noise. It is unlikely the Proposed Action would increase incidental aircraft strikes with this species given the lack of such strikes documented with the outgoing T-38C aircraft over the past 5 years. Strikes would be minimized by following Laughlin AFB's BASH plan.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status	Habitat Description and Distribution	Effect Determination and Justification
Piping Plover	<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	T	Piping Plover's preferred habitats include tidally exposed sand and mud flats with no or very sparse vegetation for foraging on invertebrates at or just below the soil surface. Other important habitats include adjacent sandy beaches and washover areas with little to no vegetation for roosting. Migration for this species is between July and September (winter) and February and April (spring). During offshore migratory flights, this species was recorded flying at heights of altitudes as high as 918 feet (280 meters). Sandy beaches and mudflats are preferred habitats along the coasts during migration and winter. Migration for this species is during the spring and autumn. This species has been observed flying at heights as high as 935 feet (285 meters).	No effect – This species is only considered in wind energy projects. No analysis is required for this action.
Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>	T	Sandy beaches and mudflats along the coasts during migration and winter. Migration for this species is during the spring and autumn. This species has been observed flying at heights as high as 935 feet (285 meters).	No effect – This species is only considered in wind energy projects. No analysis is required for this action.
Fish				
Devils River Minnow	<i>Dionda diaboli</i>	T	The Devils River minnow is found in channels of fast-flowing, spring-fed waters over gravel substrates. Although the species is closely associated with spring systems, the fish most often occurs where spring flow enters a stream, rather than in the spring outflow itself.	No effect – No impacts to hydrological features would occur.
Mexican Blindcat	<i>Prietella phreatophila</i>	E	Restricted to subterranean waters, the Mexican blindcat is a catfish that lives only in groundwater, up to 2,000 feet underground in the Edwards-Trinity Aquifer underlying the Rio Grande Basin in Texas and Coahuila, Mexico.	No effect – No impacts to hydrological features would occur.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status	Habitat Description and Distribution	Effect Determination and Justification
Rio Grande Silvery Minnow	<i>Hybognathus amarus</i>	Experimental population, non-essential	Rio Grande silvery minnow prefer large streams with slow to moderate current flowing over silt or silt/sand substrate. Rio Grande silvery minnow typically occupy stream habitats where water depths are less than 15.75 inches and have low to moderate velocity. Such habitats include eddies formed by debris piles, pools, backwaters, embayment's, shoreline, and submerged vegetation.	No effect – No impacts to hydrological features would occur.
Clam				
Texas Hornshell	<i>Popenaias Popeii</i>	E	The Texas Hornshell is found in shallow, slow-running water, tucked under travertine shelves and in-between boulders where soft sediment gathers.	No effect – No impacts to hydrological features would occur.
Insects				
Monarch Butterfly	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	C	Found in fields, roadside areas, undeveloped areas, wet areas, or urban gardens; milkweed and flowering plants are needed for monarch habitat. Adult monarchs feed on the nectar of many flowers, but they breed only where milkweeds are found. Migrations for this species occur in October and in February or March. Monarch butterflies have been observed flying at heights as high as 11,000 feet.	No effect – Suitable habitat for this candidate species includes milkweed species, which has been observed near the airfield. Suitable habitat is not present at the MILCON and FSRM project areas as these areas are either actively maintained or xeriscaped. No impacts to native vegetation are proposed to occur near the airfield, and vegetation maintenance techniques, timing, and duration are not proposed to be changed due to the Proposed Action. It is unlikely the Proposed Action would increase incidental aircraft strikes with this species given the lack of such strikes documented with the outgoing T-38C aircraft over the past 5 years. Strikes would be minimized by following Laughlin AFB's BASH plan.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status	Habitat Description and Distribution	Effect Determination and Justification
Reptile				
Tamaulipan Spot-tailed Earless Lizard	<i>Holbrookia subcaudalis</i>	Petitioned as E or T	This species inhabits moderately open prairie-brushland regions, particularly fairly flat areas free of vegetation or other obstructions (e.g. open meadows, old and new fields, graded roadways, cleared and disturbed areas, prairie savanna, and active agriculture including row crops). This species also inhabits oak-juniper woodlands and mesquite-prickly pear associations.	No effect – This species has been documented at Laughlin AFB; however, suitable habitat is not present at the MILCON and FSRM project areas as these areas are either actively maintained or xeriscaped. No impacts to native vegetation are proposed to occur near the airfield, and vegetation maintenance techniques, timing, and duration are not proposed to be changed due to the Proposed Action. Additionally, this species is motile and would likely relocate to avoid construction and aircraft noise. It is unlikely the Proposed Action would increase incidental aircraft strikes with this species (i.e., when the aircraft is in contact with the ground) given the lack of such strikes documented with the outgoing T-38C aircraft over the past 5 years. Strikes would be minimized by following Laughlin AFB’s BASH plan.
Flowering Plant				
Tobusch Fishhook Cactus	<i>Sclerocactus brevihamatus</i> spp. <i>tobuschii</i>	T	Tobusch fishhook cactus occurs in shallow soils over limestone in grassy or rocky openings in oak-juniper or pinyon pine-oak woodland.	No effect – No suitable habitat for this species occurs at the MILCON and FSRM areas at Laughlin AFB. Flight activities would not affect this terrestrial species.

Key: C = Candidate; E = Endangered; T = Threatened.

Sources of Species List: Attachment 3

Note: The species in this table have the potential to occur at the locations noted in that column based on the IPaC report generated for this project.

Attachment 2: Figures



Figure 1. MILCON Project Locations



Figure 2. FSRM Project Locations

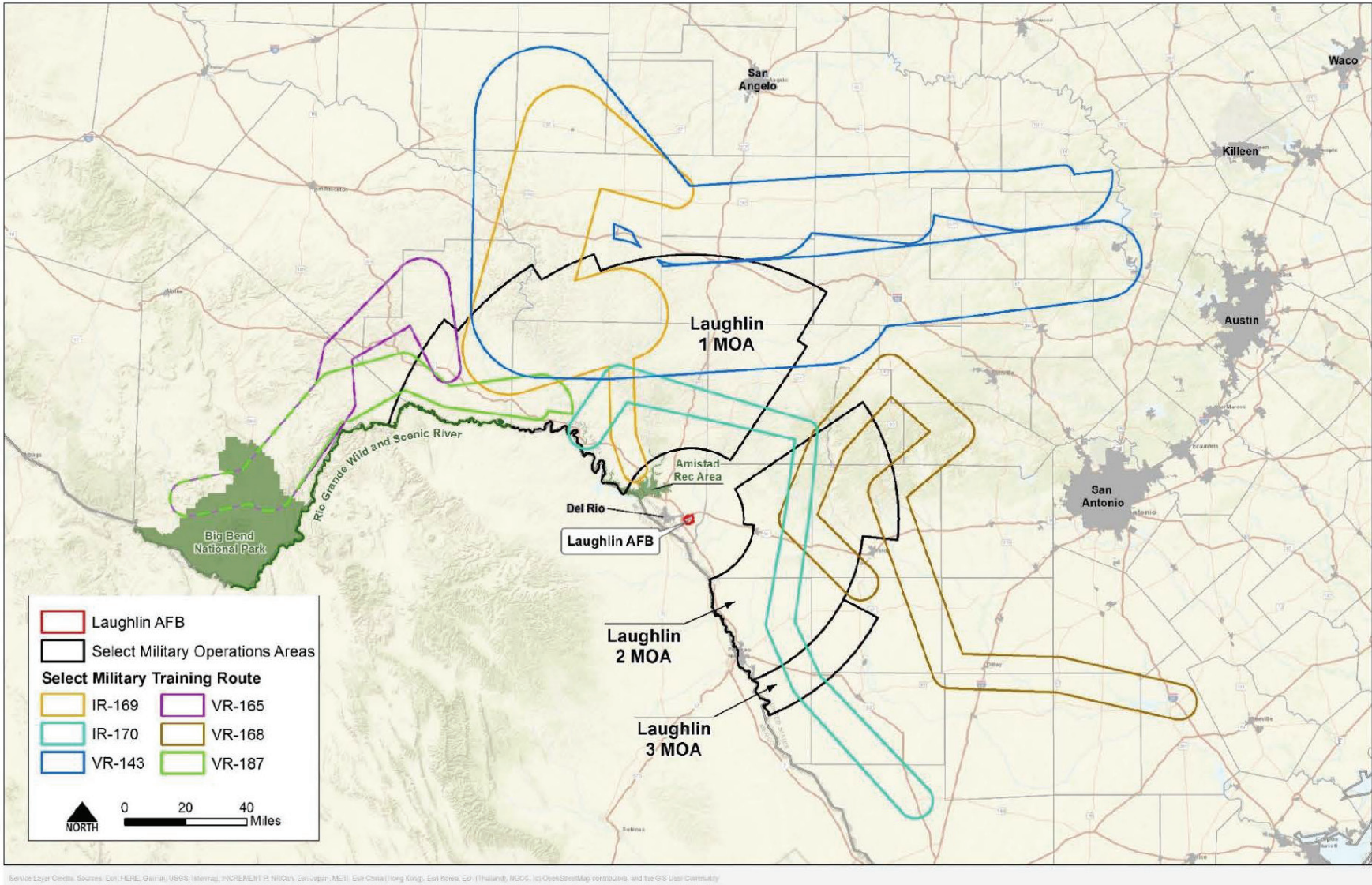


Figure 3. Laughlin AFB and Associated SUA

Attachment 3: Official Laughlin AFB IPaC Report (Project Code: 2023-0022381)



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Austin Ecological Services Field Office
1505 Ferguson Lane
Austin, TX 78754-4501
Phone: (512) 937-7371



In Reply Refer To: April 27, 2023
Project Code: 2023-0022381
Project Name: Environmental Impact Statement for T-7A Recapitalization at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the ECOS-IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2))

(c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/TOC-GLOS.PDF>

Migratory Birds: In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity, intentional or unintentional, resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts see <https://www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations.php>.

The MBTA has no provision for allowing take of migratory birds that may be unintentionally killed or injured by otherwise lawful activities. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures see <https://www.fws.gov/birds/bird-enthusiasts/threats-to-birds.php>.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations/executive-orders/e0-13186.php>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Code in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

04/27/2023

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Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

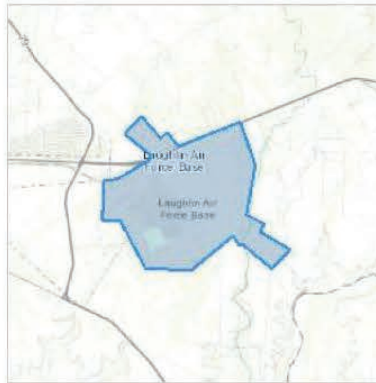
Austin Ecological Services Field Office

1505 Ferguson Lane
Austin, TX 78754-4501
(512) 937-7371

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2023-0022381
Project Name: Environmental Impact Statement for T-7A Recapitalization at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas
Project Type: Military Development
Project Description: Please refer to the project description and alternatives in the EIS.
Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@29.35764085,-100.78618686302264,14z>



Counties: Val Verde County, Texas

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 10 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species. Note that 2 of these species should be considered only under certain conditions.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

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1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

BIRDS

NAME	STATUS
Golden-cheeked Warbler <i>Setophaga chrysoparia</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/33	Endangered
Piping Plover <i>Charadrius melodus</i> Population: [Atlantic Coast and Northern Great Plains populations] - Wherever found, except those areas where listed as endangered. There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wind Energy Projects Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6039	Threatened
Red Knot <i>Calidris canutus rufa</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wind Energy Projects Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1864	Threatened

FISHES

NAME	STATUS
Devils River Minnow <i>Dionda diaboli</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7661	Threatened
Mexican Blindcat (catfish) <i>Prietella phreatophila</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7657	Endangered
Rio Grande Silvery Minnow <i>Hybognathus amarus</i> Population: Rio Grande, from Little Box Canyon to Amistad Dam No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1391	Experimental Population, Non- Essential

CLAMS

NAME	STATUS
Texas Hornshell <i>Popenaias popeii</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/919	Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

FLOWERING PLANTS

NAME	STATUS
Tobusch Fishhook Cactus <i>Sclerocactus breviphamatus ssp. tobuschii</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2221	Threatened

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: AmaTerra
Name: James Ray
Address: 11842 Rim Rock Trail
City: Austin
State: TX
Zip: 78737
Email: jray@amaterra.com
Phone: 8063672769

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Air Force

Response from USFWS (August 2023)

From: Williams, Christina <christina_williams@fws.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2023 10:34 AM
To: 'MEYER FRERICH, LAURA E CIV USAF AETC 47 CES/CEIE' <laura.meyer_frerich@us.af.mil>
Cc: HARRINGTON, CASEY L CIV USAF AETC 47 CES/CEIE <casey.harrington.1@us.af.mil>; JOHNSON, DARREN A CIV USAF AETC 47 CES/CEIE <darren.johnson.27@us.af.mil>; WALDRIP, ERIK G CIV USAF AFMC AFCEC/CZN <erik.waldrip@us.af.mil>; Didlake, Timothy J <Timothy.Didlake@hdrinc.com>; KIRK, JUSTIN C CIV USAF AFMC AFCEC/CZN <justin.kirk.13@us.af.mil>; ES Austin Info, FW2 <esaustinfo@fws.gov>; Robinson, Donelle M <donelle_robinson@fws.gov>; OWEN, JACOB D CIV USAF AFMC AFCEC/CZOW <jacob.owen@us.af.mil>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] RE: Section 7 Consultation for T-7A Recapitalization at Laughlin AFB

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Laura,

No, we have no comments.

