

APPENDIX B PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

for the

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR OPTIMIZATION OF POWDER RIVER TRAINING COMPLEX

Ellsworth Air Force Base

Scoping: July 11, 2025 through September 9, 2025



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1.0 BACKGROUND

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 United States Code [USC] section 4321 et seq.) establishes national policies and goals for the protection of the environment. The scoping process documented in this plan complied with public participation requirements of NEPA. The public involvement actions described in this plan complied with and satisfied the requirements of both the Department of the Air Force (DAF) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Public involvement is an integral part of developing a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Specifically, NEPA requires a process called “scoping” to involve the public early in the assessment process, as well as to solicit input from the public and interested agencies on the nature and extent of issues and impacts to be addressed and the methods by which potential impacts are evaluated.

This Appendix presents a summary of the scoping process conducted by the DAF for the EIS for the Optimization of the Powder River Training Complex.

2.0 SCOPING PROCESS

The scoping comment period took place from July 11, 2025 through September 9, 2025. Initiation of the scoping process began with publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register*. The DAF notified the public and government entities of its intent to prepare an EIS, identified the scoping period, requested comments, and announced that in-person and virtual scoping meetings were being held.

2.1 SCOPING PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Several methods were used to notify the public of opportunities for involvement and methods to comment. These methods included:

- Publishing the NOI in the *Federal Register*
- Mailing coordination letters to federal, state, and local agencies; elected officials; and interested parties in North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana
- Initiating government-to-government consultation through letters sent to American Indian Tribes
- Placing newspaper display advertisements in local and state newspapers
- Publishing notices on the installation website by Public Affairs
- Issuing Press Releases concurrent with the NOI publication and in advance of the meetings by Public Affairs
- Creating and maintaining a publicly accessible website at www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com.

2.1.1 Federal Notice of Intent

The NOI was published in the *Federal Register* on July 11, 2025 (**Enclosure A**). The notice provided an overview of the Proposed Action and Alternatives and the DAF’s intent to prepare an EIS to study the potential environmental impacts. The NOI also announced the public scoping meeting dates and locations. The NOI officially started the scoping comment period, during which time the DAF accepted public comments.

2.1.2 Interagency and Government-to-Government Coordination

The DAF initiated direct contact with potentially interested and affected government agencies, government representatives, elected officials, and other interested parties potentially affected through distribution of letters. The interagency letters and letters to elected officials were concurrent with publication of the NOI and newspaper advertisements. The letters contained similar content as the NOI and provided an overview of the Proposed Action and the DAF's intent to prepare an EIS. The letters announced the beginning of the scoping process, provided a map of the airspace, included a list of scoping meeting dates and locations, and requested that comments be submitted no later than September 9, 2025 to ensure consideration in the Draft EIS.

Concurrent with the interagency coordination, letters were sent via email (the preferred method of communication) to 24 American Indian Tribes potentially affected by the Proposed Action and Alternatives to initiate Government-to-Government consultation. The Tribal members were invited to the scoping meetings to participate in the NEPA process and Tribal leaders were given a single point of contact to support National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultation. Tribes were not given a comment deadline as Government-to-Government consultation will occur throughout the NEPA process.

Enclosure B contains a representative sample of the letters and associated enclosures that were distributed as well as the distribution list for the letters.

2.1.3 Press Release and Newspaper Advertisements

The DAF published display advertisements in local newspapers approximately 2 weeks prior to the first scoping meeting (**Table 1**). The advertisements provided the meeting information for the location applicable to that paper's distribution area. A sample of the newspaper advertisement can be found in **Enclosure C**.

Table 1. Newspaper Advertisements

Newspaper	Publication Date(s)
<i>Bowman County Pioneer</i>	Friday July 11, 2025
<i>Fallon County Times</i>	Friday July 11, 2025
<i>Black Hills Pioneer</i>	Friday July 11, 2025 Saturday July 12, 2025
<i>Sundance Times</i>	Thursday July 17, 2025
<i>Rapid City Journal</i>	Saturday July 12, 2025 Tuesday July 15, 2025
<i>Native Sun News Today</i>	Wednesday July 16, 2025
<i>Independent Press</i>	Wednesday July 16, 2025
<i>Big Horn County News</i>	Wednesday July 16, 2025
<i>Grant County News</i>	Thursday July 17, 2025
<i>Bison Courier</i>	Thursday July 17, 2025
<i>The Profit</i>	Tuesday July 15, 2025
<i>Pierre Capital Journal</i>	Thursday July 17, 2025
<i>The Bismarck Tribune</i>	Friday July 11, 2025 Saturday July 12, 2025
<i>Casper Star Tribune</i>	Friday July 19, 2025 Saturday July 22, 2025

2.1.4 Project Website

The project website (<https://www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com>) provided information about the Proposed Action and Alternatives, project schedule and meeting locations, virtual meeting registration, copies of all documents and materials presented at the public meetings, comment methods, and online comment submittal form. The site will be continually updated as the NEPA process progresses and used to notify the public of any changes to the schedule or project.

2.2 SCOPING MEETINGS

Nine in-person scoping meetings were hosted throughout North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana. In addition, three virtual scoping meetings were held during the scoping period. **Table 2** lists the dates and locations of the meetings.

Table 2. Schedule and Location of Scoping Meetings

Date	Location
July 28, 2025	Hardin High School Commons Area 721 North Miles Ave Hardin, MT 59034
July 29, 2025	St. Labre Soaring Eagle Gymnasium 112 St. Labre Campus Dr Ashland, MT 59003
July 30, 2025	Fallon County Fair – Exhibit Hall 3440 Highway 7 Baker, MT 59313
July 31, 2025	Bowman County Fairgrounds – West Wing 12 Highway 12 E Bowman, ND 58623
August 1, 2025	Elgin Community Center 305 North Main St Elgin, ND 58533
August 11, 2025	Spearfish High School – CTE Center 1725 North Main St Spearfish, SD 57783
August 12, 2025	Bison School Gymnasium 200 West Carr St Bison, SD 57620
August 13, 2025	Crook County School District Gymnasium 122 State Highway 585 Sundance, WY 82729
August 14, 2025	Western Dakota Technical College Event Center 800 Mickelson Dr. Rapid City, SD 57703
August 19, 2025	Virtual #1
August 20, 2025	Virtual #2
August 21, 2025	Virtual #3

The in-person scoping meetings were conducted in an “open house” format in which attendees could communicate individually with DAF personnel and review the information at their own pace. Handout materials (Welcome Fact Sheet) were provided at the sign-in table. Poster displays described: what is an EIS and the NEPA process; the Proposed Action; types of airspace at Powder River Training Complex

(PRTC); the current PRTC structure; preliminary alternatives; and opportunities for public involvement in the NEPA process. At the airspace-related poster stations, an additional handout was available that provided details of the current PRTC structure. Blank comment sheets were available at comment tables at each meeting. Handouts and posters are available on the project website (<https://www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com>).

