Finding of No Significant Impact
for the Proposed
Realignment of Army Research and
Technology Functions to Army Research
Laboratory Facility at Adelphi, Maryland

1. PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is to transfer various research functions to the newly established Army Research Laboratory (ARL) at Adelphi Laboratory Center (ALC), Adelphi, Maryland. The transferring research functions to be realigned at ALC include the Electronics Technology and Devices Laboratory (ETDL) from Fort Monmouth, New Jersey; a portion of the Atmospheric Sciences Laboratory from White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), New Mexico; the research mission from the Harry Diamond Laboratories (HDL) at Woodbridge, Virginia; and the Directed Energy and Sensors Basic and Applied Research element of the Night Vision and Electro-Optics Directorate (NVEOD) from Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Project construction would begin in 1993 and the move-in would be complete in 1997.

The relocation of functions from ETDL, WSMR, and NVEOD will move approximately 461 jobs, primarily civilian, to ALC. Approximately 128 positions will transfer out of ALC or be contracted out. An estimated 17 relocations to the newly established ARL will result in an overall net loss of 35 ARL positions at ALC.

2. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Alternatives considered in this Environmental Assessment (EA) include the No-Action Alternative, accommodation with existing on-post facilities, constructing facilities or leasing space off post, and renovation and construction of new facilities on post. The No-Action Alternative would be inconsistent with the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act, and the off-post space alternatives would not be cost-effective and would not achieve the realignment objective of centralizing research activities. The ARL facilities could not be accommodated by existing on-post facilities, or by renovation of existing facilities without new construction. Therefore, renovation and construction of new facilities at ALC was identified as the Proposed Action.

Five alternative site plans were evaluated to determine the environmental impact of new construction and renovation at ALC. Site Plan No. 1 consists of constructing facilities in the north and south parking lots and renovating 200 Area laboratory facilities. Site Plan No. 2 is similar to Site Plan No. 1, but includes construction in a grassy area west of the north parking lot. Site Plan Nos. 3 and 4 consist of construction of new laboratory facilities in the 400 Area, and construction of facilities in the north parking lot or the south parking lot. Site Plan No. 5 consists of renovation and vertical expansion of 200 Area laboratories, and constructing new facilities in the north and south parking lots. Because of the potential for impacts from the clearing of presently wooded land, operational difficulties, and the potential need for utility line construction, Site Plan Nos. 3 and 4 were dropped from further

consideration. The difference among Site Plan Nos. 1, 2, and 5 with regard to potential environmental impacts is minor.

3. FACTORS CONSIDERED IN DETERMINING THAT NO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT IS REQUIRED

In general, implementation of the Proposed Action would not substantially alter baseline environmental conditions at ALC. During construction, there would be (1) minor disruption of existing activities in the 200 Area of ALC, including increased noise levels; (2) increased traffic and disruption of on-post parking; (3) clearing a small, grassy area west of the north parking lot for the wastewater pretreatment plant (under Site Plan No. 2). The Naval Reserve Training Center would experience minor noise disturbance during construction of the parking structure in the south parking lot (Site Plan Nos. 1, 2, and 5). Construction of the ARL facilities at ALC would result in increases in employment levels, regional sales volume, and regional income in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, but the increases would not be regionally significant.

Implementation of the Proposed Action would have no effect on groundwater since groundwater is not used as a potable supply at ALC. There would be a very minor increase in stormwater runoff to Paint Branch Creek and in air emissions from laboratory fume hoods and boiler stacks. There would be no change in noise levels. There would be no change in the types of hazardous and toxic materials handled and hazardous and toxic wastes generated, but the volumes would increase. There would be no change in ALC's status as a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) storage facility. ALC's RCRA Consent Agreement would be modified to accommodate the Proposed Action. Industrial wastewaters would undergo pretreatment prior to discharge to the municipal wastewater treatment system. There would be no increase in domestic wastewater flow.

Implementation of the Proposed Action would not affect wetlands; there are no wetlands in the proposed construction areas. There would be no significant impacts on flora, fauna, or on threatened or endangered species. Phase I cultural resources investigations have been conducted in the area west of the north parking lot (Site Plan No. 2) and in the 400 Area (Site Plan Nos. 3 and 4). All archeological surveys will be completed prior to site preparation and clearing, and requirements for compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) will be met.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the environmental impact analysis found in the EA, which is hereby incorporated into this Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI), it has been determined that implementation of the Proposed Action under Site Plan Nos. 1, 2, and 5 would not have a significant impact on the quality of the natural or the human environment. Because there would be no significant environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the Proposed Action, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required and will not be prepared.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Persons wishing to comment may obtain a copy of the EA or inquire into this FNSI by writing to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ATTN: Mr. Jack Butler, Planning Division, P. O. Box 1715, Baltimore, MD 21203-1715, within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice.

Date OCT 0 1 1992

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