Thank you,
Christina

Christina Williams
Division Supervisor
Consultations and HCPs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1505 Ferguson Lane
Austin, Texas 78754
Cell 512-850-0980

Our mission is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

From: MEYER FRERICH, LAURA E CIV USAF AETC 47 CES/CEIE <laura.meyer_frerich@us.af.mil>
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2023 8:48 AM
To: Williams, Christina <christina_williams@fws.gov>
Cc: HARRINGTON, CASEY L CIV USAF AETC 47 CES/CEIE <casey.harrington.1@us.af.mil>; JOHNSON, DARREN A CIV USAF AETC 47 CES/CEIE <darren.johnson.27@us.af.mil>; WALDRIP, ERIK G CIV USAF AFMC AFCEC/CZN <erik.waldrip@us.af.mil>; Didlake, Timothy J <Timothy.Didlake@hdrinc.com>; KIRK, JUSTIN C CIV USAF AFMC AFCEC/CZN <justin.kirk.13@us.af.mil>; ES Austin Info, FW2 <esaustinfo@fws.gov>; Robinson, Donelle M <donelle_robinson@fws.gov>; OWEN, JACOB D CIV USAF AFMC AFCEC/CZOW <jacob.owen@us.af.mil>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] RE: Section 7 Consultation for T-7A Recapitalization at Laughlin AFB

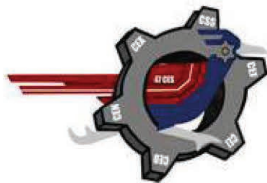
Good Morning Ms. Williams,

I am emailing you in regards to the T-7A Recapitalization at Laughlin AFB. We submitted a revised Section 7 Consultation Letter to the US Fish and Wildlife Service on 6 June 2023 in which you replied verifying you received the letter, see below. Do you or the FWS plan on submitting a response to our determination or any additional comments?

Have a great weekend.

Thank you

Laura Frerich
47 CES/CEIE
Office: 830-298-5694
Cell: 830-563-0383



Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act Consultation

DAF consulted with the Texas State Historical Preservation Officer (SHPO) under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the Proposed Action. **Section 3.5** contains further information regarding the outcome of the consultation with the Texas SHPO. A copy of the consultation letter and the SHPO's response is on the following pages.

Consultation letter sent to the Texas SHPO (May 2023)



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
47TH FLYING TRAINING WING
LAUGHLIN AIR FORCE BASE, TEXAS**

9 May 2023

Laura M. Frerich, DAF
Environmental Chief, 47th Civil Engineer Squadron
47 CES/CEIE
251 Fourth Street
Laughlin AFB, TX 78843-5126

Mr. Mark Wolfe
Texas State Historic Preservation Officer
Texas Historical Commission
11511 Colorado Avenue
PO Box 12276
Austin, TX 78711-2276

Dear Mr. Wolfe:

The United States Department of the Air Force (DAF) is proposing to recapitalize its flight training program at Laughlin Air Force Base (AFB), Texas, with newer and more capable T-7A "Red Hawk" aircraft. Recapitalization is the phased acquisition of the new generation T-7A aircraft and construction and upgrade of specific facilities to support the training, operation, and maintenance of the T-7A aircraft. To consider various environmental concerns, DAF is engaging early with the appropriate resource and regulatory agencies as it formulates the undertaking. DAF is also preparing an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act to evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with T-7A recapitalization at Laughlin AFB.

Per 54 U.S.C. 306108 and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, DAF is initiating consultation and advising you of a proposed undertaking that has the potential to affect historic properties.

The undertaking will entail the phased introduction of T-7A aircraft and phased reduction of the T-38C aircraft currently operating from Laughlin AFB; new intensities of flight operations at Laughlin AFB; and changes to the number of personnel assigned to Laughlin AFB. T-7A operations would occur within established Special Use Airspace currently used for T-38C operations (see **Attachment 1**), and no changes to Special Use Airspace configurations (i.e., size, shape, or location) would be necessary to support the proposed operations of the T-7A. Additionally, construction for six military construction (MILCON) projects and seven facilities sustainment, restoration, and modernization (FSRM) projects would occur at Laughlin AFB to provide modern facilities and infrastructure to support the T-7A aircraft's maintenance, training, and operational requirements. The MILCON and FSRM projects include new building construction and renovation of existing facilities. This undertaking's potential to impact historic

properties is from the MILCON and FSRM projects, and details on the MILCON and FSRM projects and their individual assessment of effect can be found in **Attachment 2**.

The Area of Potential Effect (APE) for this undertaking is defined as the potential impact area from all activities. The APE includes all areas of potential direct and indirect effects. Direct effects include, but are not limited to, ground disturbance, vibration, building modification and new construction, and staging and equipment storage. Indirect effects include noise and aesthetic interference. For this undertaking, the APE is defined as the footprint of all buildings proposed for interior and exterior alteration, all areas of new construction and additions, all landscape features (such as airfield markings) that are proposed for alteration, all new roads and parking lots, and a 50-foot buffer around these areas to account for construction staging and temporary physical impacts from ground disturbing activity (see **Attachment 3** for the boundaries of the APE). The APE captures all anticipated direct and indirect effects as all new construction is anticipated to be one-story in height and is not anticipated to exceed 40 feet in total building height, and there are no National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-listed or eligible historic districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects that would be visually or audibly affected by the proposed undertaking. In addition, the only vertical incursions planned are the antennas that would be located atop the proposed GBTS facility, which would project approximately 15 to 20 feet above the one-story building. Thus, the total vertical projection of the proposed GBTS facility and antennas combined is approximately 55 to 60 feet. The APE totals approximately 58.5 acres. The APE for this undertaking does not include areas within the Special Use Airspace where the T-7A would perform operations (see **Attachment 1**) because T-7A flight training would occur at a relatively high altitude (e.g., greater than 500 feet above ground level) in previously defined military airspace and would have no potential to impact historic properties.

Twenty federally recognized and one state of Texas recognized tribes have an expressed or potential interest in cultural resources at Laughlin AFB and the Special Use Airspace. These tribes are the Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, Delaware Nation (Oklahoma), Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation of Montana, Comanche Nation (Oklahoma), Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, Kickapoo Tribe of Indians of the Kickapoo, Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma, Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma, Mescalero Apache Tribe, San Carlos Apache Tribe, Shoshone Tribe of the Wind River Reservation, Tonkawa Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, White Mountain Apache Tribe, Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, and Lipan Apache Tribe of Texas. DAF consults with tribes on issues related to cultural resource management, the unanticipated discovery of human remains and cultural items under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and on project specific effects under Section 106 of the NHPA. During prior consultations, these tribes have not identified any sacred sites or traditional cultural properties on the installation. DAF has invited these tribes to consult on the proposed undertaking and to confirm that no sacred sites or traditional cultural properties are present in the APE.

Archaeological investigations in 1992 and 1994 recorded a total of 13 archaeological sites on Laughlin AFB. One additional previously recorded site, 41VV1652, was registered as a

site in 1992 despite consisting of only two isolated finds. All 14 sites are described in **Attachment 4**. Testing of these sites in 1998 deemed only four of them eligible for inclusion in the NRHP (Laughlin AFB 2017). None of the 14 sites are within the APE of the proposed MILCON and FSRM projects.

Four MILCON and three FSRM projects (GBTS facility, UMT facility, hush house, addition to the egress shop, trim pad, T-7A explosive component storage facility, and addition to Building 905) would involve ground disturbance. The potential for archaeological resources to occur within these construction areas is variable. The hush house, addition to the egress shop, trim pad, and addition to Building 905 have low potential for archaeological resources because these areas and the land around them have been previously modified and developed through building or ramp construction. Additionally, the T-7A explosive component storage facility has low archaeological potential because it is located in an area that has been previously surveyed (archaeological survey report No. 239), and no archaeological materials were identified within the unit's APE. The GBTS facility and the UMT facility are set in locations that appear unmodified and have not been previously surveyed. As such, these two locations have moderate archaeological potential. The remaining MILCON and FSRM projects would have no potential to impact archaeological resources as they would entail no ground disturbance.

Two standing structures surveys of Laughlin AFB have been performed. The first survey was performed in 2002 and identified 163 Cold War-Era buildings dating from 1952 to 1991 and recommended none of the buildings eligible for the NRHP (AETC 2002). Your office concurred with those recommendations on January 14, 2003 (**Attachment 5**). The second historic building survey was performed in 2020 and identified 196 buildings and structures constructed between 1955 and 2017 and evaluated them for their Cold War-Era and post-Cold War significance. None of the buildings or structures were recommended eligible for the NRHP (ANLESD 2020). Your office concurred with the recommendations on October 27, 2020, ETRAC #202101311 (**Attachment 6**).

Four MILCON and four FSRM projects (i.e., GBTS facility, UMT facility, T-7A shelters, jet blast deflectors, antenna farm, airfield improvements, trim pad, and T-7A explosive component storage facility) would have no potential to impact standing resources as they entail no modification of historic-age resources. The proposed T-7A shelters, jet blast deflectors, airfield improvements, and trim pad would occur on the existing concrete of the aircraft parking ramp or apron, which is non-historic. The construction of the T-7A shelters also would require the removal of the existing, prefabricated T-38C shelters, which are non-historic and were installed between 2017 and 2021. The existing trim pad (ca. 1985) would be rebuilt, and the existing compass rose (last painted in 2020) would be relocated to a new magnetically quiet site. Neither of these features is historic. The proposed antenna farm would be located on the roof of the proposed GBTS facility, which has not yet been constructed, and the total vertical projection of the one-story building with antennas is not anticipated to exceed 60 feet. The GBTS facility, UMT facility, and T-7A explosive component storage facility are new construction located away from existing buildings.

With respect to properties located within the APE, Buildings 15 (constructed in 1987), 201 (constructed in 1990), 307 (constructed in 2007), 320 (constructed in 1988), and 328

(constructed in 1979) were addressed by the previously mentioned standing structure surveys and determined not to be historic properties (AETC 2002, ANLESD 2020). Buildings 50 (constructed in 1954), 210 (constructed in 1955), and 905 (constructed in 1970) were also evaluated in the 2002 standing structure survey but were re-evaluated to support the EIS as they are now more than 50 years old. While all three buildings were constructed during and are associated broadly with the Cold War, DAF has determined all three buildings lack the significance and integrity necessary for listing in the NRHP (**Attachment 7**). DAF is herein requesting SHPO concurrence on that determination.

No changes to Laughlin AFB airfield traffic patterns would occur from the T-7A recapitalization undertaking. The T-7A may operate at nighttime for training and curriculum requirements, and at full implementation, up to 614 annual nighttime T-7A operations could occur. For comparison, the existing T-38C aircraft currently perform approximately 2,180 annual nighttime operations at Laughlin AFB.

Pursuant to 36 CFR §800.4(d), DAF has determined that no historic properties would be affected by the T-7A Recapitalization at Laughlin AFB. Attached for your review are copies of relevant documents supporting DAF's findings and determinations. We request your comment or concurrence on the finding of *No Historic Properties Affected*. If we do not receive your comments or concurrence within the required 30 days, we will assume concurrence and proceed with the undertaking as described. Please contact Mr. Darren Johnson via email at darren.johnson.27@us.af.mil or mail at Attn: Laughlin AFB T-7A Recapitalization EIS, 47 CES/CEIE, 251 Fourth Street, Laughlin AFB, TX 78843-5126 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