The virtual meetings were moderated by contractor staff and began with a welcome and project presentation. The presentation included narrations for each of the posters that were on display at the in-person meetings. These narrations were also available on the project website. After the project presentation, the DAF representatives responded to questions submitted by meeting attendees.

In total, 54 people participated in the scoping meetings. **Table 3** presents the number of attendees who signed in at each meeting (all attendees were requested to sign in; however, it was not mandatory to do so) by attendee type.

Table 3. Meeting Participation

	Hardin MT	Ashland MT	Baker MT	Bowman ND	Elgin ND	Spearfish SD	Bison SD	Sundance WY	Rapid City SD	Virtual 1	Virtual 2	Virtual 3
Attendees	7/28/25	7/29/25	7/30/25	7/31/25	8/1/25	8/11/25	8/12/25	8/13/25	8/14/25	8/19/25	8/20/25	8/24/25
Members of the Public	--	5	4	6	1	3	4	1	5	1	--	--
Elected Official	--	--	4	1	1	1	2	--	--	--	1	--
Federal Agency	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Tribe	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
State, Local Agency	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	2	--	--
Airport, Aviation Group	--	--	3	1	2	--	--	3	--	--	--	--
NGO/Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	--
Media present?	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	--
Meeting Total	0	5	11	8	4	4	6	5	5	5	1	0
Scoping Total	54											

Legend: NGO = Non-Government Organization

3.0 SCOPING COMMENT SUMMARY

The public could comment during the scoping period through multiple methods:

- **Written Comment Form** – written comment forms were provided at all scoping meetings; they could be completed and submitted during or after the scoping meeting. Written comment forms were also available for download on the project website.
- **Standard Mail or through Project Website** – The DAF invited the public to submit comments by U.S. Postal Service or electronically through the project website. The mailing address and website were announced in the NOI, coordination letters, press release(s), display advertisements in local newspapers, on the poster displays, and in handout materials disseminated at all scoping meetings.

The total number of comments received during the scoping comment period (July 11, 2025 through September 9, 2025) and the method of submittal is summarized in **Table 4**. A summary of the comments by commenter affiliation is provided in **Table 5**. Duplicate comments (a comment submitted by the same individual via more than one method) were not counted in these tallies.

Table 4. Comments and Method of Submittal

Method of Submittal	Number of Comments
Submitted at Public Meeting	2
Hard Copy Mailed	13
Submitted via Website	16
Total	31

Table 5. Commenter Affiliation

Affiliation	Number of Comments
Member of the Public (or no affiliation)	12
Tribe	0
Federal Agency	1
State or Local Agency	3
Elected Official/County Commission	7
Aviation Group	2
Airport	6
Other Non-Government Organization	0
Total	31

The general concerns expressed by the community are summarized below. These concerns were considered to determine the scope of analysis presented in the EIS.

General Aviation or Airport Concerns

- Gaps in the very high frequency (VHF) radio coverage and radar visibility in certain portions of the airspace; compounds the safety issue experienced due to the fact that there are three Air Traffic Control (ATC) centers.
- XWA is a United States Port of Entry and operates a General Aviation Facility for U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Assess impacts to international aircraft operations that utilize XWA's Port of Entry and subsequently require transition through the proposed airspace to reach their destinations.

- Future route development could be hindered if carriers perceive recurring operational inefficiencies when transitioning through this airspace, limiting the state's ability to expand service to southern and western destinations.

Other Foreseeable Projects

- Proposed airport development being planned approximately 8 miles north of Rapid City that is very close to the training complex area and Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB) that will add private jet traffic to the area. Also, Rapid City is annexing land west of Rapid City Airport that is underneath the runway corridor anticipating more expansion of air traffic.

Recommendations for Proposed Action or Alternatives

- Explore consolidating the ATC centers for the PRTC.
- Establish dedicated VHF communication frequency and enhance radar coverage.
- Request the floor of the PRTC 3 Low Military Operations Area (MOA) be raised to 12,000 feet mean sea level (MSL).
- Other Special Use Airspace (SUA) complexes, such as those surrounding Eielson AFB in Alaska, make effective use of the Special Use Airspace Information Service (SUAIS). We believe that a similarly robust system should be implemented at the PRTC.

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**ENCLOSURE A
NOTICE OF INTENT**

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overestimate of respondents to the information collection. If all 615 U.S. producers and all 3,641 importers introduced new children's sleepwear garments each year, the total number of respondents to the information collection would be 4,256 (615 + 3,641). As noted above, the actual number of respondents is likely lower.

Estimated Time per Response: PRA burden associated with testing and recordkeeping of each sleepwear item is approximately three hours.

Total Estimated Annual Burden: The 50 largest domestic manufacturers and the 100 largest importers may each introduce an average of 100 new children's sleepwear items annually. The annual burden for the 50 large domestic manufacturers and the 100 largest importers is estimated at 45,000 hours for PRA burden associated with testing and recordkeeping (150 firms $\times$ 100 items $\times$ 3 hours). Without adjusting for possible double-counting, CPSC staff estimates that the remaining 565 manufacturers and 3,541 importers may each introduce an average of 10 new children's sleepwear items, for a total burden of 123,180 hours (4,106 $\times$ 10 items $\times$ 3 hours.) Therefore, the total estimated potential annual burden imposed by the standard and regulations on all manufacturers and importers of children's sleepwear will be about 168,180 hours (45,000 + 123,180).

Total Estimated Annual Cost to Respondents: Using compensation data available from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employer Costs for Employee Compensation," December 2024, Table 4, total compensation for management, professional, and related workers in goods-producing private industries, <http://www.bls.gov/ncs>, the annual cost to the industry is estimated to be \$12,748,044 based on an hourly wage of \$75.80 $\times$ 168,180 hours.

