

Final
**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/
FINDING OF NO PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE
FOR**
**TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE COASTAL RESILIENCE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 *United States Code* 4331 et seq.), the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) that implement NEPA procedures (40 *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] 1500–1508), and the Department of the Air Force (DAF) “Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP)” (32 CFR 989), the DAF has prepared this Programmatic Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the potential environmental impacts of implementing the Tyndall Air Force Base (AFB) Coastal Resilience Implementation Plan (CRIP) and four associated nature-based solutions (NBS) pilot projects at Tyndall AFB, Florida. The DAF is aware of the November 12, 2024 decision in *Marin Audubon Society v. Federal Aviation Administration*, No. 23-1067 (D.C. Cir. Nov. 12, 2024). To the extent that a court may conclude that the CEQ regulations implementing NEPA are not judicially enforceable or binding on this agency action, the DAF has nonetheless elected to follow those regulations at 40 CFR 1500–1508, in addition to the DAF’s procedures and regulations implementing NEPA at 32 CFR 989, to meet the agency’s obligations under NEPA (42 USC 4321 et seq.).

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is to implement the Tyndall AFB CRIP, which has been developed to improve the resilience of Tyndall AFB against coastal flooding impacts from strong storms and sea-level rise through traditional and NBS flood defense strategies. The CRIP analyzes long-term coastal resilience out to Year 2100 and identifies flood defense strategies that include traditional structural options such as constructing levees and floodwalls around flood-prone areas, nonstructural options such as elevating flood-prone facilities, and NBS options to be implemented where appropriate throughout Tyndall AFB and adjacent nearshore waters. The Proposed Action also includes implementing four NBS pilot projects in the nearshore waters of Tyndall AFB under the CRIP, which include the creation of a living shoreline breakwater, oyster reef breakwater, and shoreline stabilization breakwater, and the enhancement of seagrass habitat.

All the flood defense strategies recommended in the CRIP are conceptual and analyzed on a programmatic level in the attached EA. In contrast, the EA provides a detailed analysis of the four proposed pilot projects, which would be the first NBS projects implemented under the CRIP. These projects have defined locations, layouts, and materials and, therefore, are analyzed in detail in the EA. All the other traditional and NBS options under the CRIP that are analyzed programmatically in the EA would undergo separate environmental review by Tyndall AFB if they are proposed to be implemented in the future; the subsequent environmental reviews of proposed CRIP projects would be tiered off the analyses in the attached EA, as applicable.

Alternatives

Two action alternatives (Alternatives 1 and 2) for implementing the Tyndall AFB CRIP, two action alternatives (Alternatives 1 and 2) for implementing the four in-water NBS pilot projects, and the No Action Alternative are analyzed in the attached EA. Under Alternative 1 for CRIP implementation (preferred alternative), the flood defense strategies recommended for each district of Tyndall AFB in the final CRIP would be implemented. The specific projects identified in the final CRIP are the preferred flood defense options for the various districts of the base. Under Alternative 2, structural solutions that differ from the preferred structural solutions under Alternative 1 for certain districts would be implemented. Under Alternative 1, the preferred structural solutions are earthen levees. Under

Alternative 2, concrete floodwalls instead of levees would be constructed. Floodwalls would serve the same purpose as levees but would differ from levees in their construction footprint, potential impacts to natural and cultural resources, and overall cost. Alternative 2 would include the same nonstructural CRIP solutions as Alternative 1, which include constructing new buildings to the design flood elevation, floodproofing existing at-risk buildings, and incorporating NBS options for all seven districts of the base.

Under Alternative 1 for the four NBS pilot projects (preferred alternative), the breakwaters would be constructed based on the preferred design for each breakwater, which is a submerged quarry stone breakwater. Under Alternative 2, a submerged pile-mounted concrete disk breakwater would be installed for the living shoreline and oyster reef breakwater projects and a submerged geotube breakwater would be installed for the shoreline stabilization project. The designs under Alternative 2 would serve the same purpose as the quarry stone breakwater design under Alternative 1 but would differ in construction footprint, effectiveness, cost, and other factors. The Alternative 2 breakwaters would be constructed within the same footprints as the Alternative 1 breakwaters.

Under the No Action Alternative, none of the CRIP projects, NBS pilot projects, or strategies identified in the CRIP to reduce the coastal flood risk at Tyndall AFB would be implemented.

Environmental Consequences

Based on the findings of the attached EA, implementation of the Tyndall AFB CRIP under either Alternative 1 or 2 would have no effect on airspace and a less-than-significant impact on air quality, climate change, water resources, geological resources, cultural resources, biological resources, noise, infrastructure, land use, public health and safety, hazardous materials and wastes, and socioeconomics. When combined with past, present, or future actions, neither alternative would have adverse cumulative impacts on any resource analyzed. The EA identifies the mitigation measures required to avoid, minimize, or offset potential impacts to air quality, water resources, cultural resources, and biological resources under both alternatives. Wetland impacts from constructing the Alternative 1 levees or Alternative 2 floodwalls would be offset by purchasing wetland mitigation credits from the Horseshoe Creek Mitigation Bank (HCMB). Based on the wetland mitigation plan developed for the EA, construction of all the Alternative 1 levees would require a total of 10.93 palustrine forested (PFO) credits and 1.64 palustrine emergent (PEM) credits, and construction of all the Alternative 2 floodwalls would require a total of 2.99 PFO credits and 0.6 PEM credit. The current and projected number of wetland credits at the HCMB would satisfy the estimated mitigation requirements of all the Alternative 1 levees and Alternative 2 floodwalls combined. Based on current HCMB credit prices, the credits required for all Alternative 1 levees would cost a total of \$1,052,050, and the credits required for all the Alternative 2 floodwalls would cost a total of \$299,150. For any levee or floodwall that is proposed to be constructed in the future, the estimated number of mitigation credits based on this mitigation plan, or the actual number if different, would be purchased from the HCMB to offset the wetland impacts associated with the project.