MEYER
FRERICH.LAURA.E.1403
703547

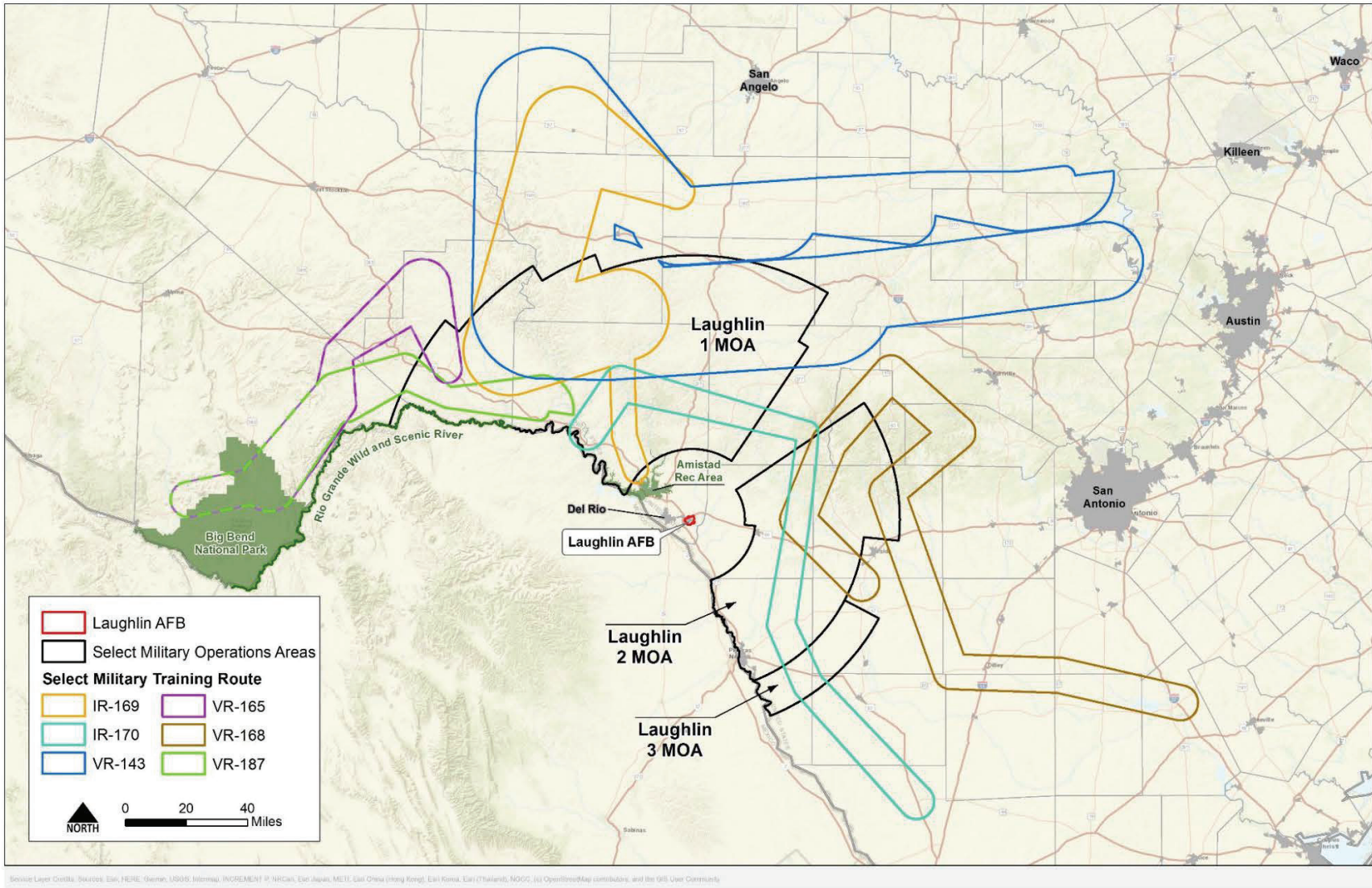
Digitally signed by MEYER
FRERICH.LAURA.E.1403703547
Date: 2023.05.09 07:53:29 -0500'

LAURA M. FRERICH, DAF
Environmental Chief, 47th Civil Engineer
Squadron

7 Attachments:

1. Map of Special Use Airspace used for T-38C and T-7A Operations
2. Table of MILCON and FSRM Projects
3. Map of APE for Laughlin AFB T-7A Recapitalization Undertaking
4. Table of Previously Recorded Archaeological Sites on Laughlin AFB
5. SHPO letter regarding 2002 Survey
6. SHPO letter regarding 2020 Survey
7. Documentation forms for Buildings 50, 210, and 905

Attachment 1: Map of Special Use Airspace used for
T-38C and T-7A Operations



Laughlin AFB T-38C and T-7A Training Airspace

Attachment 2: Table of MILCON and FSRM Projects

Table 1. Cultural Resources Components of the Proposed Action and Impact on Historic Properties

Building Name/Number	Project Component	NRHP Status	Date Constructed	Assessment of Effect
MILCON Projects				
Ground Based Training System (GBTS) Facility	Construct a one-story building (approximately 34,000 square feet [ft ²] and 40 feet tall) and parking lot (106 spots) on undeveloped land adjacent to Building 328 (constructed in 1979).	N/A – New construction	N/A – Vacant land	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Unit Maintenance Trainer (UMT) Facility	Construct a one-story building (approximately 11,500 ft ²) on undeveloped land adjacent to Colorado Avenue. No parking lot is required.	N/A – New construction	N/A – Vacant land	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Hush House	Construct a new, one-story hush house on the site of Building 15 (breakroom, built 1987). Realign airfield service road to provide buffer space. Laughlin AFB's existing hush house (Building 19) would not be altered or demolished.	Building 15 is non-historic	1987	Recommend no effect to historic properties
T-7A Shelters	Construct 48 shelters (sunshades) on existing aircraft parking ramp and remove existing non-historic T-38C prefabricated shelters (installed from 2017 to 2021).	N/A – New construction Existing shelters are non-historic	Non-historic ramp Existing T-38C shelters installed from 2017 to 2021	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Addition to Egress Shop	Add 3,400 ft ² addition to Building 201 (built 1990).	Building 201 is non-historic	1990	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Jet Blast Deflectors	Install jet blast deflectors on airfield. Final placement dependent on ramp layout design.	N/A – Attached to non-historic ramp	Non-historic ramp	Recommend no effect to historic properties
FSRM Projects				
Modify Buildings 50 and 210	Modify Buildings 50 (built 1954) and 210 (built 1955), including hangar doors.	Recommend not eligible	1954 and 1955	Recommend no effect to historic properties

Building Name/Number	Project Component	NRHP Status	Date Constructed	Assessment of Effect
Antenna Farm	Incorporate an antenna farm into the design of the proposed GBTS facility. Antenna to be located atop the roof, projecting approximately 15 to 20 feet above the approximately 40-foot-tall building.	N/A – New construction	N/A – Proposed GBTS facility (new construction)	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Squadron Operations Buildings Renovations	Renovate interior of Squadron Operations Buildings 307 (built 2007), 320 (built 1988), and 328 (built 1979).	Buildings 307, 320, and 328 are non-historic	2007, 1988, and 1979	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Airfield Improvements	Remark the T-38C ramp to the width of the T-7A. Install new moorings and anchor rods for T-7A aircraft. Replace existing aircraft arresting system. Remove aboveground service modules of the Centralized Aircraft Support System.	N/A – Attached to non-historic ramp	Non-historic ramp	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Trim Pad	Rebuild existing trim pad (built ca. 1985) and install T-7A anchor block. Relocate the compass rose (painted 2020) to another magnetically quiet site.	N/A – Attached to non-historic ramp	Non-historic ramp Trim pad, ca. 1985 compass rose, painted 2020	Recommend no effect to historic properties
T-7A Explosive Component Storage Facility	Construct an approximately 7,200 ft ² concrete pad and provide utilities for a storage container.	N/A – New construction	N/A – Vacant land	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Addition to Building 905	Construct an approximately 1,000 ft ² addition onto the east side of Building 905 (built 1970). Add perimeter fences and gates and construct a 10-vehicle parking lot.	Recommend not eligible	1970	Recommend no effect to historic properties

Sources: Laughlin AFB 2017, AETC 2002, ANLESD 2020, and 47 CES 2022
Key: N/A = Not applicable

Table 1 Sources

47 CES 2022	47 Civil Engineer Squadron (47 CES). 2022. Email communication from Mr. Darren Johnson (Natural/Cultural Resources Manager for 47 CES) to Mr. Timothy Didlake (HDR) regarding building construction dates. Email sent on November 29, 2022.
AETC 2002	Air Education and Training Command (AETC). 2002. <i>Cold War-Era Buildings and Structures Inventory and Assessment. Laughlin Air Force Base.</i> May 2002.
ANLESD 2020	Argonne National Library Environmental Science Division (ANLESD). 2020. <i>Historic Building Report for Laughlin Air Force Base Kinney and Val Verde Counties, Texas.</i> September 2020.
Laughlin AFB 2017	Laughlin Air Force Base (AFB). 2017. <i>U.S. Air Force, Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan, Laughlin Air Force Base.</i> October 2017.



Area of Potential Effect (APE)

Attachment 4: Table of Previously Recorded
Archaeological Sites on Laughlin AFB

Table 2. Previously Recorded Archaeological Sites on Laughlin AFB

Site Designation	Year Recorded	Site Age	Site Type	NRHP Eligibility
41VV1652	1992	Archaic, Historic	Two isolated finds: point frag and .45 caliber steel jacket bullet	Ineligible
41VV1653	1992, 1994	Prehistoric	Surface lithic scatter with three possible surface hearths	Ineligible
41VV1654	1992, 1994	Paleoindian, Archaic, Historic	Habitation with burned rock hearths, historic ranch with 19th to early 20th century features	Eligible
41VV1655	1992, 1994	Prehistoric	Sparse lithic scatter, lithic procurement locality	Ineligible
41VV1682	1994	Historic	Zacatos Ranch Headquarters: multiple disturbed concrete and stone features, artifact scatters	Ineligible
41VV1683	1994	Paleoindian	Angostura point in lithic scatter, lithic procurement locality	Ineligible
41VV1684	1994	Prehistoric	Surface lithic scatter with fire-cracked rock	Ineligible
41VV1685	1994	Prehistoric	Extensive lithic scatter and procurement locality	Ineligible
41VV1686	1994	Prehistoric	Lithic surface scatter with three possible burned rock hearths	Ineligible
41VV1687	1994	Prehistoric	Small scatter of lithics and fire-cracked rock	Ineligible
41VV1688	1994	Middle to Late Archaic	Lithic scatter with two possible hearths, and a Kinney and an Ensor point	Eligible
41VV1689	1994	Early Archaic	Martindale point with a thin lithic scatter and one possible hearth	Eligible
41VV1690	1994	Middle Archaic	Pedernales point with three possible hearths	Eligible
41VV1691	1994	Prehistoric	Small lithic scatter	Ineligible

Attachment 5: SHPO letter regarding 2002 Survey



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

RICK PERRY, GOVERNOR
JOHN L. NAU, III, CHAIRMAN
F. LAWERENCE OAKS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

January 14, 2003

Lt. Jadee A. Bell
Cultural Resources Manager
47 CES/CEV
251 Fourth Street
Laughlin AFB, Texas 78843-5143

*Re: Project review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966,
Laughlin Air Force Base: Cold War-Era Buildings and Structures Inventory and Assessment,
Laughlin AFB, Val Verde County, Texas. (Air Force)*

Dear Lt. Bell:

Thank you for providing information regarding the above referenced project. This letter serves as comment on the proposed undertaking from the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Executive Director of the Texas Historical Commission.

The review staff, led by Bob Brinkman, has reviewed the submitted information. The above referenced report was completed by Geo-Marine Inc. under contract to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in May 2002. We concur with the determinations of eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as referenced in the report. Namely, seven properties evaluated for potential eligibility under Criterion Consideration G (Buildings 50, 210, 301, 338, 401, 404 and 414) lack exceptional Cold War significance or exhibit alterations and are **not eligible** for listing. The gun alignment facility (1953) is determined **not eligible** for listing, but is recommended for Historic American Buildings Survey / Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) Level III documentation.

We look forward to further consultation with your office, and hope to maintain a partnership that will foster effective historic preservation. Thank you for your participation in this federal review process. If you have any questions concerning this review or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Bob Brinkman at 512/463-8769.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "F. Lawrence Oaks".

for: F. Lawrence Oaks
Executive Director, Texas Historical Commission

Attachment 6: SHPO letter regarding 2020 Survey

From: noreply@thc.state.tx.us
To: YANDELL, DANNY L GS-12 USAF AETC 47 CES/CEIE; reviews@thc.state.tx.us
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Section 106 Submission
Date: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:54:21 AM



Re: Project Review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and/or the Antiquities Code of Texas
THC Tracking #202101311
Historic Building Inventory Report for Laughlin Air Force Base Kinney & Val Verde County Texas
251 Fourth Street
Del Rio, TX 78843

Description: Laughlin AFB is seeking your concurrence, per 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1), that all the 196 facilities evaluated Historic Building Inventory for Laughlin Air Force Base in Kinney and Val Verde Counties

Dear Danny Yandell:

Thank you for your submittal regarding the above-referenced project. This response represents the comments of the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Executive Director of the Texas Historical Commission (THC), pursuant to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The review staff, led by Caitlin Brashear, has completed its review and has made the following determinations based on the information submitted for review:

Above-Ground Resources

- THC/SHPO concurs with information provided.
- Property/properties are not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

We have the following comments: We concur that the 196 facilities evaluated as part of this Historic Building Inventory for Laughlin Air Force Base in Kinney and Val Verde Counties are Not Eligible at this time for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Resources under 50 years of age that were identified as part of this survey will need to be re-evaluated once they reach historic age.

We look forward to further consultation with your office and hope to maintain a partnership that will foster effective historic preservation. Thank you for your cooperation in this review process, and for your efforts to preserve the irreplaceable heritage of Texas. If the project changes, or if new historic properties are found, please contact the review staff. If you have

any questions concerning our review or if we can be of further assistance, please email the following reviewers: caitlin.brashear@thc.texas.gov.

This response has been sent through the electronic THC review and compliance system (eTRAC). Submitting your project via eTRAC eliminates mailing delays and allows you to check the status of the review, receive an electronic response, and generate reports on your submissions. For more information, visit <http://thc.texas.gov/etrac-system>.

Sincerely,



for Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director, Texas Historical Commission

Please do not respond to this email.

