

PRESS ADVISORY

United States Marine Corps

Division of Public Affairs

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HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS (November 23, 2009) – The Marine Corps continues to study reasonable alternatives for potential land acquisition and airspace establishment to meet its Marine Expeditionary Brigade sustained, combined-arms live-fire and maneuver training requirements at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, California.

Approximately 20,000 stakeholder comments were received on the alternatives that were presented to the public during the public scoping period held from October 2008 through January 2009. These comments and other stakeholder input have helped the Marine Corps further refine the issues and study alternatives. An additional alternative, Alternative Six, has now been developed that accommodates public access to some of the lands in the West Study Area when Marines are not using the area for training.

A range of reasonable alternatives (Alternatives One through Six), as well as the No-Action Alternative, has been finalized for inclusion in the Environmental Impact Statement.

The Marine Corps and the Department of the Navy are scheduled to publish a Draft EIS evaluating alternatives for meeting our MEB training requirements in September 2010. Following this release, there will be a 90-day public comment period.

A final EIS that takes into account public comments will be issued in July 2011. A Record of Decision will be made public in October 2011, after which any request for public land withdrawal to support MEB training will be submitted to Congress. Any non-federal lands acquired would be purchased at fair market value. Any request for establishment of related special use airspace would be presented to the Federal Aviation Administration for rule making.

Maps depicting the study areas, the study alternatives and other project information on the project may be viewed at the MCAGCC web site, <http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/las/>. This site is regularly updated to reflect the most recent project developments and information.