

Project Name: Unpaved Eglin Range Road paving and 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 of 2,000 miles of clay road which are adjacent to the many waterways that intersect Eglin AFB and add to the sedimentation of the Yellow River, Pensacola Bay, and Choctawhatchee Bay watersheds.

Estimated Project Cost: \$80,000,000

Other Funds: None

Technical Feasibility: Eglin AFB has been very proactive over many years establishing plans and processes to reduce sedimentation in the waters of the state. We have the plans and process in place to reduce this sedimentation through many years of research and study.

Environmental Benefits: Many environmental documents have identified sedimentation as a primary issue affecting the health of the Yellow River, Pensacola Bay, and Choctawhatchee Bay Watersheds; unpaved roads are a primary source of this sedimentation. Eglin's range roads directly affect many different watersheds but two major watersheds are Pensacola Bay and Choctawhatchee Bay. 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, Pensacola Bay, and Choctawhatchee Bay watersheds 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, Pensacola Bay, and Choctawhatchee Bay watersheds 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 miles of essential clay roads 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 Pensacola Bay and Choctawhatchee 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**