Attachment 7: Documentation forms for Buildings 50, 210,
and 905

T-7A Recapitalization Project Laughlin AFB, Texas Historic Resources Desktop Survey (cut-off date 1978) April 2023			
Resource:	Building 50	Year built:	1954
Type:	Building	Function/ Use:	Defense/military facility
References:	<p>Air Education and Training Command (AETC). 2002. Laughlin AFB Cold War-Era Buildings and Structures Inventory and Assessment. May.</p> <p>National Environmental Title Research (NETR). 2023. Historic Aerials. https://www.historicaerials.com/. Accessed January 2023.</p> <p>National Park Service (NPS). 1997. How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.</p> <p>United States Air Force (USAF). 2017. Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan for Laughlin Air Force Base. October.</p> <p>Weitze, K. J. 1999. Cold War Infrastructure for Strategic Air Command: The Bomber Mission. KEA Environmental, Inc., Sacramento, California. Submitted to U.S. Air Force, Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia.</p>		
NRHP Eligibility:	Not Eligible		
<p>Description:</p> <p>Building 50 is a maintenance hangar designed by Strobel and Salzman of New York and erected in 1954 to support flying operations for the Korean War. The hangar was constructed using a design commonly implemented by the U.S. Air Force (USAF) in the 1950s.</p> <p>The building, which measures approximately 238 x 240 feet, has an augmented rectangular plan with one-story side wings, a front-facing gable roof covered in 2008 corrugated metal, concrete block walls, and a concrete foundation. The façade faces north and has three primary bays with eleven structural bays. A hinged truss system supports the structure (AETC 2002:30). Windows are primarily multi-pane metal with fixed and pivot operation; multiple windows have been painted over or infilled with non-historic entry doors. The metal doors are primarily single- and double-leaf, except for the seven hangar doors, which are multi-leaf.</p> <p>A review of as-built drawings, maintenance records, and historic aerials indicates that the building has been altered on multiple occasions. Circa 2004, as indicated by materials and historic aerials, an addition was constructed at the building's southwest corner (NETR 2023). As-built drawings indicate that multiple windows have been infilled or removed. Though exact dates are not available for those alterations, replacement materials indicate alterations occurred within the past 50 years. On the façade, one window group within the east side wing has been removed and one window group within the west side wing was replaced with a double-leaf steel door. On the west elevation, two window groups have been replaced with single-leaf pedestrian doors, and the addition obscured a band of original windows. On the east elevation, one window group has been infilled and most windows have painted panes. Most, if not all, of the single-leaf pedestrian doors appear to be non-historic; however, the sliding hangar doors appear to be of historic age.</p> <p>According to USAF records, a battery shop was constructed inside the building in 1956. In 1960, multiple hangar doors were repaired. In 1964, an overhead door was installed, which appears to be located on the west elevation. In 2003, a fire suppression system was installed, and in 2008 the original roof was reinforced and replaced prior to the installation of solar panels. In addition, the roofing material was changed from asphalt shingle to corrugated metal.</p>			

Historic Context:

Laughlin AFB was established as a training base by the U.S. Army Air Corps for medium bomber crews during World War II. The base closed after the war and reopened in 1952 during the Korean War as a flying training base (AETC 2002:1). The mission of the reactivated base, the responsibility of the Flying Training Air Force (FTAF), was to house the 3645th Pilot Training Wing (3645 PTW). Reactivation required extensive new construction as the original World War II-era buildings had been removed. Six months after base reactivation, the mission changed to training combat pilots in F-84 and T-33 jet fighters, and the wing was renamed the 3645th Flying Training Wing (3645 FTW). At that time, the base was transferred from FTAF to the Crew Training Air Force (CTAF). By early 1953, the mission had changed again to supporting solely T-33 aircraft (USAF 2017:6).

Building 50 was constructed to support general maintenance of the T-33 planes at Laughlin AFB after the Korean Armistice Agreement ended fighting in 1953. In September 1955, the Air Training Command (ATC) transferred Laughlin AFB from CTAF back to FTAF, and the base resumed its original mission of basic single-engine pilot training with the T-33.

Basic pilot training remained the primary mission of the base until the Strategic Air Command (SAC) acquired the base in the spring of 1957 as a staging area for the 4080th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (4080 SRW) and its historic U-2 reconnaissance plane operations (USAF 2017:15). The 4080 SRW was established to gather meteorological data at high altitudes. This High-Altitude Sampling Program (HASP) was designed to collect information about the Soviet Union's above-ground nuclear tests. Following the 4080 SRW's establishment, Laughlin AFB saw its most significant involvement in the Cold War.

In 1957, as Cold War-era tensions rose and U-2 utilization amplified, all USAF pilot training for the U-2 moved to Laughlin AFB and USAF pilots from the 4080 SRW began training alongside Central Intelligence Agency pilots (USAF 2017:6). U-2 training, and reconnaissance flights formed an important part of Laughlin AFB's mission from 1957 through 1962. Hangars were converted to house the planes and other buildings on the base were converted to serve the overall U-2 mission. The most important Cold War mission flown by U-2s out of Laughlin AFB were part of the HASP. The mission involved a series of flights over Cuba that began during the planning for the Bay of Pigs invasion in the late 1950s. These flights continued through 1962 and provided essential information about the build-up of Soviet arms in Cuba (USAF 2017:6).

In 1960, the 4080 SRW became the 4080th Strategic Wing. In 1961, an undergraduate pilot training program began at the base. In order to accomplish this transition, the 3645 PTW was re-activated, and later became the 3646 PTW. In April 1962, Laughlin AFB was restored to the ATC, which reestablished flying training at the base. Laughlin AFB still maintains the undergraduate pilot training program (AETC 2002:1; USAF 2017:6).

One of the two hangars constructed at Laughlin AFB following the Korean War (either Building 50 [1954] or Building 210 [1955]) had a 30-foot pit dug on its interior for aligning the U-2 camera system added after 1957; however, the pit has since been filled in and available information did not reveal which hangar housed the equipment. The Air Education and Training Command (AETC) previously concluded that the hangars were not designed for U-2 missions and played a minor role in U-2 maintenance (USAF 2017:36).

NRHP Eligibility:*Previous NRHP Determination*

A 2002 historic resources inventory identified and assessed 163 Cold War era buildings at Laughlin AFB for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility (USAF 2017:29). Building 50 was evaluated as retaining historic integrity but lacking significance. The evaluator found that Building 50 was not significantly associated with the base's Cold War mission, lacked the distinctive characteristics typically associated with U-2 support facilities, and did not satisfy the "exceptional importance" requirement of Criteria Consideration G (AETC 2002:32). On January 14, 2003, SHPO concurred with the USAF's "not eligible" determination. One year after SHPO's concurrence, the building turned 50 years old and no longer needed to satisfy Criterion Consideration G's requirement of demonstrating "exceptional importance."

Criterion A

USAF hangars are generally not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A as Cold War resources, because they are ubiquitous in nature and standardized in design. However, certain hangars have been found to possess significance

for their significant association with Cold War-era technologies or the Cold War-era mission of Strategic Reconnaissance Operations and Training (SROT) (AETC 2002:27-28; Weitze 1999).

Building 50 was constructed in 1954, three years before the SAC acquired the base in the spring of 1957 as a staging area for the 4080 SRW. The hangar was initially used to house and service T-33 aircraft as part of a basic flight training program. After 1957, the building was converted into a support facility for the new U-2 planes. The building does not retain any equipment or infrastructure from its U-2 support role or any material related to the HASP missions. The hangar continues to be used for general maintenance of base aircraft.

Building 50 lacks significant association with the themes of SROT or Cold War-era technologies, because it was constructed before SROT operations began at Laughlin AFB and all U-2 related materials and equipment have been removed. Research has not indicated that the building is associated with any other significant themes related to Cold War activities. Therefore, Building 50 is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A.

Criterion B

Building 50 is recommended not eligible under NRHP Criterion B due to a lack of significance. Research did not produce evidence of the building's association with the lives or persons significant in our past.

Criterion C

Building 50 does retain characteristics typical of Cold War-era hangars (such as its overall form and use of corrugated metal); however, multiple windows and doors have been altered and the building received an addition ca. 2004. According to National Register Bulletin 15, "a property important for illustrating a particular architectural style or construction technique must retain most of the physical features that constitute that style or technique" (NPS 1997:46). Due to the common nature of the building's design, which was mass-produced across the U.S. during the Cold War, and impacts that have occurred to integrity, the building is recommended not eligible under Criterion C.

Criterion D

Building 50 is recommended not eligible under NRHP Criterion D as the current recording of the building encapsulates its likely information potential, and it is unlikely that further survey would reveal additional information important to history.

Integrity

Building 50 at Laughlin AFB has lost key aspects of historic integrity, specifically design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. It retains integrity of location as it has not been moved. The building's integrity of design, materials, and workmanship has been diminished by the addition at the southwest corner, and the alteration of windows and doors. Integrity of setting is retained as the building's general setting (characterized by adjacent hangars and concrete runway and taxi lanes) remains unchanged. Integrity of feeling has been diminished by the replacement of historic building materials and the removal of all U-2 related infrastructure and equipment. Integrity of association has been retained as the building maintains its original location at the AFB and remains sufficiently intact to convey its association with historic AFB activities.

Form Preparer: This site form and NRHP evaluation was completed by HDR Engineering, Inc. Architectural Historian Leesa Gratreak. Ms. Gratreak, who has a Bachelor of Arts in architectural history from the University of Oregon and a Master of Science degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Oregon, is an Architectural Historian practicing throughout the West. Ms. Gratreak meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Architectural History and has over 12 years of experience.



Facade (north elevation). viewing south.

Resource:

Building 50



West elevation, viewing east. Note: addition to right indicated by red arrow.



South elevation, viewing north. Note: addition to far left indicated by red arrow.

Resource:

Building 50



East elevation, viewing west.



Plan oriented North.

Resource:

Building 50

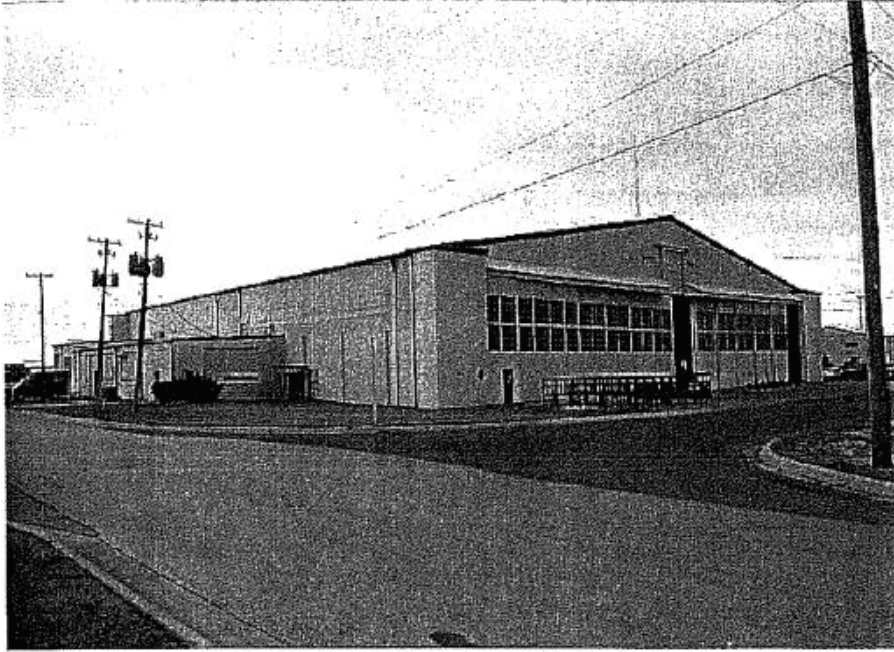


Figure 8. Building 50, 1954 maintenance hangar (photograph by Joe C. Freeman).

Figure from 2002 Historic Structures Survey, viewing northeast (AETC 2002:31).