All the flood defense projects in the Tyndall AFB CRIP are conceptual and analyzed on a programmatic level in the attached EA. Any CRIP projects proposed in the future would undergo a separate environmental review that follows Air Force Form 813, *Request for Environmental Impact Analysis* (32 CFR 989.12), prior to implementation. Through this subsequent review, the DAF would reassess potential impacts and determine the associated mitigation and consultation requirements for the project; this review would be tiered off the programmatic impact analyses in the attached EA, as applicable.

Based on the findings of the attached EA, implementation of the four NBS pilot projects under either Alternative 1 or 2 would have no effect on airspace or infrastructure and a less-than-significant impact on air quality, climate change, water resources, geological resources, cultural resources, biological resources, noise, land use, public health and safety, hazardous materials and wastes, and socioeconomics. Implementation of the NBS projects under either Alternative 1 or 2 would not have disproportionate environmental or human health effects on minority or low-income populations and would not result in disproportionate environmental health or safety risks to children. When combined with past, present, or

future actions, neither alternative would have adverse cumulative impacts on any resource analyzed. The EA identifies the mitigation measures required to avoid, minimize, or offset potential impacts to air quality, water resources, cultural resources, and biological resources under both alternatives.

Public Review and Stakeholder Consultation

A public notice was published in the *Panama City News Herald* on September 8, 2022, to announce the 30-day early public review period for the Proposed Action to provide opportunity for early public review of proposed federal actions in wetlands or floodplains. A Notice of Availability was published in the *Panama City News Herald* on November 17, 2024, to announce the 30-day availability of the draft EA and this draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)/Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) for public review and comment. Copies of the draft EA and FONSI/FONPA were made available for public access at the Bay County Public Library in Panama City, Florida, and on the Tyndall AFB public website during the review period. No comments were received during the public review period. The Florida State Clearinghouse coordinated state review of the draft EA and replied on January 9, 2025, that the Proposed Action is consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program.

The DAF consulted with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Native American tribes affiliated with the land encompassed by Tyndall AFB on the Proposed Action under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. SHPO did not have any comments on the Phase I submerged archaeological resources survey report for the NBS pilot projects or on the draft EA, and consultation with SHPO on the Proposed Action has been completed. The Seminole Tribe of Florida replied on January 24, 2025, that it would like to be consulted if Tyndall AFB decides to construct any of the proposed levees or floodwalls and stated that it has “no objections or other comments regarding the implementation of the four proposed in-water NBS pilot projects.”

The DAF informally consulted under Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act with NMFS, on the NBS projects under Alternative 1. NMFS replied on January 6, 2025, that it concurs with the DAF’s determination that the proposed NBS projects are “not likely to adversely affect NMFS ESA-listed species and/or designated critical habitat.” The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service replied on November 20, 2024, that it “finds that the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect any federally listed species or designated critical habitat protected by the Endangered Species Act.” NMFS replied on July 16, 2024, that it anticipates that any adverse effects that might occur on marine and anadromous fishery resources would be minimal and that the EFH consultation requirement for the project has been satisfied. Documentation of intergovernmental and interagency consultation on the Proposed Action is included in Appendix A of the attached EA. Documentation of public participation in the EA process is included in Appendix B of the attached EA.

Finding of No Practicable Alternative

Pursuant to Executive Order 11988, “Floodplain Management,” and Executive Order 11990, “Protection of Wetlands,” and considering all supporting information, the DAF finds that there is no practicable alternative to the Proposed Action being located in floodplains or wetlands, as discussed in the attached EA. The 7000 area is in the floodplain and surrounded by wetlands; therefore, no layout or design for a levee or floodwall could avoid floodplains or wetlands at this site. Portions of the original CRIP levee and floodwall alignments were modified to avoid floodplains and wetlands to the extent practicable while still allowing the levees and floodwalls to encompass all the assets within the protected area. Opportunities to further reduce floodplain and wetland impacts at some of the sites would be assessed during future actual design. Compensatory wetland mitigation would be provided for any unavoidable wetland impacts that result from CRIP implementation under Alternative 1 or 2, as discussed in the attached EA. The proposed NBS breakwaters must be located offshore, and other alternatives such as armoring the shoreline with riprap would result in excessive environmental damage and would not qualify as an NBS strategy. Compensatory mitigation is not expected to be required for the NBS projects under Alternative 1 or 2 based on their

beneficial purpose and lack of seagrass impacts. The attached EA identifies all practicable measures to minimize harm to floodplains and wetlands.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based on my review of the facts and analysis in the attached EA, I conclude that implementation of the CRIP under Alternative 1 or 2 and implementation of the NBS projects under Alternative 1 or 2 would not have a significant impact on the natural or human environment, either by themselves or considering cumulative impacts. The requirements of NEPA, the President’s Council on Environmental Quality, and 32 CFR Part 989 have been fulfilled. An Environmental Impact Statement is not required and will not be prepared.

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Date