Request for Comments:

The Commission solicits written comments from all interested persons about the proposed collection of information. The Commission specifically solicits information relevant to the following topics:

- whether the collection of information described above is necessary for the proper performance of the Commission's functions, including whether the information would have practical utility;
- whether the estimated burden of the proposed collection of information is accurate;
- whether the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected could be enhanced; and

- whether the burden imposed by the collection of information could be minimized by use of automated, electronic or other technological collection techniques, or other forms of information technology.

Alberta E. Mills,

Secretary, Consumer Product Safety Commission.

[FR Doc. 2025-13013 Filed 7-10-25; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6355-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Air Force

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for Optimization of the Powder River Training Complex

AGENCY: Department of the Air Force, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Air Force (DAF) is issuing this Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts associated with optimization of the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC) (Unique Identification Number EISX-007-57-UAF-1729171028). The EIS will analyze the potential impacts from improvements to the airspace structure at PRTC to address shortfalls in day-to-day training for aircrews from Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB) and Minot AFB and increasing Large Force Exercise (LFE) capability at PRTC to meet threats to National Security. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is participating as a cooperating agency.

DATES: A public scoping period will run through September 9, 2025. Comments will be accepted at any time during the environmental impact analysis process; however, to ensure DAF has sufficient time to consider public scoping comments during preparation of the Draft EIS, please submit comments within the defined scoping period. A schedule is provided on the project website (www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com) and will be updated as the project progresses.

DAF invites the public, stakeholders, and other interested parties to attend a public scoping meeting. Scoping meetings will be held on the following dates, times, and locations:

- July 28, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m., Hardin, MT
- July 29, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m., Ashland, MT

- July 30, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m., Baker, MT
- July 31, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m., Bowman, ND
- August 1, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m., Elgin, ND
- August 11, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m., Spearfish, SD
- August 12, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m., Bison, SD
- August 13, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m., Sundance, WY
- August 14, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m., Rapid City, SD
- August 19, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m., Virtual Meeting #1
- August 20, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m., Virtual Meeting #2
- August 21, 2025, 5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m., Virtual Meeting #3

All meeting times are in mountain time. For information on the virtual scoping meetings and to view meeting materials please see the project website (www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com).

ADDRESSES: The addresses for the in-person public scoping meetings listed in the **DATES** section will be published in local newspapers and on the project website a minimum of 15 days prior to the meetings. Written scoping comments can be submitted at an in-person scoping meeting, via the project website (www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com), or via postal mail to Attn. PRTC Airspace EIS, 501 Butler Farm Rd., Suite H, Hampton, VA 23666.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For inquiries regarding accommodations under the Americans with Disability Act, please contact Grace Keesling, NEPA Project Manager at AFCEC.CIE.airspace.workflow@us.af.mil, or by phone at 1-380-458-2617.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the Proposed Action is to facilitate training that ensures combat effectiveness and aircrew survivability. The Proposed Action is needed because the current PRTC does not allow aircrews to complete required high altitude day-to-day and LFE training, and because current limitations on LFEs prevent realistic training that ensures mission readiness and aircrew survivability.

DAF is considering two alternatives to implement the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative.

For Alternative 1, the ceiling of two of the primary airspace segments used for day-to-day training (named Powder River 2 and Gateway West Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspaces [ATCAAs]) would be raised to 60,000 feet from the current 26,000 feet, improving the high-altitude training capability. This

alternative also includes an administrative change to the published times of use to align with how the complex is currently used for day-to-day training. Under Alternative 1, the ceiling of all the PRTC airspace would be raised to 60,000 feet during LFEs and increase the LFE days from 10 days total per year to a total of 30 days per year. Increasing the duration and frequency of LFEs would increase the total sorties conducted within PRTC by 50 percent for a total of 4,974.

For Alternative 2, the ceiling of Powder River 2, Gateway West, and Gateway East ATCAAs would be raised to 60,000 feet from the current 26,000 feet for day-to-day training. Currently Gateway East ATCAA is only available for LFEs. Under this alternative, Gateway East ATCAA would now be available for day-to-day training and the lateral dimensions of the Gateway West ATCAA would be reduced. Other changes would be the same as Alternative 1 and include an administrative change to the published times of use for day-to-day training, raising the ceiling of the entire complex to 60,000 feet during LFEs and increasing the LFE days to a total of 30 days per year.

For the No Action Alternative, DAF would not implement changes to the airspace structure or increase the total LFE days. Use of the PRTC for day-to-day training and LFEs would continue as it does currently.

The DAF and Cooperating Agencies will determine the scope of the analysis by soliciting comments from interested local, state, and federally elected officials and agencies, federally recognized Native American tribes, as well as interested members of the public. Comments are requested on identification of potential alternatives, information, and analyses relevant to the Proposed Action.

Tommy W. Lee,

Acting Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 2025-12981 Filed 7-10-25; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3911-44-P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

[Docket ID: DoD-2024-OS-0132]

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security (OUSD(I&S)), Department of Defense (DoD).

ACTION: 30-Day information collection notice.

SUMMARY: The DoD has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act.

DATES: Consideration will be given to all comments received by August 11, 2025.

ADDRESSES: Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Reginald Lucas, (571) 372-7574, whs.mc-alex.esd.mbx.dd-dod-information-collections@mail.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title; Associated Form; and OMB Number: National Industrial Security Program Contracts Classification System; DD Form 254; OMB Control Number 0704-0567.

Type of Request: Extension.

Number of Respondents: 8,800.

Responses per Respondent: 6.

Annual Responses: 52,800.

Average Burden per Response: 36 minutes.

Annual Burden Hours: 31,680.

Needs and Uses: Pursuant to 48 CFR 27, in conjunction with subpart 4.4 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation, contracting officers shall determine whether access to classified information may be required by a contractor during contract performance. DoD Components shall use the DD Form 254, "Contract Security Classification Specification," as an attachment to contracts or agreements requiring access to classified information by U.S. contractors. The DD Form 254 is used to identify the classified areas of information involved in a contract and the specific items of information that require protection. The National Industrial Security Program Contract Classification System (NCCS) is the electronic repository for the DD Form 254. NCCS expedites the processing and distribution of contract classification specifications for contracts requiring access to classified information. NCCS also has a built-in automated process for the Request for Approval to Subcontract and provides workflow support for the Facility Clearance Request and National Interest Determination processes.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit.

Frequency: On occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.
DoD Clearance Officer: Mr. Reginald Lucas.

Dated: July 8, 2025.

