

Draft
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/
FINDING OF NO PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE (FONPA)

**Environmental Assessment Addressing Implementation of Proposed Actions in the
MacDill Air Force Base Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, Florida**

BACKGROUND: The 6th Air Refueling Wing at MacDill Air Force Base (AFB), Florida, has recently updated its Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) (MacDill AFB 2024a) for the installation. The INRMP was prepared to assist the Installation Commander with the conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources consistent with the military mission of MacDill AFB for the next five years (2026–2031). The INRMP is consistent with the Sikes Act Improvement Act of 1997 (SAIA), as amended through 2010 (16 United States Code § 670a et seq.), which requires the preparation, implementation, update, and review of an INRMP for each military installation in the United States (U.S) and its territories with significant natural resources. The Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of these proposed projects in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended by Public Law 118-5: Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 (42 United States Code § 4321 et seq.); and the Department of Defense (DoD) NEPA Implementing Procedures dated June 30, 2025.

PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION: The purpose of implementing the INRMP is to direct, guide, and support the installation with the conservation, enhancement, and rehabilitation of natural resources consistent with the military mission at MacDill AFB. The Proposed Action is needed to implement the natural resources management actions identified in the MacDill AFB INRMP. Implementation of the INRMP is required for compliance with federal laws and regulations (i.e., the SAIA), guidelines and policies for natural resources management as outlined in Department of the Air Force (DAF) Manual 32-7003, *Environmental Conservation*, adaptive management strategies, and sustainment of the military training mission at MacDill AFB.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Proposed Action. The EA evaluates the potential environmental impacts that may arise from the implementation of natural resources management activities outlined in the MacDill AFB INRMP, which is consistent with the SAIA. Although the SAIA specifies only that a formal review must be completed no less often than every five years, DoD policy requires installations to review INRMPs annually in cooperation with the other parties to the INRMP. Annual reviews facilitate “adaptive management” by providing an opportunity for the parties to review the goals and objectives of the plan, as well as establish a realistic schedule for undertaking proposed actions. Projects that are covered in the EA are from the 2024 Annual Review of the INRMP and include those planned in 2025–2030. These actions were developed in response to issues and management concerns obtained from cooperating agencies (i.e., the USFWS and FDEP), the military mission, and other interested stakeholders.

No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, management of natural resources would continue as characterized in previous versions of the MacDill AFB INRMP, including those projects that are recurring and ongoing. This alternative represents the status quo. The No Action Alternative would not meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action because the management goals, objectives, and projects from the previous versions of the MacDill AFB INRMP do not consider current conditions. Key differences between the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action are that the latter reflects enhanced agency engagement and coordination, and the most current available scientific and installation-specific information. This alternative is carried forward for analysis as a baseline against which the impacts of the Proposed Action and the potential action alternatives can be evaluated.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION: The analysis of environmental impacts focused on the following environmental resources: air quality, noise, biological resources, water resources, geology and soils, cultural resources, hazardous materials and hazardous waste, and safety and occupational health. A reasonably foreseeable effects assessment was also conducted for each resource area.

Details of the environmental consequences are provided in the EA and are incorporated by reference. The analysis in the EA for each of the environmental resource areas identified negligible to moderate adverse impacts under the Proposed Action; therefore, environmental impacts would not be significant.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT: Based on the description of the Proposed Action as set forth in the EA, all activities were found to comply with the criteria or standards of environmental quality and were coordinated with the appropriate federal, state, and local government agencies and Native American tribal governments. The attached EA and this FONSI will be made available to the public for a 30-day comment period.

FINDING OF NO PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE: Pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 11988, *Floodplain Management*, and EO 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. Approximately 93 percent of MacDill AFB is located within the 100-year floodplain; therefore, the associated floodplain impacts are unavoidable. Best management practices would be implemented to avoid and minimize floodplain impacts to the extent possible during construction. Approximately 20 percent of MacDill AFB is covered by wetlands. The 1,195 acres of wetlands include 880 acres of estuarine scrub/shrub emergent wetlands, 115 acres of needle-leaved forested wetlands, and 200 acres of palustrine wetlands. Terrestrial and aquatic invasive species treatment would occur within all installation wetlands; therefore, the associated temporary wetland impacts are unavoidable. In the long-term, beneficial impacts on floodplains and wetlands would be anticipated as a result of the proposed natural resources management practices. This finding

fulfills both the requirements of the referenced EOs and the Environmental Impact Analysis Process regulation, 32 Code of Federal Regulations Section 989.14¹, for a FONPA.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: Based on the information and analysis presented in the EA, which was prepared in accordance with the requirements of NEPA and the DoD NEPA Implementing Procedures, and review of the submitted comments, I conclude that the environmental effects of implementing the Proposed Action at MacDill AFB, Florida, are not significant, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is unnecessary, and a Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate.

APPROVED:

David A. Jokinen, Colonel, USAF
Chief, Civil Engineer Division
AMC/A4C

DATE

¹ As of September 2025, current DAF policy is to continue relying upon 32 Code of Federal Regulations 989.14 for Environmental Impact Analysis Process guidance for topics not discussed in the 30 June 2025 DoD NEPA Implementing Procedures, such as the FONPA.