<p style="text-align: center;">T-7A Recapitalization Project Laughlin AFB, Texas Historic Resources Desktop Survey (cut-off date 1978) April 2023</p>			
Resource:	Building 210	Year built:	1955
Type:	Building	Function/Use:	Defense/military facility
References:	<p>Air Education and Training Command (AETC). 2002. Laughlin AFB Cold War-Era Buildings and Structures Inventory and Assessment. May.</p> <p>National Environmental Title Research (NETR). 2023. Historic Aerials. https://www.historicaerials.com/. Accessed January 2023.</p> <p>National Park Service (NPS). 1997. How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.</p> <p>United States Air Force (USAF). 2017. Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan for Laughlin Air Force Base. October.</p> <p>Weitze, K. J. 1999. Cold War Infrastructure for Strategic Air Command: The Bomber Mission. KEA Environmental, Inc., Sacramento, California. Submitted to U.S. Air Force, Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia.</p>		
NRHP Eligibility:	Not Eligible		
<p>Description:</p> <p>Building 210 is a maintenance hangar designed by Strobel and Salzman of New York and erected in 1955 to support flying operations for the Korean War. The hangar was constructed using a design commonly implemented by the U.S. Air Force (USAF) in the 1950s.</p> <p>The building, which measures approximately 180 x 240 feet, has an augmented rectangular plan with one-story side wings, a front-facing gable roof covered in ca. 2008 corrugated metal, concrete block walls, and a concrete foundation. The façade faces northwest and has three primary bays with six structural bays. A hinged truss system supports the structure (AETC 2002:30). The original windows were multi-pane metal and translucent corrugated panels; however, within the past 50 years, all of the multi-pane metal windows were removed and covered with metal 'R-panels' as siding. The translucent corrugated panels within the clerestory level remain. The metal doors are primarily single- and double-leaf, except for the four hangar doors, which are multi-leaf. The roof was replaced ca. 2008 based on existing materials and aerial imagery (NETR 2023).</p> <p>A review of as-built drawings, maintenance records, and historic aerials indicates that the building has been altered on multiple occasions. Based on design plans, materials, and historic aerials, a ca. 2008 addition was constructed at the building's northeast corner, which added a third bay to the façade (NETR 2023). The addition required the removal of multiple windows and doors. According to as-built drawings, multiple bands of multi-pane metal windows originally spanned most of the east and west elevations. These windows were removed and infilled with corrugated metal within the past 50 years, which substantially altered the overall fenestration pattern. Sections of original cladding have been replaced with new corrugated metal; most of the replacement cladding appears to be in-kind. All of the steel pedestrian doors appear to be non-historic, except for two single-leaf façade doors, which as-built drawings indicate are wood.</p> <p>Historic Context:</p> <p>Laughlin AFB was established as a training base by the U.S. Army Air Corps for medium bomber crews during World War II. The base closed after the war and reopened in 1952 during the Korean War as a flying training base (AETC 2002:1). The mission of the reactivated base, the responsibility of the Flying Training Air Force (FTAF), was to house the 3645th Pilot Training Wing (3645 PTW). Reactivation required extensive new construction as the original World</p>			

War II-era buildings had been removed. Six months after base reactivation, the mission changed to training combat pilots in F-84 and T-33 jet fighters, and the wing was renamed the 3645th Flying Training Wing (3645 FTW). At that time, the base was transferred from FTAF to the Crew Training Air Force (CTAF). By early 1953, the mission had changed again to supporting solely T-33 aircraft (USAF 2017:6).

Building 210 was constructed to support general maintenance of the T-33 planes at Laughlin AFB after the Korean Armistice Agreement ended fighting in 1953. In September 1955, the Air Training Command (ATC) transferred Laughlin AFB from CTAF back to FTAF, and the base resumed its original mission of basic single-engine pilot training with the T-33.

Basic pilot training remained the primary mission of the base until the Strategic Air Command (SAC) acquired the base in the spring of 1957 as a staging area for the 4080th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (4080 SRW) and its historic U-2 reconnaissance plane operations (USAF 2017:15). The 4080 SRW was established to gather meteorological data at high altitudes. This High-Altitude Sampling Program (HASP) was designed to collect information about the Soviet Union's above-ground nuclear tests. Following the 4080 SRW's establishment, Laughlin AFB saw its most significant involvement in the Cold War.

In 1957, as Cold War-era tensions rose and U-2 utilization amplified, all USAF pilot training for the U-2 moved to Laughlin AFB and USAF pilots from the 4080 SRW began training alongside Central Intelligence Agency pilots (USAF 2017:6). U-2 training, and reconnaissance flights formed an important part of Laughlin AFB's mission from 1957 through 1962. Hangars were converted to house the planes and other buildings on the base were converted to serve the overall U-2 mission. The most important Cold War mission flown by U-2s out of Laughlin AFB were part of the HASP. The mission involved a series of flights over Cuba that began during the planning for the Bay of Pigs invasion in the late 1950s. These flights continued through 1962 and provided essential information about the build-up of Soviet arms in Cuba (USAF 2017:6).

In 1960, the 4080 SRW became the 4080th Strategic Wing. In 1961, an undergraduate pilot training program began at the base. In order to accomplish this transition, the 3645 PTW was re-activated, and later became the 3646 PTW. In April 1962, Laughlin AFB was restored to the ATC, which reestablished flying training at the base. Laughlin AFB still maintains the undergraduate pilot training program (AETC 2002:1; USAF 2017:6).

One of the two hangars constructed at Laughlin AFB following the Korean War (either Building 50 [1954] or Building 210 [1955]) had a 30-foot pit dug on its interior for aligning the U-2 camera system added after 1957; however, the pit has since been filled in and available information did not reveal which hangar housed the equipment. The Air Education and Training Command (AETC) previously concluded that the hangars were not designed for U-2 missions and played a minor role in U-2 maintenance (USAF 2017:36).

NRHP Eligibility:

Previous Evaluation

A 2002 historic resources inventory identified and assessed 163 Cold War era buildings at Laughlin AFB for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility (USAF 2017:29). Building 210 was evaluated as retaining historic integrity but lacking significance. The evaluator found that Building 210 was not significantly associated with the base's Cold War mission, lacked the distinctive characteristics typically associated with U-2 support facilities, and did not satisfy the "exceptional importance" requirement of Criteria Consideration G (AETC 2002:32). On January 14, 2003, SHPO concurred with the USAF's "not eligible" determination. One year after SHPO's concurrence, the building turned 50 years old and no longer needed to satisfy Criterion Consideration G's requirement of demonstrating "exceptional importance."

Criterion A

USAF hangars are generally not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A as Cold War resources, because they are ubiquitous in nature and standardized in design. However, certain hangars have been found to possess significance for their significant association with Cold War-era technologies or the Cold War-era mission of Strategic Reconnaissance Operations and Training (SROT) (AETC 2002:27-28; Weitze 1999).

Building 210 was constructed in 1955, two years before the SAC acquired the base in the spring of 1957 as a staging area for the 4080 SRW. The hangar was initially used to house and service T-33 aircraft as part of a basic flight training program. After 1957, the building was converted into a support facility for the new U-2 planes. The building does not

retain any equipment or infrastructure from its U-2 support role or any material related to the HASP missions. The hangar continues to be used for general maintenance of base aircraft.

Building 210 lacks significant association with the themes of SROT or Cold War-era technologies, because it was constructed before SROT operations began at Laughlin AFB and all U-2 related materials and equipment have been removed. Research has not indicated that the building is associated with any other significant themes related to Cold War activities.

Therefore, Building 210 is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A.

Criterion B

Building 210 is recommended not eligible under NRHP Criterion B due to a lack of significance. Research did not produce evidence of the building's association with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Criterion C

Building 210 does retain characteristics typical of Cold War-era hangars (such as its overall form and use of corrugated metal); however, extensive alterations have occurred to the building's fenestration, and it received an addition ca. 2008. According to National Register Bulletin 15, "a property important for illustrating a particular architectural style or construction technique must retain most of the physical features that constitute that style or technique" (NPS 1997:46). Due to the common nature of the building's design, which was mass-produced across the U.S. during the Cold War, and impacts that have occurred to integrity, the building is recommended not eligible under Criterion C.

Criterion D

Building 210 is recommended not eligible under NRHP Criterion D as the current recording of the building encapsulates its likely information potential, and it is unlikely that further survey would reveal additional information important to history.

Integrity

Building 210 at Laughlin AFB has lost key aspects of historic integrity, specifically design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. It retains integrity of location as it has not been moved. The building's integrity of design, materials, and workmanship has been diminished by the addition at the northeast corner, and the removal and alteration of windows and doors. Integrity of setting is retained as the building's general setting (characterized by adjacent hangars and concrete runway and taxi lanes) remains unchanged. Integrity of feeling has been diminished by the replacement of historic building materials and the removal of all U-2 related infrastructure and equipment. Integrity of association has been retained as the building maintains its original location at the AFB and remains sufficiently intact to convey its association with historic AFB activities.

Form Preparer: This site form and NRHP evaluation was completed by HDR Engineering, Inc. Architectural Historian Leesa Gratreak. Ms. Gratreak, who has a Bachelor of Arts in architectural history from the University of Oregon and a Master of Science degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Oregon, is an Architectural Historian practicing throughout the West. Ms. Gratreak meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Architectural History and has over 12 years of experience.



Façade (northwest elevation), viewing southeast.

Resource:

Building 210



Southwest elevation, viewing northeast.



Southeast elevation, viewing northwest.

Resource:

Building 210



Northeast elevation, viewing southwest. Note: the addition is outlined in red.

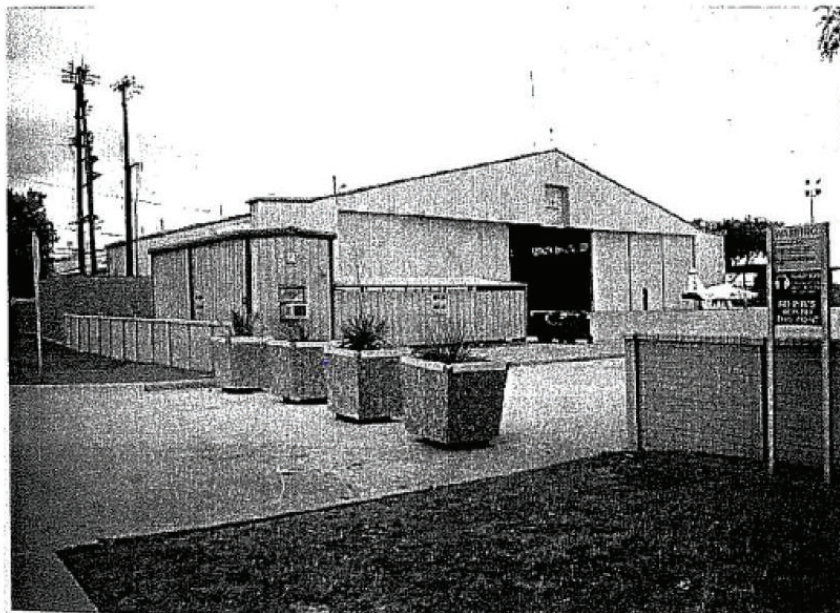


Figure 9. Building 210, 1955 maintenance hangar (photograph by Joe C. Freeman).

Figure from 2002 Historic Structures Survey, viewing north (AETC 2002:31).

<p style="text-align: center;">T-7A Recapitalization Project Laughlin AFB, Texas Historic Resources Desktop Survey (cut-off date 1978) April 2023</p>			
Resource:	Building 905	Year built:	1970
Type:	Building	Function/Use:	Defense/military facility
References:	<p>Air Education and Training Command (AETC). 2002. Laughlin AFB Cold War-Era Buildings and Structures Inventory and Assessment. May.</p> <p>United States Air Force (USAF). 2017. Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan for Laughlin Air Force Base. October.</p> <p>USAF. 1995-96. Transfer and Acceptance of Military Real Property Records for Building 905.</p>		
NRHP Eligibility:	Not Eligible		
<p>Description:</p> <p>Building 905 is a Magazine Storage Building erected in 1970 to support flying operations for the Cold War. The small, utilitarian building was constructed from a U.S. Air Force (USAF) standard design and has no attributed designer or contracting company.</p> <p>The building, which measures 28 x 30 feet, has a rectangular plan, side-gable roof covered in ca. 1996 corrugated metal, concrete block walls, and a concrete foundation (see floor plan provided by USAF inserted below). The façade faces west and has one bay. A single-leaf, steel door on the façade is sheltered by the overhanging roof eave and accessed via a non-historic concrete walkway leading through a chain-link fence surround. A double-leaf steel door is located on the south elevation. Both doors appear original. There are no windows on the building. Three non-historic exterior lights are attached to the gable end on the façade. The building has no additional architectural details or setting features. Building records provided by the USAF indicate that a restroom was added on the interior ca. 1996 (USAF 1995-96). At approximately the same time, the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system was installed, which appears to be located within the roof and eaves (USAF 1995-96). The HVAC system's installation appears to have included a roof replacement, based on the ca. 1996 roofing and eave material.</p> <p>Historic Context:</p> <p>Laughlin AFB was established as a training base by the U.S. Army Air Corps for medium bomber crews during World War II. The base closed after the war and reopened in 1952 during the Korean War as a flying training base (AETC 2002:1). The mission of the reactivated base, the responsibility of the Flying Training Air Force (FTAF), was to house the 3645th Pilot Training Wing (3645 PTW). Reactivation required extensive new construction as the original World War II-era buildings had been removed. Six months after base reactivation, the mission changed to training combat pilots in F-84 and T-33 jet fighters, and the wing was renamed the 3645th Flying Training Wing (3645 FTW). At that time, the base was transferred from FTAF to the Crew Training Air Force (CTAF). By early 1953, the mission had changed again to supporting solely T-33 aircraft (USAF 2017:6).</p> <p>In September 1955, the Air Training Command (ATC) transferred Laughlin AFB from CTAF back to FTAF, and the base resumed its original mission of basic single-engine pilot training with the T-33.</p> <p>Basic pilot training remained the primary mission of the base until the Strategic Air Command (SAC) acquired the base in the spring of 1957 as a staging area for the 4080th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (4080 SRW) and its historic U-2 reconnaissance plane operations (USAF 2017:15). The 4080 SRW was established to gather meteorological data at high altitudes. This High-Altitude Sampling Program (HASP) was designed to collect information about the Soviet Union's above-ground nuclear tests. Following the 4080 SRW's establishment, Laughlin AFB saw its most significant involvement in the Cold War.</p> <p>In 1957, as Cold War-era tensions rose and U-2 utilization amplified, all USAF pilot training for the U-2 moved to Laughlin AFB and USAF pilots from the 4080 SRW began training alongside Central Intelligence Agency pilots (USAF</p>			

2017:6). U-2 training, and reconnaissance flights formed an important part of Laughlin AFB's mission from 1957 through 1962. Hangars were converted to house the planes and other buildings on the base were converted to serve the overall U-2 mission. The most important Cold War mission flown by U-2s out of Laughlin AFB were part of the HASP. The mission involved a series of flights over Cuba that began during the planning for the Bay of Pigs invasion in the late 1950s. These flights continued through 1962 and provided essential information about the build-up of Soviet arms in Cuba (USAF 2017:6).