Stephanie J. Bost,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 2025-12907 Filed 7-10-25; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6001-FR-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

National Assessment Governing Board

Committee and Quarterly Board Meetings

AGENCY: National Assessment Governing Board, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of open and closed meetings.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the agenda, time, and instructions to access the National Assessment Governing Board's (hereafter referred to as the Board or Governing Board) standing committee meetings and quarterly Governing Board meeting. This notice provides information to members of the public who may be interested in attending the meetings and/or providing written comments related to the work of the Governing Board. The meetings will be held either in person and/or virtually, as noted below. Members of the public must register in advance to attend the meetings virtually. A registration link will be posted on the Governing Board's website, www.nagb.gov, five (5) business days prior to each meeting.

DATES: The Quarterly Board Meeting will be held on the following dates:

- July 31, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., ET
- August 1, 2025, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:40 a.m., ET

ADDRESSES: Hotel AKA, 625 First Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Angela Scott, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Governing Board, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202, telephone: (202) 245-6234, email: Angela.Scott@ed.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: *Statutory Authority and Function:* The Governing Board is established under the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9621). Information on the Governing Board and its work can be found at www.nagb.gov. Notice of the meetings is required under section 1009(a)(2) of 5 U.S.C. chapter 10

**ENCLOSURE B
INTERAGENCY AND GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT
COORDINATION**

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Optimization of Powder River Training Complex EIS

Scoping Phase Coordination Letters Matrix

Letter Template	Recipients	No. Recipients	Signature Authority	Shipping Method
Scoping Stakeholder	Members of Congress State Legislature, Mayors	12 81	28BW	Congress - Email from HAF (2 weeks prior to NOI) All others - Click N Ship (tracking capability)
Scoping General Memo	County Commission Fed, State Agencies Non-government Organizations Airports	94 40 13 23	none	USPS
Scoping_SHPOs	SHPOs	4	28BW	Email from 28BW Click N Ship hard copy follow-up
Scoping_Tribes	Tribes (THPO and President for each)	48	28BW	Email from 28BW Click N Ship hard copy follow-up
TOTAL		315		

Stakeholder	Office	Sol.	First	Last
North Dakota				
U.S. Senate	ND Senator	Senator	Kevin	Cramer
	ND Senator	Senator	John	Hoeven
ND District at Large	119th U.S. House	Representative	Julie	Fedorchak
South Dakota				
U.S. Senate	SD Senator	Senator	John	Thune
	SD Senator	Senator	Mike	Rounds
SD District at Large	119th U.S. House	Representative	Dusty	Johnson
Wyoming				
U.S. Senate	WY Senator	Senator	John	Barrasso
	WY Senator	Senator	Cynthia	Lummis
WY District at Large	119th U.S. House	Representative	Harriet	Hageman
Montana				
U.S. Senate	MT Senator	Senator	Tim	Sheehy
	MT Senator	Senator	Steve	Daines
MT District 2	119th U.S. House	Representative	Troy	Downing

Stakeholder	Office	Sol.	First	Last
North Dakota				
State of ND	Governor	The Honorable	Kelly	Armstrong
ND House District 31	State House District	Representative	Dawson	Holle
ND House District 31	State House District	Representative	Karen M.	Rohr
ND House District 36	State House District	Representative	Dori	Hauck
ND House District 36	State House District	Representative	Ty	Dressler
ND House District 39	State House District	Representative	Keith	Kempenich
ND House District 39	State House District	Representative	Mike	Schatz
ND Senate District 31	State Senate District	Senator	Donald	Schaible
ND Senate District 36	State Senate District	Senator	Desiree Van	Oosting
ND Senate District 39	State Senate District	Senator	Greg	Kessel
South Dakota				
State of SD	Governor	The Honorable	Kristi	Noem
SD House District 28A	State House District	Representative	Jana	Hunt
SD House District 28B	State House District	Representative	Travis	Ismay
SD House District 29	State House District	Representative	Terri	Jorgenson
SD House District 29	State House District	Representative	Kathy	Rice
SD House District 30	State House District	Representative	Tim	Goodwin
SD House District 30	State House District	Representative	Trish	Ladner
SD House District 31	State House District	Representative	Mary J.	Fitzgerald
SD House District 31	State House District	Representative	Scott	Odenbach
SD Senate District 28	State Senate District	Senator	Sam	Marty
SD Senate District 29	State Senate District	Senator	John	Carley
SD Senate District 30	State Senate District	Senator	Amber	Hulse
SD Senate District 31	State Senate District	Senator	Randy	Deibert
Wyoming				
State of WY	Governor	The Honorable	Mark	Gordon
WY House District 1	State House District	Representative	Chip	Neiman
WY House District 30	State House District	Representative	Tom	Kelly
WY House District 40	State House District	Representative	Marilyn	Connoly
WY House District 52	State House District	Representative	Reuben	Tarver
WY Senate District 1	State Senate District	Senator	Chip	Newman
WY Senate District 22	State Senate District	Senator	Andrew	Byron
Montana				
State of MT	Governor	The Honorable	Greg	Gianforte
MT House District 34	State House District	Representative	Jerry	Schillinger
MT House District 35	State House District	Representative	Gary	Parry
MT House District 41	State House District	Representative	Jade	Sookis
MT House District 42	State House District	Representative	Sidney	Fitzpatrick
MT Senate District 17	State Senate District	Senator	Bob	Phalen

