

Project Name: Eglin AFB Range Road and Unpaved Stream Crossing Stabilization

Contact Information:

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Project Location: Areas within the 460,000 acres that comprise the Eglin Air Force Base Test Range, which spans across Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Bay Counties in Florida.

Project Description: We propose the stabilization or replacement of approximately 78 stream crossings that directly affect the Yellow River, more if the requested money allows. All stabilization will be hilltop to hilltop at each crossing.

Estimated Project Cost: \$150,000,000

Other Funds: None

Technical Feasibility: Eglin AFB completed a Road –Stream Crossing Assessment in 2008 to evaluate the impact of the unpaved road-stream crossings aquatic ecosystems and prioritize crossing sites for treatment. The result is an accessible library of information for the stakeholders to use in a designing and implementing crossing site treatment (decommission or maintenance) solutions.

Environmental Benefits: Many environmental documents have identified sedimentation as a primary issue affecting the health of the Pensacola Bay Watershed and unpaved roads as a primary source of this sedimentation. From a biological perspective, sedimentation is altering the habitats of aquatic species protected under 270 state and federal regulations.

Economic and Social Benefits: Stabilization of the Eglin Range Road Network will benefit the test and training mission conducted on the range complex and reduce the annual maintenance costs for these roads. Logistics and maintenance costs for the extensive range vehicle fleet and equipment will also be reduced. Improving the water quality of the Yellow River and Pensacola Bay Watershed will provide economic benefits to local tourism, recreation, and regional flora and fauna. The Florida Panhandle attracts thousands of tourists each year that come to enjoy the coastal and inland natural environment. The unique and diverse natural environment in the Panhandle is what attracts tourists and by protecting and improving the inland and coastal waterways this project will be an important strategy to make sure that tourists continue to be attracted to the area. Improving water quality will help maintain the Panhandle as a desirable

destination for boaters and kayakers, and will help maintain water quality, maintain biodiversity, provide habitat for plants, birds and wildlife, and maintain fish populations which attract divers and fisherman.

Community Resilience: Improvements to the Yellow River and Pensacola Bay Watershed promotes the resilience of the area's economy by strengthening the attraction of the natural environment to attract tourism and local investment. This area relies heavily on the economic base provided by a large military presence. In today's atmosphere of government downsizing and economic uncertainty this proposal would help build a more diverse economy by strengthening tourism and attracting more permanent residents that do not rely on the military for their income.

Conflict or Complements to Existing Efforts: These funds will enable Eglin to move forward on the many repairs need to reduce and control the sedimentation caused by the stormwater runoff from the many stream crossings that intersect the Eglin test range.

Complies with Federal, State, Local and tribal Laws/ Regulations.

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Endangered 105 Species Act (ESA) Section 7 consultations.
- Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 262 62-302 (Surface Water Protection);
- Clean Water Act (CWA), Section 404 (Wetland Protection);
- FAC 62-312 (Dredge and Fill).

Readiness for Implantation: Eglin AFB as the in-house technical knowledge, manpower, skills, and equipment to start minor repairs as soon as funds are available. Eglin also has the established contracting process for contracting large design and build projects that will not be done using in-house assets.

Public Acceptance: By reducing the sedimentation of these waterways and increasing the water quality of Yellow River and Pensacola Bay the recreational value of these areas will be greatly increased

Additional Information you wish to provide: Eglin AFB has been very proactive over many years establishing plans and processes to reduce sedimentation in the water of the state. These funds will enable us to leap forward to enact many of these proved practices and reduce sedimentation entering the many waterways that intersect Eglin AFB. Approval of this proposal will have a direct impact on the water quality of Pensacola Bay and Choctawhatchee Bay Watersheds by reducing sedimentation from our many miles of clay roads.

List of documents:

- **Range Roads Programmatic Environmental Assessment 2013**
- **Range Road Network Asset Management Planning 2012**
- **Range Road-Stream Crossing Strategic Planning 2010**
- **Range road-Stream Crossing Assessment 2009**
- **Unpaved Road-Stream Crossing Management Strategic Plan 2007**
- **Stream Crossing Manual 2007**
- **Unpaved Road-Stream Crossing Process Specific Opportunity Assessment 2005**
- **Range Road Maintenance Biological Assessment 2003**
- **Range roads Maintenance Handbook 2001**