In 1960, the 4080 SRW became the 4080th Strategic Wing. In 1961, an undergraduate pilot training program began at the base. In order to accomplish this transition, the 3645 PTW was re-activated, and later became the 3646 PTW. In April 1962, Laughlin AFB was restored to the ATC, which reestablished basic flying training at the base. Laughlin AFB still maintains the undergraduate pilot training program (AETC 2002:1; USAF 2017:6).

Building 905 was constructed in 1970 to support general flying operations and storage at Laughlin AFB during the Cold War and was not added to assist in any particular missions or flight exercises. The building was not designed to support U-2 missions.

NRHP Eligibility:

Previous Evaluation

A 2002 historic resources inventory identified and assessed 163 Cold War-era (1947-91) buildings at Laughlin AFB for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility (USAF 2017:29). Building 905 was evaluated as not eligible as it was not found to be significantly associated with the base's Cold War mission and did not satisfy the exceptional importance requirement of Criteria Consideration G (AETC 2002). On January 14, 2003, SHPO concurred with the USAF's "not eligible" determination. In 2020, the building turned 50 years old and no longer needs to satisfy Criterion Consideration G's requirement of demonstrating exceptional importance.

Criterion A

USAF generally recognizes five property type groups that may convey important aspects of the Cold War. Those include Operational and Support Installations, Combat Weapons and Support Systems, Training Facilities, Materiel Development Facilities, and Intelligence Facilities (AETC 2002:24). Building 905, used for general magazine storage, would not fall under any of those previously defined property types. In addition, the USAF maintains that elements of base infrastructure such as storage facilities lack a direct Cold War association as they are necessary for base operation regardless of wartime status and activities (AETC 2002:27).

Building 905 was constructed in 1970, eight years after Laughlin AFB reestablished basic flying training, and is not associated with the significant U-2 operations that occurred at Laughlin AFB earlier in the Cold War. Research has not indicated that the building is associated with any other significant themes related to Cold War or post-Cold War activities. Therefore, Building 905 is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A.

Criterion B

Building 905 is recommended not eligible under NRHP Criterion B due to a lack of significance. Research did not produce evidence of the building's association with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Criterion C

Building 905 is a small, utilitarian storage building constructed of concrete block that does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represent the work of a master; or possess high artistic values. In addition, none of the previous documentation at Laughlin AFB indicates it has the potential to be a component of a greater historic district and none have been identified at the base. Therefore, the building is recommended not eligible under Criterion C due to a lack of significance.

Criterion D

Building 905 is recommended not eligible under NRHP Criterion D as the current recording of the building encapsulates its likely information potential, and it is unlikely that further survey would reveal additional information important to history.

Integrity

Building 905 retains all seven aspects of integrity (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association); however, integrity of design and materials has been impacted by the alterations to the roof and eaves.

Form Preparer: This site form and NRHP evaluation was completed by HDR Engineering, Inc. Architectural Historian Leesa Gratrek. Ms. Gratrek, who has a Bachelor of Arts in architectural history from the University of Oregon and a Master of Science degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Oregon, is an Architectural Historian practicing throughout the West. Ms. Gratrek meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Architectural History and has over 12 years of experience.



Façade (west elevation), view facing east.

Resource:

Building 905



South elevation, view facing north-northeast.



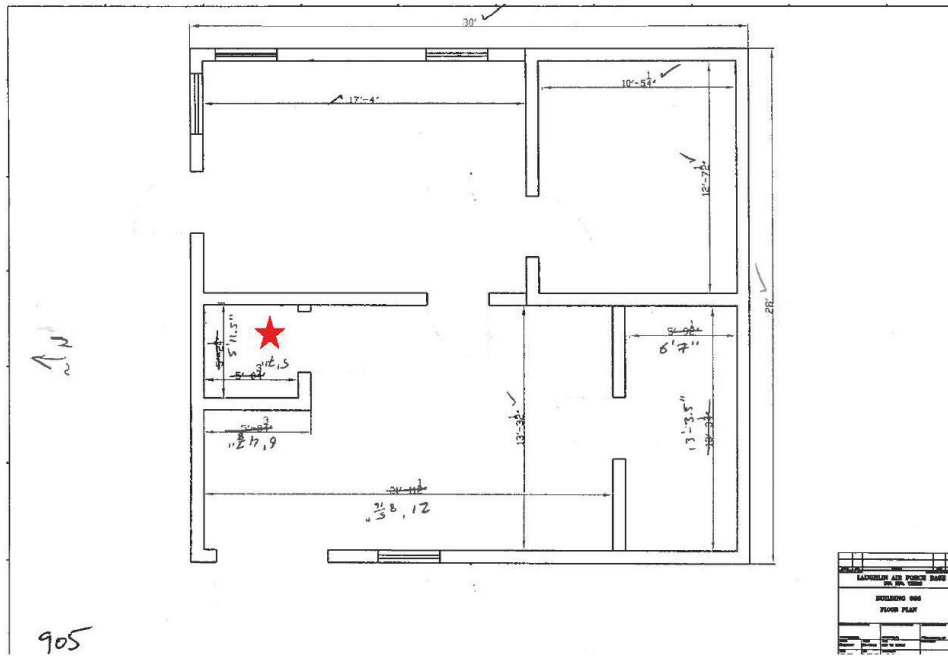
East elevation, view facing west.

Resource:

Building 905



North elevation, view facing south.



1996 floorplan provided by USAF showing the bathroom addition, indicated by a red star (image provided by USAF).

Response from the Texas SHPO (June 2023)

From: noreply@thc.state.tx.us <noreply@thc.state.tx.us>
Sent: Monday, June 5, 2023 9:09 AM
To: JOHNSON, DARREN A CIV USAF AETC 47 CES/CEIE
<darren.johnson.27@us.af.mil>; reviews@thc.state.tx.us
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Laughlin AFB T-7A

<<https://xapps.thc.texas.gov/106Review/Images/THCtrans.png>>

Re: Project Review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act THC Tracking #202308062
Date: 06/05/2023
Laughlin AFB T-7A
251 Fourth Street
Del Rio, TX 78843

Description: Recapitalization is the phased acquisition of the new generation T-7A aircraft and construction and upgrade of specific facilities to support the training, operation, and maintenance of the aircraft.

Dear Darren:

Thank you for your submittal regarding the above-referenced project. This response represents the comments of the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Executive Director of the Texas Historical Commission (THC), pursuant to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The review staff, led by Tiffany Osburn and Caitlin Brashear, has completed its review and has made the following determinations based on the information submitted for review:

Above-Ground Resources

. No historic properties are present or affected by the project as proposed. However, if historic properties are discovered or unanticipated effects on historic properties are found, work should cease in the immediate area; work can continue where no historic properties are present. Please contact the THC's History Programs Division at 512-463-5853 to consult on further actions that may be necessary to protect historic properties.

Archeology Comments

. No adverse effects on historic properties.

We have the following comments: Regarding above-ground resources, the History Programs Division review staff, led by Caitlin Brashear, concurs that Buildings 50, 210, and 905 are Not Eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

We look forward to further consultation with your office and hope to maintain a partnership that will foster effective historic preservation. Thank you for your cooperation in this review process, and for your efforts to preserve the irreplaceable heritage of Texas. If the project changes, or if new historic properties are found, please contact the review staff. If you have any questions concerning our review or if we can be of further assistance, please email the following reviewers:
tiffany.osburn@thc.texas.gov, caitlin.brashear@thc.texas.gov.

This response has been sent through the electronic THC review and compliance system (eTRAC). Submitting your project via eTRAC eliminates mailing delays and allows you to check the status of the review, receive an electronic response, and generate reports on your submissions. For more information, visit <http://thc.texas.gov/etrac-system>.

Sincerely,

<<https://xapps.thc.texas.gov/106Review/Images/Signatures/103.png>>

for Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer Executive Director,
Texas Historical Commission

Please do not respond to this email.

Native American Tribal Nation Consultation

DAF consulted under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act with the following 21 Native American Tribes with an expressed or potential interest in cultural resources at Laughlin AFB and the SUA:

- Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas
- Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
- Delaware Nation (Oklahoma)
- Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation of Montana
- Comanche Nation (Oklahoma)
- Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Jicarilla Apache Nation
- Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas
- Kickapoo Tribe of Indians of the Kickapoo Reservation in Kansas
- Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma
- Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
- Mescalero Apache Tribe
- San Carlos Apache Tribe
- Shoshone Tribe of the Wind River Reservation
- Tonkawa Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- White Mountain Apache Tribe
- Wichita and Affiliated Tribes
- Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo
- Lipan Apache Tribe of Texas.

Section 3.5 contains further information regarding the outcome of the consultation with the Native American Tribes. A copy of the consultation letters and responses is on the following pages.

Example of DAF's first consultation letter (January 2023) sent to the Native American tribes

Each of the 21 tribes received an identical letter. A copy of each tribe's letter has been retained in the project's administrative record.



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 47TH FLYING TRAINING WING
LAUGHLIN AIR FORCE BASE TEXAS**

11 January 2023

Colonel Kevin A. Davidson
47 FTW Wing Commander
561 Liberty Drive, Suite 1
Laughlin AFB, TX 78843

Honorable <First Name> <Last Name>
<Title>
<Address 1>
<Address 2>

Dear <Title> <Last Name>

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and its implementing regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500–1508), the U.S. Department of the Air Force (DAF) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess the potential environmental consequences associated with T-7A recapitalization at Laughlin Air Force Base (AFB), Texas. Under this proposal, DAF would recapitalize the T-38C Talon flight training program at Laughlin AFB with T-7A Red Hawk aircraft. This proposal supports the Secretary of the Air Force's strategic basing decisions to recapitalize existing T-38C pilot training installations, and Laughlin AFB would be the third installation to be environmentally analyzed for possible recapitalization.

Recapitalization entails introduction of T-7A aircraft and flight operations at Laughlin AFB and associated airspace to replace all T-38C aircraft assigned to the installation; introduction of nighttime (between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.) T-7A flight operations; changes to the number of personnel and dependents in the Laughlin AFB region; and construction and upgrade of operations, support, and maintenance facilities. The purpose of this proposal is to continue the T-7A recapitalization program by recapitalizing Laughlin AFB to prepare pilots to operate more technologically advanced modern aircraft. Recapitalization is needed because the current training practices with the older T-38C aircraft do not adequately prepare pilots for the technological advancements of fourth and fifth generation aircraft. The enclosed informational brochure provides further background information on this proposal, describes the alternatives in detail, and summarizes the EIS process.

DAF invites all members of your community to remotely participate in public scoping for the EIS. In accordance with DAF guidance, in-person public scoping meetings will not be held. DAF will hold a remote public scoping meeting planned for February 8, 2023 to provide the opportunity to learn more about this proposal. A link to the on-line remote public scoping meeting has been provided on the project website (<https://laughlin.t-7anepadocuments.com>) allowing interested parties to register to attend the remote public scoping meeting. Individuals without internet access may call 408-418-9388 and use the passcode 2491 041 7105 to attend. The remote public scoping meeting will open at 5:30 p.m. Central Time and begin with DAF giving a brief presentation about the proposal. Following the presentation, DAF will answer relevant

questions from the public. The remote public scoping meeting will end no later than 8:00 p.m and may end earlier upon verification that all participants who desire to ask a question have been given that opportunity.

The project website provides posters, the remote public scoping meeting presentation, the enclosed informational brochure, other meeting materials, and a capability for the public to provide public scoping comments. Scoping materials are also available in print at the Val Verde County Library (300 Spring Street, Del Rio, Texas). Requests for printed scoping materials may also be made to the address provided below. For printed material requests, the standard U.S. Postal Service shipping timeline will apply. Please consider the environment before requesting printed material

We are requesting government-to-government consultation with your community on preparation of this EIS, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, *Protection of Historic Properties*. DAF is committed to sustained, meaningful and respectful consultation with federally recognized Indian Tribes. In accordance with the NEPA process, government-to-government consultation with federally recognized Tribal Nations is required per Executive Memorandum, April 29, 1994, *Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments*; Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 4710.02: *DoD Interactions with Federally-Recognized Tribes*; and Department of Air Force Instruction (DAFI) 90-2002: *Interactions with Federally-Recognized Tribes*.

DAF has determined that for the purposes of Section 106, the current project is an undertaking that should be subject to Section 106 analysis. Section 106 for the current project will be carried out in parallel to the NEPA process, and the results of Section 106 will inform the NEPA analysis. DAF is soliciting any comments or concerns you may have at this time regarding the project, and is seeking any information you might be willing to share regarding properties of traditional or cultural significance that you feel should be considered in any analysis of the project. DAF will continue Section 106 consultation with your tribe as more information becomes available regarding the finalized Area of Potential Effect (APE), DAF good faith efforts to identify historic properties within the APE, determinations of eligibility and effect, and any proposed mitigation for possible adverse effects.