State Elected Officials

MT Senate District 18	State Senate District	Senator	Steve	Hinebaugh
MT Senate District 21	State Senate District	Senator	Gayle	Lammers
North Dakota				
City of Bucyrus	Mayor	Mayor	Roger	Warbis
City of Amidon	Mayor	Mayor	L. K	Lorge
City of Marmarth	No Mayor Listed			
City of Mott	Mayor	Mayor	Troy	Mosbrucker
City of Reeder	Mayor	Mayor	Wesley	Schwarzwalte
City of Haynes	Mayor	Mayor	Sarah	Chadwick
City of Scranton	Mayor	Mayor	Jason	Anderson
City of Rhame	Mayor	Mayor	Rocky	Wallman
City of Gascoyne	Mayor	Mayor	Garth	Logsdon
City of Bowman	No Mayor Listed			
City of New Leipzig	Mayor	Mayor	Kelly	Roth
City of Elgin	Mayor	Mayor	Ronald	Bartz
City of Carson	Mayor	Mayor	Dawn	Hanson
City of Leith	Mayor	Mayor	Ryan	Schock
City of Hettinger	Mayor	Mayor	James	Lindquist
South Dakota				
Town of Morristown	No Mayor Listed			
Town of Fruitdale	No Mayor Listed			
Town of Camp Crook	No Mayor Listed			
City of Sturgis	Mayor	Mayor	Kevin	Forrester
Town of Buffalo	No Mayor Listed			
City of Lemmon	Mayor	Mayor	Matthew	Barnes
City of Belle Fourche	Mayor	Mayor	Randy	Schmidt
City of Whitewood	Mayor	Mayor	Mitch	Harmon
Town of Nisland	No Mayor Listed			
City of Newell	Mayor	Mayor	Tara	Tennis
City of McIntosh	No Mayor Listed			
Town of Bison	No Mayor Listed			
City of Spearfish	Mayor	Mayor	John	Senden
City of Lead	Mayor	Mayor	Ron	Everett
City of Central City	No Mayor Listed			
City of Deadwood	Mayor	Mayor	Dave	Ruth, Jr.
Wyoming				
Town of Hulett	Mayor	Mayor	Ted	Parsons
Town of Pine Haven	Mayor	Mayor	Karla	Brandenburg
Town of Sundance	Mayor	Mayor	Paul S.	Brooks
Town of Upton	Mayor	Mayor	Nick	Trandahl
Town of Moorcroft	Mayor	Mayor	Ben	Glenn
Montana				
Town of Ekalaka	Mayor	Mayor	Buck	Kratzer
Town of Lodge Grass	Mayor	Mayor	Quincy	Dabney

State Elected Officials

Town of Plevna	Mayor	Mayor	Gary	Thielen
City of Baker	Mayor	Mayor	Steve	Zachmann
Town of Broadus	Mayor	Mayor	Chad	Gatlin
City of Hardin	Mayor	Mayor	Joe	Purcell
City of Colstrip	Mayor	Mayor	John	Williams

County Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Office	Sol.	First	Last
North Dakota				
Sioux County	County Commissioner		Terry	Comeau
Sioux County	Commission Chairman	Mr.	Larry	Silbernagel
Sioux County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Kenneth "Bruiser"	Snider
Hettinger County	Commission Chairman	Mr.	Devan	Laufer
Hettinger County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Thomas "Tom"	Geerts
Hettinger County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Todd	Lutz
Stark County	Commission Chairman	Mr.	Dean	Franchuk
Stark County	Commisson Vice Chairman	Mr.	Neal	Messer
Stark County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Paul	Clarys
Stark County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Bernie	Marsh
Stark County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Cory	White
Bowman County	Commission Chairman	Mr.	Rick	Braaten
Bowman County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Pine	Abrahamson
Bowman County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Josh	Buchmann
Bowman County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Jerid	Janikowski
Bowman County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Jerry	Jeffers
Golden Valley County	Commission Chairperson	Mr.	Adam	Smith
Golden Valley County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Rory	Farstveet
Golden Valley County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Robert "Bob"	Schmeling
Slope County	Commission Chairman	Mr.	Scott	Ouradnik
Slope County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Mike	Sonsalla
Slope County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Mike	Teske
Adams County	Commisson Vice Chairman	Mr.	Kevin	Pagel
Adams County	Commission Chairman	Mr.	Dustin	Laufer
Adams County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Anthony	Larson
Billings County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Lester	Iverson
Billings County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Steve	Klym
Billings County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Dean	Rodne
Grant County	Commission Chairman	Mr.	Alton	Zenker
Grant County	County Commissioner	Mr.	AlRoy	Hochhalter
Grant County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Marty	Meyer
Morton County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Nathan	Boehm
Morton County	County Commissioner	Ms.	Jackie	Buckley
Morton County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Ron	Leingang
Morton County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Raymond	Morrell
Morton County	County Commissioner	Mr.	Andrew	Zachmeier
South Dakota				
Butte County	Commission Chairman District 1	Mr.	James	Ager
Butte County	Commisson Vice Chairman District 2	Ms.	Karrol	Herman

County Stakeholders

Butte County	County Commissioner District 3	Mr. Chad	Erk
Butte County	County Commissioner District 4	Mr. Terry	Batterman
Butte County	County Commissioner District 5	Mr. Frank	Walton
Corson County	County Commissioner 1	Mr. Shawn	Hinsz
Corson County	County Commissioner 2	Mr. Darren	Bauer
Corson County	County Commissioner 3	Mr. Jacob	Nehl
Corson County	County Commissioner 4	Mr. Lucas	Sutherland
Corson County	County Commissioner 5	Mr. Ben	Bieber
Harding County			
Lawrence County	Commission Chairman	Mr. Bob	Ewing
Lawrence County	Commisson Vice Chairman	Mr. Brandon	Flanagan
Meade County	County Executive Director	Ms. Rhea	Crane
Pennington County	Commission Chairman	Mr. Lloyd	LaCroix
Pennington County	Commisson Vice Chairman	Mr. Ron	Rossknecht
Perkins County	Commission Chairman	Mr. Kyle	Carmichael
Perkins County	Commisson Vice Chairman	Mr. Rusty	Foster
Ziebach County	County Commissioner	Mr. Tucker	Stocklin
Ziebach County	County Commissioner	Mr. Bill	Henderson
Ziebach County	County Commissioner	Mr. Rick	Farlee
Ziebach County	County Commissioner	Mr. Shane	Farlee
Ziebach County	County Commissioner	Mr. David	Pesicka

Wyoming

Campbell County	County Commissioner	Mr. Del	Shelstad
Campbell County	County Commissioner	Mr. Jim	Ford
Campbell County	County Commissioner	Mr. Kelley	McCreery
Campbell County	County Commissioner	Mr. Scott	Clem
Campbell County	County Commissioner	Mr. Bob	Jordan
Crook County	Commission Chairman	Mr. Fred M.	Devish
Crook County	Commisson Vice Chairman	Mr. Kelly B.	Dennis
Sheridan County	Commission Chairman	Mr. Nick	Siddle
Sheridan County	County Commissioner	Mr. Lonnie	Wright
Sheridan County	County Commissioner	Mr. Tom	Ringley
Sheridan County	County Commissioner	Ms. Holly	Jennings
Sheridan County	County Commissioner	Ms. Christi	Haswell
Weston County	Commission Chairman	Mr. Don	Taylor
Weston County	Commisson Vice Chairman	Mr. Garrett	Borton
Weston County	County Commissioner	Mr. Nathan	Todd
Weston County	County Commissioner	Mr. Ed	Wagoner
Weston County	County Commissioner	Ms. Vera	Huber

