

SECTION 1 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE ACTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) addresses the potential environmental consequences associated with implementing the overall management approach as well as project-specific goals contained in the Camp Stanley Storage Activity (CSSA) Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP), dated September 2007. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 requires federal agencies to consider the potential environmental consequences in the decision-making process. The intent of NEPA is to protect, restore, and enhance the environment through well-informed federal decisions. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) was established under NEPA to implement and oversee the federal process. The NEPA process involves one of three levels of analysis, as well as accompanying documentation:

- A Categorical Exclusion applies to an action whose effects are so minor it is not necessary to prepare an EA or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- An EA is prepared to determine the magnitude of the impacts, both individually and cumulatively, of the implementation of a proposed project. An EA is required when the necessary conditions for a Categorical Exclusion are not met. Section 651.33(h) of 32 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 651, or Army Regulation (AR) 200-2, states that “development and implementation of INRMPs” require an EA to be prepared. If analysis of the results of the EA find no significant impact to the quality of the environment, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) is issued and the Proposed Action proceeds as planned. A public comment period is provided after development of the EA. After the comment period concludes, and if a FNSI is proposed and issued, another comment period is held before initiating the action.
- An EIS is necessary when any federal agency or department proposes a “major action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment” (NEPA, Section 102(a)). An EIS is the typical course of action when an EA does not result in a FNSI.

1.2 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE ACTION

CSSA is proposing to implement the most current INRMP (dated September 2007). The purpose of the Proposed Action is to implement an ecosystem-based conservation program to support sustained use of land for military purposes and to ensure compliance with applicable natural resources management requirements. The Proposed Action is needed to meet requirements specified by the Department of the Army (DA) policy set forth in the 21 March 1997 memorandum entitled *Army Goals and Implementing Guidance for Natural Resources Planning Level Surveys and INRMPs* and Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 4700.4, *Natural Resources Management Programs* which require an INRMP for the storage facility.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The EA presents an analysis of environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and the No Action alternative. The overall natural resources management approach contained in the INRMP was evaluated on a programmatic level, while INRMP goals were addressed on a project-specific level. Programmatic analysis of the management approach allows CSSA to evaluate potential environmental impacts of future INRMP goals developed in accordance with this approach.

The EA addresses only those environmental resources and resource parameters that could potentially be affected by the actions or are of public concern. The level of detail applied to each particular resource area is commensurate with the level of importance and concern for that resource and the issues it presents. This EA includes analyses of the following biophysical resource areas: land use, air quality, noise, geological resources, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, socioeconomics (including environmental justice and protection of children), and hazardous and toxic materials/waste. The Proposed Action has no potential to affect infrastructure at or in the vicinity of CSSA. Therefore, descriptions of existing conditions and impacts for infrastructure are not included in the EA.

Many of the goals contained in the INRMP involve natural resources inventory and monitoring, data analysis, outdoor recreation, information management, natural resource protection measures, and/or program and policy development. Such actions have no potential to result in significant environmental impacts. They are designed to provide long-term benefits to natural resources and can normally be handled, if necessary, as Categorical Exclusions in accordance with AR 200-2 (U.S. Army 2002). Consequently, actions that only involve natural resources inventory and monitoring, data analysis, outdoor recreation, information management, natural resource protection measures, and/or program and policy development, are not analyzed in detail.

The baseline conditions used for this EA are calendar year (CY) 2005. However, if CY05 data are not available, the most recent information will be used. For analysis purposes, it is estimated that goal-specific activities would be distributed equally over the 5-year period that the INRMP is current.

1.4 AGENCY AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Agency and public participation in the NEPA process promotes both open communications between the public and government and better decision-making. All persons and organizations having a potential interest in the Proposed Action, including minority, low-income, disadvantaged, and Native American groups, are urged to participate in the decision-making process.

Preparation of the CSSA INRMP and this EA has been coordinated with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) regarding the potential effects of the Proposed Action on species protected under state provisions, and with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) regarding the potential effects

of the Proposed Action on the Golden-cheeked warbler (*Scientific name*) and the Black-capped vireo (*Scientific name*). Copies of correspondence with the appropriate agencies is provided in Appendix A.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Following this introductory section, a description of the Proposed Action is presented in Section 2, and other alternatives considered are presented in Section 3. The affected environment is presented in Section 4, and environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and alternatives are presented in Section 5. A summary of findings is presented in Section 6 and references are provided in Section 7. A list of preparers and agencies consulted during preparation of this document are presented in Section 8. Appendix A includes copies of correspondence with agencies, and Appendix B provides copies of the public notices.