The DAF Point of Contact for this project is Mr. Nolan Swick, NEPA Program Manager. Please send him your comments and concerns to Attn: Laughlin AFB T-7A Recapitalization EIS; Headquarters AETC Public Affairs; 100 H. East Street, Suite 4; Randolph AFB, TX 78150, or by email or phone at nolan.swick@us.af.mil or 210-925-3392. Should your tribe have no further interest in this project, please let us know in writing, via email or letter. I look forward to receiving any input you may have regarding this endeavor. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this effort.

Sincerely,

DAVIDSON, KEVIN Digitally signed by
DAVIDSON, KEVIN, A.1187390300
N.A.1187390300 Date: 2023.01.18 14:10:49 -0600

KEVIN A. DAVIDSON, Colonel, USAF
Commander

Enclosure:

1. Brochure: Public Scoping for T-7A Recapitalization at Laughlin AFB, Texas



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

T-7A RECAPITALIZATION AT LAUGHLIN AIR FORCE BASE, TEXAS



PUBLIC SCOPING FOR T-7A RECAPITALIZATION AT LAUGHLIN AIR FORCE BASE, TEXAS



Photo Credit: Boeing T-7A Red Hawk Website, September 2021, <https://www.boeing.com/defense/t-7a/gallery>

Introduction

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was enacted to address concerns about federal actions and their effects on the environment. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the most detailed analysis prescribed by regulations implementing NEPA. The U.S. Department of the Air Force (DAF) has published a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS, pursuant to NEPA, for the proposed T-7A recapitalization at Laughlin Air Force Base (AFB). This proposal is the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action entails introduction of T-7A Red Hawk

aircraft and flight operations at Laughlin AFB and associated airspace to replace all T-38C Talon aircraft assigned to the installation; introduction of nighttime (between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.) T-7A flight operations; changes to the number of personnel and dependents in the Laughlin AFB region; and construction and upgrade of operations, support, and maintenance facilities. The number of T-7A aircraft, aircraft operations, and nighttime operations is evaluated as alternatives to the Proposed Action described on the back of this brochure.

Background

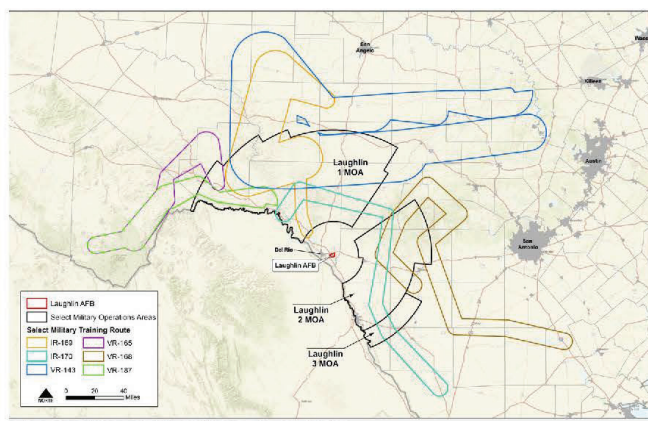
DAF proposes to recapitalize the flight training program at Laughlin AFB with T-7A aircraft because the T-38C is expected to reach the end of its service life within the next decade. Training with the T-38C does not adequately prepare pilots for the technological advancements of modern fourth and fifth generation aircraft including nighttime flight training. The Secretary of the Air Force has made strategic basing decisions to recapitalize existing T-38C pilot training installations, and Laughlin AFB would be the third of five T-38C installations to be environmentally analyzed for possible recapitalization.

What is the Public Scoping Process?

Public scoping is an early and open process, conducted in compliance with NEPA, for identifying issues and alternatives to be addressed in an EIS and determining who (e.g., public and government agencies) is interested in a proposed action. Public outreach is conducted as a part of the public scoping process to provide information to interested parties and to receive comments on a proposed action, alternatives, and potential impacts. Comments received during the public scoping process are considered in the preparation of the Draft EIS. A timeline showing the steps of the EIS process is on the back of this brochure.

Personnel and Construction

Laughlin AFB and surrounding region would experience a 190 staff and 361 dependent increase during the aircraft transition period of 2030 and 2031 and a 60 staff and 114 dependent decrease (relative to current personnel levels) after 2031. Six military construction and six facility sustainment, restoration, and modernization projects would be undertaken. These projects include construction at Laughlin AFB of a new Ground Based Training System Facility, Unit Maintenance Trainer Facility, and hush house; addition to the Egress Shop; and 48 T-7A shelters.



Laughlin AFB and Affected Military Training Airspace

Alternatives

DAF is considering three alternatives to the Proposed Action (i.e., Alternatives 1, 2, and 3) and the No Action Alternative. These alternatives are described as follows:

Alternative 1: 63 T-7A Aircraft and T-7A Operations at a Level Sustaining Pilot Training while Simultaneously Phasing Out the T-38C and Phasing In the T-7A

Laughlin AFB would receive 63 T-7A aircraft between 2030 and 2033. Pilot training operations would gradually transition from the T-38C to the T-7A during 2030, 2031, 2032, and 2033, and pilot training operations would be performed at a level to meet DAF's anticipated training needs. Operations are takeoffs, landings, the approach phase of a "touch-and-go", and the takeoff phase of a "touch-and-go". Up to 490 annual nighttime T-7A operations would occur. Existing military training airspace would be used, and no changes to airspace configurations would be required. All T-7A operations would be sub-sonic.

Alternative 2: 63 T-7A Aircraft and T-7A Operations 25 Percent Greater than the Proposed Action

Alternative 2 would be identical to Alternative 1 except T-7A operations would be 25 percent greater than Alternative 1. Up to 613 annual nighttime T-7A operations would occur. Alternative 2 covers a potential scenario in which DAF requires a surge or increase in pilot training operations above current plan.

Alternative 3: 79 T-7A Aircraft and T-7A Operations 25 Percent Greater than the Proposed Action

Alternative 3 would be identical to Alternatives 1 and 2 except 16 additional T-7A aircraft would be delivered in 2030 and 60 T-7A shelters would be constructed. T-7A operations would be identical to Alternative 2. Alternative 3 covers a potential scenario in which another military installation is unable to accept delivery of all their T-7A aircraft and some of those aircraft need to be permanently reassigned to Laughlin AFB.

No Action Alternative: Does Not Implement T-7A Recapitalization at Laughlin AFB

The No Action Alternative assesses the environmental consequences from taking no action and serves as a baseline to compare the environmental consequences of the Proposed Action. For the No Action Alternative, T-38C aircraft would remain in service with no changes to operations at Laughlin AFB or airspace areas even though they will reach the end of their service lives within the next decade. No changes to the number of personnel and dependents would occur, and no construction would be undertaken.

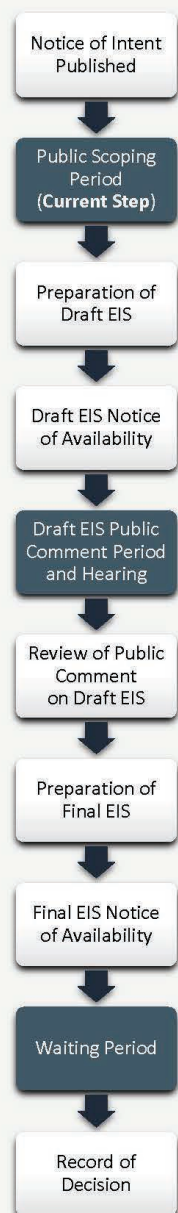
Environmental Impact Analysis Process

DAF anticipates potential for the following notable environmental impacts from the Proposed Action:

1. Increased air emissions, particularly nitrogen oxides.
2. Increased noise from aircraft operations because the T-7A is inherently louder than the T-38C and the addition of nighttime operations may be bothersome to some residents. Increased noise could have a disproportionate impact on certain populations and impact off-installation land use compatibility.
3. Increased potential for bird/wildlife aircraft strike hazards.
4. Construction may have a minor impact on downstream water quality.

The EIS will model air emissions, noise levels, and the number of sleep and school disturbance events and compare to current conditions. DAF will also consult with appropriate resource agencies and Native American tribes to determine the potential for significant impacts. Consultation will be incorporated into the preparation of the EIS and will include, but not be limited to, consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Additional analysis will be provided in the Draft EIS, which is anticipated in late 2023. The Final EIS and a decision on which alternative to implement is expected in early 2024.

EIS Timeline



Please provide comments on the project website, by email at nolan.swick@us.af.mil, or via postal mail to Mr. Nolan Swick, AFCEC/CZN; Attn: Laughlin AFB T-7A Recapitalization EIS; Headquarters Air Education and Training Command Public Affairs; 100 H. East Street, Suite 4; Randolph AFB, TX 78150. DAF also welcomes comments under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 800). The scoping materials are also available in print at the Val Verde County Library (300 Spring Street, Del Rio, Texas) and by request. Please consider the environment before requesting printed material.

<https://laughlin.t-7anepadocuments.com/>

To ensure DAF has sufficient time to consider public input, please submit all comments by February 17, 2023.

Response from the San Carlos Apache Tribe regarding DAF's first consultation letter



Received from Tribal Admin 01/26/23 W
E-mailed 02/01/23 W (date)
Scanned 02/01/23 W (date)

SAN CARLOS APACHE TRIBE
Historic Preservation & Archaeology Department
P.O. Box 0
San Carlos Arizona 85550
Tel. (928) 475-5797, apachevern@yahoo.com

Tribal Consultation Response Letter

Date: January 26, 2023
Contact Name: Kevin A. Davidson (210) 925-3392/Nolan.swick@us.af.mil
Company: Department of the Air Force – Laughlin Air Force Base Texas
Address: 561 Liberty Dr., Suite 1 Laughlin AFB, TX 78843
Project Name/#: T-7A recapitalization at Laughlin Air Force Base (AFB), Texas EIS

Dear Sir or Madam:

Under Section 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we are replying to the above referenced project. Please see the appropriate marked circle, including the signatures of Vernelda Grant, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), and the concurrence of the Chairman of the San Carlos Apache Tribe:

- NO INTEREST/NO FURTHER CONSULTATION/NO FUTURE UPDATES**
We defer to the Tribe located nearest to the project area.
- CONCURRENCE WITH REPORT FINDINGS & THANK YOU**
- REQUEST ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
I require additional information in order to provide a finding of effect for this proposed undertaking, i.e. Project description ___ Map ___ Photos Other We defer to the Ft. Sill Apache
- NO EFFECT** & Mescalero Apache Tribe
I have determined that there are no properties of religious and cultural significance to the San Carlos Apache Tribe that are listed on the National Register within the area of potential effect or that the proposed project will have no effect on any such properties that may be present.
- NO ADVERSE EFFECT**
Properties of cultural and religious significance within the area of effect have been identified that are eligible for listing in the National Register for which there would be no adverse effect as a result of the proposed project.
- ADVERSE EFFECT**
I have identified properties of cultural and religious significance within the area of potential effect that are eligible for listing in the National Register. I believe the proposed project would cause an adverse effect on these properties. Please contact the THPO for further discussion.

We were taught traditionally not to disturb the natural world in a significant way, and that to do so may cause harm to oneself or one's family. Apache resources can be best protected by managing the land to be as natural as it was in pre-1870s settlement times. Please contact the THPO, if there is a change in any portion of the project, especially if Apache cultural resources are found at any phase of planning and construction. Thank you for contacting the San Carlos Apache Tribe, your time and effort is greatly appreciated.

DIRECTOR/THPO: Vernelda J. Grant 01/27/23
Vernelda J. Grant, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Date
CONCURRENCE: Terry Rambler 01/02/2023
Terry Rambler, Tribal Chairman Date

Example of DAF's second consultation letter (June 2023) sent to the Native American tribes

This letter was sent to all tribes except the San Carlos Apache Tribe, which had already provided "concurrence with report findings" and determined no adverse effect would occur from this undertaking. A copy of each tribe's letter has been retained in the project's administrative record.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 47TH FLYING TRAINING WING
LAUGHLIN AIR FORCE BASE TEXAS

Colonel Kevin A. Davidson
47 FTW Wing Commander
561 Liberty Drive, Suite 1
Laughlin AFB, TX 78843

Receiver Name
Chairman/Title
Tribe Name
Street Address
City ST 12345-6789

Dear Chairman/Title Last Name:

The United States Department of the Air Force (DAF) previously contacted your tribe with a letter dated 18 January 2023 regarding the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act to evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with T-7A Recapitalization at Laughlin Air Force Base (AFB), Texas. Recapitalization is the phased acquisition of the new generation T-7A aircraft and construction and upgrade of specific facilities to support the training, operation, and maintenance of the T-7A aircraft. As a follow-up to our 18 January 2023 letter and in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S.C. 306108) and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, DAF would like to initiate government-to-government consultation regarding the proposed recapitalization and requests that you identify any historic properties of religious or cultural significance that may be present.