Montana

Big Horn County	County Commissioner District 1	Mr. George Real	Bird III
Big Horn County	County Commissioner District 2	Mr. Lawrence Pete	Big Hair
Big Horn County	County Commissioner District 3	Mr. Larry	Vandersloot
Carter County	Commisson Chairman	Mr. Rod	Tauck

County Stakeholders

Carter County	Commisson Vice Chairman	Mr. Mike	Watkins
Custer County	Chairman District 1	Mr. Jason	Strouf
Custer County	Commissioner District 2	Mr. Jeff	Faycosh
Custer County	Commissioner District 3	Mr. Kevin	Krausz
Fallon County	Commissioner	Mr. Roy	Rost
Fallon County	Commissioner	Mr. Kevin	Braun
Fallon County	Commission Chairperson	Mr. Steve	Baldwin
Powder River County	Commission Chairman	Lee	Randall
Powder River County	County Commissioner	Mr. John	Olson
Powder River County	County Commissioner	Ms. Lori	Fortner
Rosebud County	County Commissioner District 1	Mr. Robert E.	Lee
Rosebud County	County Commissioner District 2	Mr. Scott	Hein
Rosebud County	County Commissioner District 3	Mr. Ed	Joiner
Treasure County	Commission Chair	Marlo	Moehr

Stakeholder/Name of Agency	POC Role/Title	Sol.	First	Last
U.S. EPA, Region 8	Administrator	Ms.	KC	Becker
BOR Dakotas Area Office	Area Manager	Mr.	Joe	Hall
BOR Dakotas Area Office	Deputy Area Manager	Mr.	Scott	Hettinger
NPS Regions 3, 4, and 5	Regional Director	Mr.	Bert	Frost
BLM Eastern Montana/Dakotas District Office	District Manager	Ms.	Wendy	Warren
BLM Montana/Dakotas State Office	State Director	Ms.	Sonya	German
BLM Montana/Dakotas State Office	Associate State Director	Mr.	Scott	Height
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Great Plains Region				
USFWS Mountain-Prairie Region	Regional Director	Mr.	Matt	Hogan
NPS Regions 6, 7, and 8				
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Rocky Mountain Region				
North Dakota				
North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality	Director	Mr.	David	Glatt
North Dakota Game and Fish Department	Director	Mr.	Jeb	Williams
North Dakota Department of Transportation	Director	Mr.	Ron	Henke
BLM North Dakota Field Office				
North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office	Director	Mr.	Bill	Peterson
USFWS North Dakota Ecological Services Field Office	North Dakota Deputy Field Supervisor	Mr.	Luke	Toso
Office of Governor North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission	Executive Director	Mr.	Nathan	Davis
South Dakota				
South Dakota Department of Agriculture & Natural Resource	Rapid City Office			
South Dakota Department of Agriculture & Natural Resource	Department Secretary	Mr.	Hunter	Roberts
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks	Chair	Ms.	Stephanie	Rissler
South Dakota Aeronautics Commission Office				
South Dakota Department of Transportation	Rapid City Region			
BLM South Dakota Field Office				
USFWS South Dakota Ecological Services Field Office	ND/SD Project Leader	Mr.	Christopher	Swanson
South Dakota State Historical Society	Interim State Historic Preservation Office	Ms.	Jenna Carlson	Dietmeier
Wyoming				
Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality	Director	Mr.	Todd	Parfitt
Wyoming Game and Fish Department	Sheridan Regional Office			
Wyoming Department of Transportation	Director	Mr.	Darin J.	Westby
BOR Wyoming Area Office	Area Manager		Lyle	Myler
BLM Wyoming State Office	State Director	Mr.	Andrew	Archuleta
BLM Wyoming State Office	Associate State Director		Kris	Kirby
BLM High Plains District Office	District Manager	Mr.	Kevin	Christensen
BLM Buffalo Field Office	Field Manager	Mr.	Todd	Yeager
BLM Newcastle Field Office	Field Manager	Mr.	Chad	Krause
USFWS Wyoming Ecological Services Field Office	Wyoming Field Supervisor	Mr.	Tyler	Abbott
Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office	Deputy Director	Ms.	Sara	Sheen
Montana				
Montana Department of Environmental Quality	Director	Mr.	Christopher	Dorrington
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Director	Mr.	Dustin	Temple
Montana Department of Transportation	Director	Mr.	Malcolm	Long
Montana Department of Transportation	Deputy Director	Mr.	Larry	Flynn
BOR Montana Area Office	Area Manager		Ryan	Newman
Montana Historical Society	Director	Ms.	Molly	Kruckenberger
USFWS Montana Ecological Services Field Office	Montana Field Supervisor		Amity	Bass

Airports

Stakeholder/Name of Agency	City	Sol.	First	Last
North Dakota				
Bowman Regional Airport	Bowman		Brent	Kline
Elgin Municipal Airport	Elgin		Aaron	Levorsen
Hettinger/JB Lindquist Regional	Hettinger		Jay B.	Lindquist
Mott Municipal Airport	Mott		Derek	Mayer
Hagen Airport	Reeder		Bruce	Hagen
Dilse Airstrip	Scranton		Ted D.	Dilse
South Dakota				
Belle Fourche Municipal Airport	Belle Fourche		James	Deranleau
Bison Municipal Airport	Bison		Paula	Kopren
Harding County Airport	Buffalo		Will	Henderson
Lemmon Municipal Airport	Lemmon		Mike	Ginther
Black Hills-Clyde Ice Field Airport	Spearfish		Channing	Wagner
Wyoming				
Ipy Ranch Airport	Hulett		George	White
Thompson Creek Oilfield Airport	Hulett		Ted H.	Williams
Hulett Municipal Airport	Hulett		Town of Hulett	
Keyhole Airport	Moorcroft		George B.	Waters
Taylor Field Airport	Sundance		Guy David	Taylor
Upton Municipal Airport	Upton		Lori	Materi
Montana				
Colstrip Airport	Colstrip		Brian	Schwend
Ekalaka Airport	Ekalaka		Troy	Fruit
Broadus Airport	Broadus		John	Olsen
St. Labre Mission Airport	Ashland		Tana	McNac
Fairgrounds Airpark	Hardin		Ed	Auker
Baker Municipal Airport	Baker		Rodger	Meggers

Stakeholder/Name of Agency	POC Role/Title	Sol.	First	Last
National Business Aviation Association	President	Mr.	Edward	Bolen
Airlines for America	Managing Director	Ms.	Marli	Collier
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association	Senior Vice President of Government	Mr.	Jim	Coon
Center for Biological Diversity	Northern Rockies Director	Ms.	Kristine	Akland
North Dakota				
North Dakota Aviation Association	Chair	Mr.	Tanner	Overland
South Dakota				
South Dakota Pilots Association	President	Mr.	Dale	Knuth
Wyoming				
Sheridan Pilots Association	President	Mr.	J.T.	Grainger
Wyoming Pilots Association	No POC listed			
Montana				
Montana Pilots Association	President	Mr.	Tim	Robertson
Wild Montana	President	Mr.	Tim	Lynch
Montana Land Reliance	Managing Director	Mr.	Kendall	Van Dyk
Preserve Montana	Executive Director	Ms.	Jenny	Buddenborg
Montana Environmental Information Center	Executive Director	Ms.	Cari	Kimbell

Powder River Training Complex Optimization EIS*Tribal Consultation List*

No.	Tribe Name
1	Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
2	Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, Montana
3	Black Feet Nation
4	Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes
5	Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe of the Cheyenne River Reservation, South Dakota
6	Chippewa Cree Indians of the Rocky Boy's Reservation, Montana
7	Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation
8	Crow Creek Sioux Tribe of the Crow Creek Reservation, South Dakota
9	Crow Tribe of Montana
10	Eastern Shoshone Tribe (Shoshone Tribe of the Wind River Reservation)
11	Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe of South Dakota
12	Fort Belknap Indian Community of the Fort Belknap Reservation of Montana
13	Lower Brule Sioux Tribe of the Lower Brule Reservation, South Dakota
14	Northern Arapaho
15	Northern Cheyenne Tribe of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, Montana
16	Oglala Sioux Tribe
17	Rosebud Sioux Tribe of the Rosebud Indian Reservation, South Dakota
18	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation
19	Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation, South Dakota
20	Spirit Lake Tribe, North Dakota
21	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe of North and South Dakota
22	Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation, North Dakota
23	Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians of North Dakota
24	Yankton Sioux Tribe of South Dakota



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 28TH BOMB WING (AFGSC)
ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE SOUTH DAKOTA**

Colonel Derek C. Oakley, USAF
Commander
1958 Scott Dr
Ellsworth AFB SD 57706-4710

The Honorable John Barrasso
WY Senator
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Barrasso

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Department of the Air Force (DAF) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of addressing shortfalls in aircrew readiness in the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC). The PRTC is the training airspace used by aircrews at Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB) and Minot AFB for day-to-day training and it is also used for Large Force Exercises (LFEs) a few times a year that bring together joint forces to participate in realistic combat training scenarios. The PRTC was originally established in 2015 and overlies parts of South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana. The proposed action includes improvements to the airspace structure to address shortfalls in day-to-day training and increasing LFE capability to meet emerging threats to National Security. We encourage you to visit our project website for additional details: www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com.

We request your participation and solicit your comments on the preliminary alternatives and the scope of environmental issues to be addressed in the Draft EIS. Written comments may be submitted on the project website, www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com, at an in-person public meeting, or by mailing to PRTC Airspace EIS, c/o Stantec, 501 Butler Farm Rd., Suite H, Hampton, VA 23666. Please provide your comments no later than **September 9, 2025** to ensure consideration in the Draft EIS.

The DAF has identified two preliminary alternatives to evaluate in the EIS along with the No Action Alternative:

For Alternative 1, the ceiling of two of the primary airspace segments used for day-to-day training, named Powder River (PR) 2 and Gateway West Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspaces (ATCAAs), would be raised to 60,000 feet from the current 26,000 feet improving the high-altitude training capability. This alternative also includes an administrative change to the published times of use to align with how the complex is currently used for day-to-day training.

Also under Alternative 1, the ceiling of all the PRTC airspace would be raised to 60,000 feet during LFEs and increase the LFE days from 10 days total per year to a total of 30 days per year. See Enclosure 1 for illustrations of the proposed airspace changes.

For Alternative 2, the ceiling of three airspace segments would be raised to 60,000 feet from the current 26,000 feet to include PR 2, Gateway West, and Gateway East ATCAAs. Currently Gateway East ATCAAs is only available for LFEs. Under this alternative the lateral dimensions of Gateway West and Gateway East ATCAAs would be reduced. Other changes would be the same as Alternative 1 and include an administrative change to the published time of use for day-to-day training, raising the ceiling of the entire complex to 60,000 feet during LFEs, and increasing the total LFE days to 30 days per year. See Enclosure 2 for illustrations of the proposed airspace changes.

For the No Action Alternative, DAF would not implement changes to the airspace structure or increase the total LFE days. Use of the PRTC for day-to-day training and LFEs would continue as it does currently.

The DAF published a Notice of Intent to prepare the EIS in the Federal Register initiating the scoping phase of the project, which is the first opportunity for public and stakeholder involvement in the NEPA process. The DAF is hosting several in-person and virtual public meetings to provide information on the proposed action and the preliminary alternatives described above. See Enclosure 3 for a list of meeting dates and locations. We encourage you to visit the project website where you can obtain additional information about the project and preview all the materials that will be on display at the meetings.