The undertaking will entail the phased introduction of T-7A aircraft and phased reduction of the T-38C aircraft currently operating from Laughlin AFB; new intensities of flight operations at Laughlin AFB including nighttime operations; and changes to the number of personnel assigned to Laughlin AFB. T-7A operations would occur within established Special Use Airspace currently used for T-38C operations (see **Attachment 1**), and no changes to Special Use Airspace configurations (i.e., size, shape, or location) would be necessary to support the proposed operations of the T-7A. Additionally, construction for six military construction (MILCON) projects and seven facilities sustainment, restoration, and modernization (FSRM) projects would occur at Laughlin AFB to provide modern facilities and infrastructure to support the T-7A aircrafts' maintenance, training, and operational requirements. The MILCON and FSRM projects include new building construction and renovation of existing facilities. This undertaking's potential to impact historic properties is from the MILCON and FSRM projects, and details on the MILCON and FSRM projects and their individual assessment of effect can be found in **Attachment 2**.

The Area of Potential Effect (APE) for this undertaking is defined as the potential impact area from all activities. The APE includes all areas of potential direct and indirect effects. Direct effects include, but are not limited to, ground disturbance, vibration, building modification and new construction, and staging and equipment storage. Indirect effects include noise and aesthetic interference. For this undertaking, the APE is defined as the footprint of all buildings proposed for interior and exterior alteration, all areas of new construction and additions, all landscape features (such as airfield markings) that are proposed for alteration, all new roads and parking lots, and a 50-foot buffer around these areas to account for construction staging and temporary physical impacts from ground disturbing activity (see **Attachment 3** for the boundaries of the APE). The APE captures all anticipated direct and indirect effects. The APE totals approximately 58.5 acres. The APE for this undertaking does not include areas within the Special Use Airspace where the T-7A would perform operations (see **Attachment 1**) because T-7A flight training would occur at a relatively high altitude (e.g., greater than 500 feet above ground level) in previously defined military airspace and would have no potential to impact historic properties.

DAF maintains an Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP), which was last updated in 2017, to provide effective management and protection of cultural resources within the bounds of Laughlin AFB. Under the NHPA, historic properties are those cultural resources that meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Archaeological investigations in 1992 and 1994 recorded a total of 14 archaeological sites on Laughlin AFB (see **Attachment 4**). Of these 14 archeological sites, NRHP testing determined that four are eligible for listing on the NRHP, and none of these sites are within the APE. Additionally, the ICRMP states there are no NRHP-eligible buildings on the installation.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Darren Johnson via email at darren.johnson.27@us.af.mil or mail at Attn: Laughlin AFB T-7A Recapitalization EIS, 47 CES/CEIE, 251 Fourth Street, Laughlin AFB, TX 78843-5126. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this effort.

Sincerely,

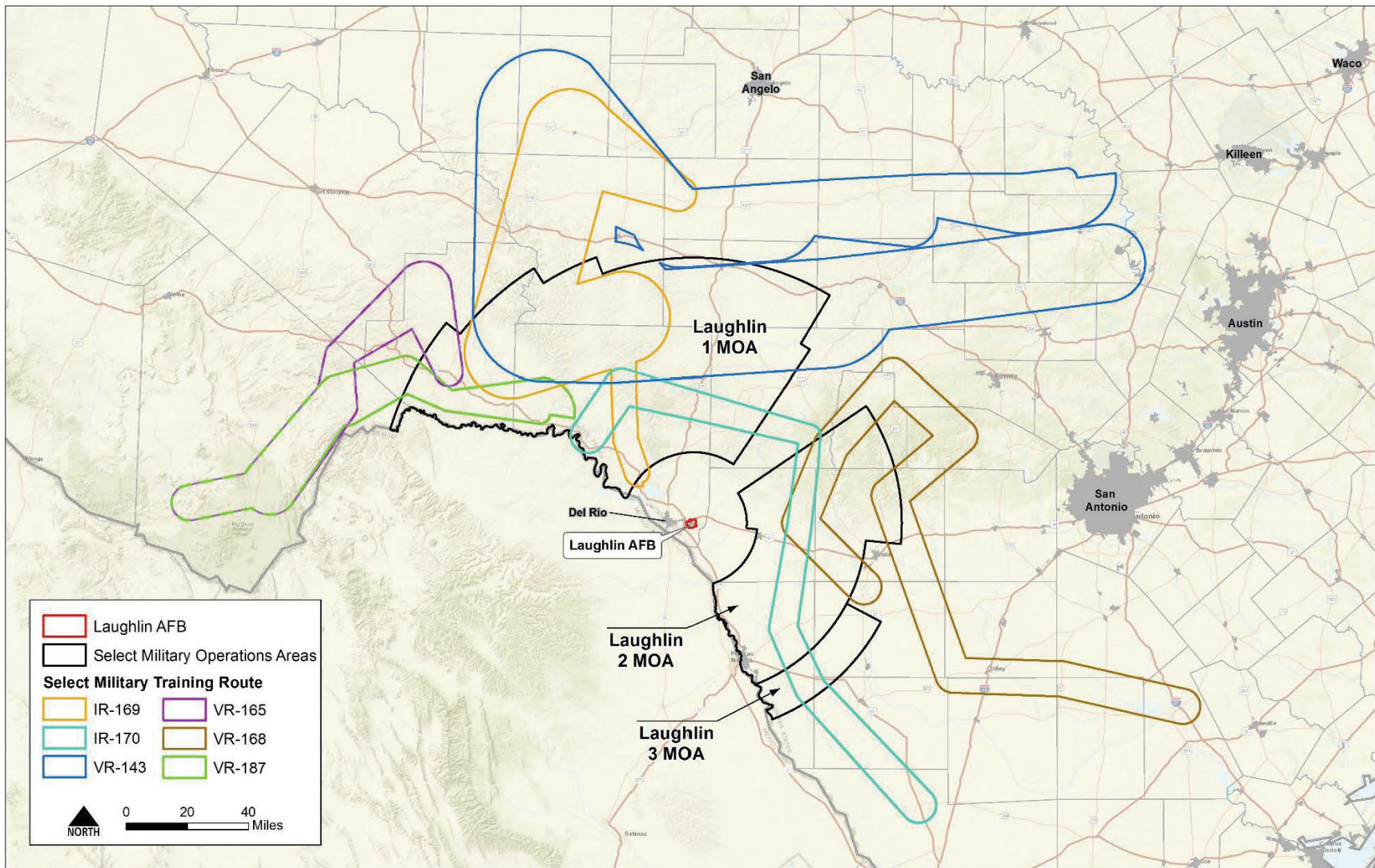
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Date: 2023.05.25 08:45:02 -05'00'
N.A.1187390300

KEVIN A. DAVIDSON, Colonel, USAF
Commander, 47th Flying Training Wing

Attachments:

1. Map of Special Use Airspace used for T-38C and T-7A Operations
2. Table of MILCON and FSRM Projects
3. Map of APE for Laughlin AFB T-7A Recapitalization Undertaking
4. Table of Previously Recorded Archaeological Sites on Laughlin AFB

Attachment 1: Map of Special Use Airspace used for
T-38C and T-7A Operations



Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Laughlin AFB T-38C and T-7A Training Airspace

Attachment 2: Table of MILCON and FSRM Projects

Table 1. Cultural Resources Components of the Proposed Action and Impact on Historic Properties

Building Name/Number	Project Component	NRHP Status	Date Constructed	Assessment of Effect
MILCON Projects				
Ground Based Training System (GBTS) Facility	Construct a one-story building (approximately 34,000 square feet [ft ²] and 40 feet tall) and parking lot (106 spots) on undeveloped land adjacent to Building 328 (constructed in 1979).	N/A – New construction	N/A – Vacant land	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Unit Maintenance Trainer (UMT) Facility	Construct a one-story building (approximately 11,500 ft ²) on undeveloped land adjacent to Colorado Avenue. No parking lot is required.	N/A – New construction	N/A – Vacant land	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Hush House	Construct a new, one-story hush house on the site of Building 15 (breakroom, built 1987). Realign airfield service road to provide buffer space. Laughlin AFB's existing hush house (Building 19) would not be altered or demolished.	Building 15 is non-historic	1987	Recommend no effect to historic properties
T-7A Shelters	Construct 48 shelters (sunshades) on existing aircraft parking ramp and remove existing non-historic T-38C prefabricated shelters (installed from 2017 to 2021).	N/A – New construction Existing shelters are non-historic	Non-historic ramp Existing T-38C shelters installed from 2017 to 2021	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Addition to Egress Shop	Add 3,400 ft ² addition to Building 201 (built 1990).	Building 201 is non-historic	1990	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Jet Blast Deflectors	Install jet blast deflectors on airfield. Final placement dependent on ramp layout design.	N/A – Attached to non-historic ramp	Non-historic ramp	Recommend no effect to historic properties
FSRM Projects				
Modify Buildings 50 and 210	Modify Buildings 50 (built 1954) and 210 (built 1955), including hangar doors.	Recommend not eligible	1954 and 1955	Recommend no effect to historic properties

Building Name/Number	Project Component	NRHP Status	Date Constructed	Assessment of Effect
Antenna Farm	Incorporate an antenna farm into the design of the proposed GBTS facility. Antenna to be located atop the roof, projecting approximately 15 to 20 feet above the approximately 40-foot-tall building.	N/A – New construction	N/A – Proposed GBTS facility (new construction)	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Squadron Operations Buildings Renovations	Renovate interior of Squadron Operations Buildings 307 (built 2007), 320 (built 1988), and 328 (built 1979).	Buildings 307, 320, and 328 are non-historic	2007, 1988, and 1979	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Airfield Improvements	Remark the T-38C ramp to the width of the T-7A. Install new moorings and anchor rods for T-7A aircraft. Replace existing aircraft arresting system. Remove aboveground service modules of the Centralized Aircraft Support System.	N/A – Attached to non-historic ramp	Non-historic ramp	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Trim Pad	Rebuild existing trim pad (built ca. 1985) and install T-7A anchor block. Relocate the compass rose (painted 2020) to another magnetically quiet site.	N/A – Attached to non-historic ramp	Non-historic ramp Trim pad, ca. 1985 compass rose, painted 2020	Recommend no effect to historic properties
T-7A Explosive Component Storage Facility	Construct an approximately 7,200 ft ² concrete pad and provide utilities for a storage container.	N/A – New construction	N/A – Vacant land	Recommend no effect to historic properties
Addition to Building 905	Construct an approximately 1,000 ft ² addition onto the east side of Building 905 (built 1970). Add perimeter fences and gates and construct a 10-vehicle parking lot.	Recommend not eligible	1970	Recommend no effect to historic properties

Sources: Laughlin AFB 2017, AETC 2002, ANLESD 2020, and 47 CES 2022
Key: N/A = Not applicable

Table 1 Sources

47 CES 2022	47 Civil Engineer Squadron (47 CES). 2022. Email communication from Mr. Darren Johnson (Natural/Cultural Resources Manager for 47 CES) to Mr. Timothy Didlake (HDR) regarding building construction dates. Email sent on November 29, 2022.
AETC 2002	Air Education and Training Command (AETC). 2002. <i>Cold War-Era Buildings and Structures Inventory and Assessment. Laughlin Air Force Base.</i> May 2002.
ANLESD 2020	Argonne National Library Environmental Science Division (ANLESD). 2020. <i>Historic Building Report for Laughlin Air Force Base Kinney and Val Verde Counties, Texas.</i> September 2020.
Laughlin AFB 2017	Laughlin Air Force Base (AFB). 2017. <i>U.S. Air Force, Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan, Laughlin Air Force Base.</i> October 2017.

Attachment 3: Map of APE for Laughlin AFB T-7A
Recapitalization Undertaking



Source: Layer Credits: World Imagery: Earthstar Geographics
World Imagery: Maxar

Area of Potential Effect (APE)

Attachment 4: Table of Previously Recorded
Archaeological Sites on Laughlin AFB

Table 2. Previously Recorded Archaeological Sites on Laughlin AFB

Site Designation	Year Recorded	Site Age	Site Type	NRHP Eligibility
41VV1652	1992	Archaic, Historic	Two isolated finds: point frag and .45 caliber steel jacket bullet	Ineligible
41VV1653	1992, 1994	Prehistoric	Surface lithic scatter with three possible surface hearths	Ineligible
41VV1654	1992, 1994	Paleoindian, Archaic, Historic	Habitation with burned rock hearths, historic ranch with 19th to early 20th century features	Eligible
41VV1655	1992, 1994	Prehistoric	Sparse lithic scatter, lithic procurement locality	Ineligible
41VV1682	1994	Historic	Zacatos Ranch Headquarters: multiple disturbed concrete and stone features, artifact scatters	Ineligible
41VV1683	1994	Paleoindian	Angostura point in lithic scatter, lithic procurement locality	Ineligible
41VV1684	1994	Prehistoric	Surface lithic scatter with fire-cracked rock	Ineligible
41VV1685	1994	Prehistoric	Extensive lithic scatter and procurement locality	Ineligible
41VV1686	1994	Prehistoric	Lithic surface scatter with three possible burned rock hearths	Ineligible
41VV1687	1994	Prehistoric	Small scatter of lithics and fire-cracked rock	Ineligible
41VV1688	1994	Middle to Late Archaic	Lithic scatter with two possible hearths, and a Kinney and an Ensor point	Eligible
41VV1689	1994	Early Archaic	Martindale point with a thin lithic scatter and one possible hearth	Eligible
41VV1690	1994	Middle Archaic	Pedernales point with three possible hearths	Eligible
41VV1691	1994	Prehistoric	Small lithic scatter	Ineligible