Sincerely

OAKLEY.DER
EK.CHRISTIA
N.1141333921

Digitally signed by
OAKLEY.DEREK.CH
RISTIAN.1141333921
Date: 2025.07.01
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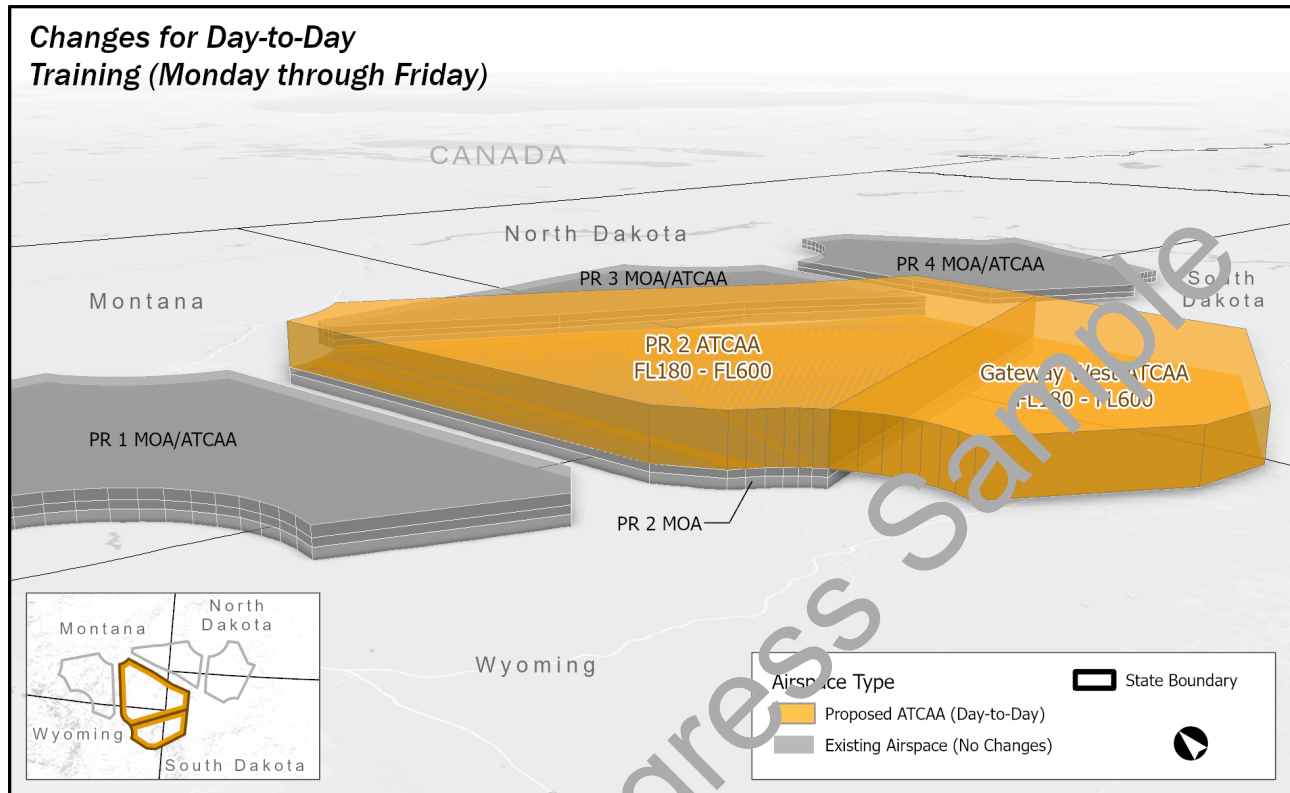
DEREK C. OAKLEY, Colonel, USAF
Commander

3 Attachments:

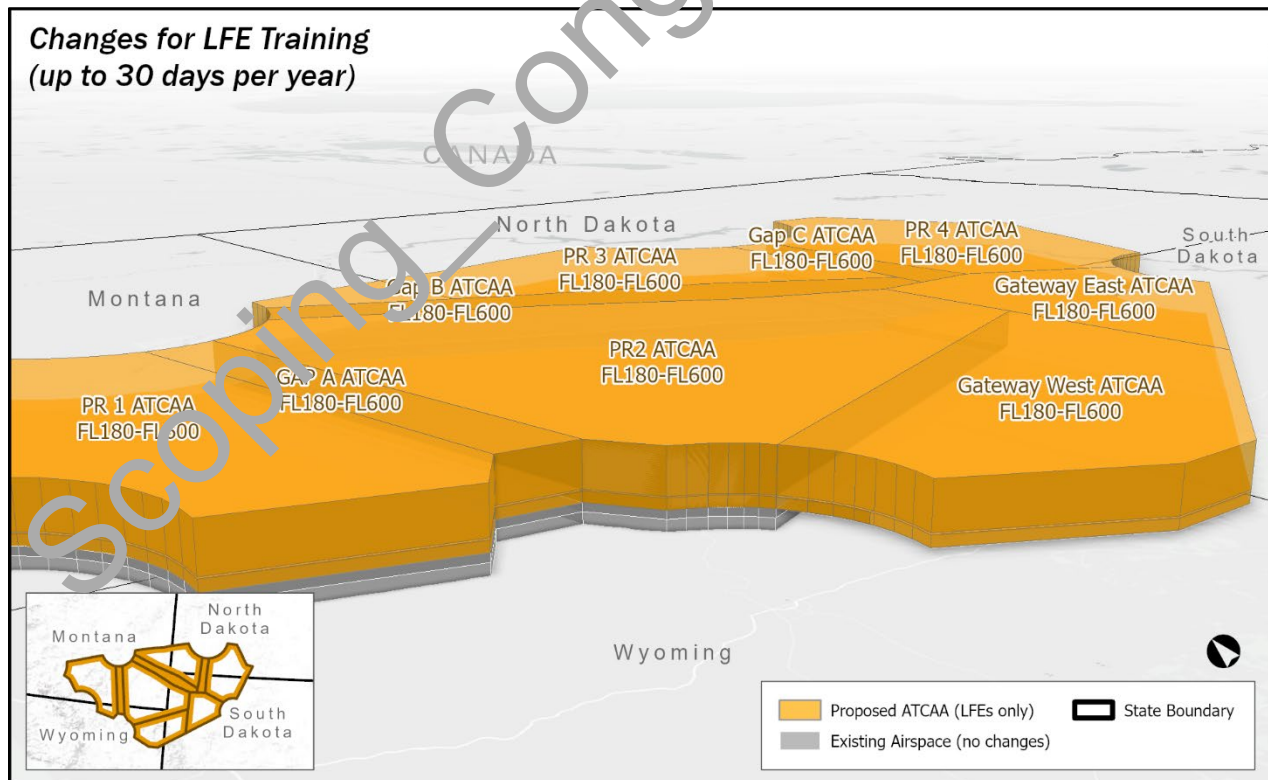
1. Enclosure 1 - Alternative 1 Proposed Airspace Modifications
2. Enclosure 2 - Alternative 2 Proposed Airspace Modifications
3. Enclosure 3 - Public Meetings

Enclosure 1 – Alternative 1 Proposed Airspace Modifications

Changes for Day-to-Day Training (Monday through Friday)



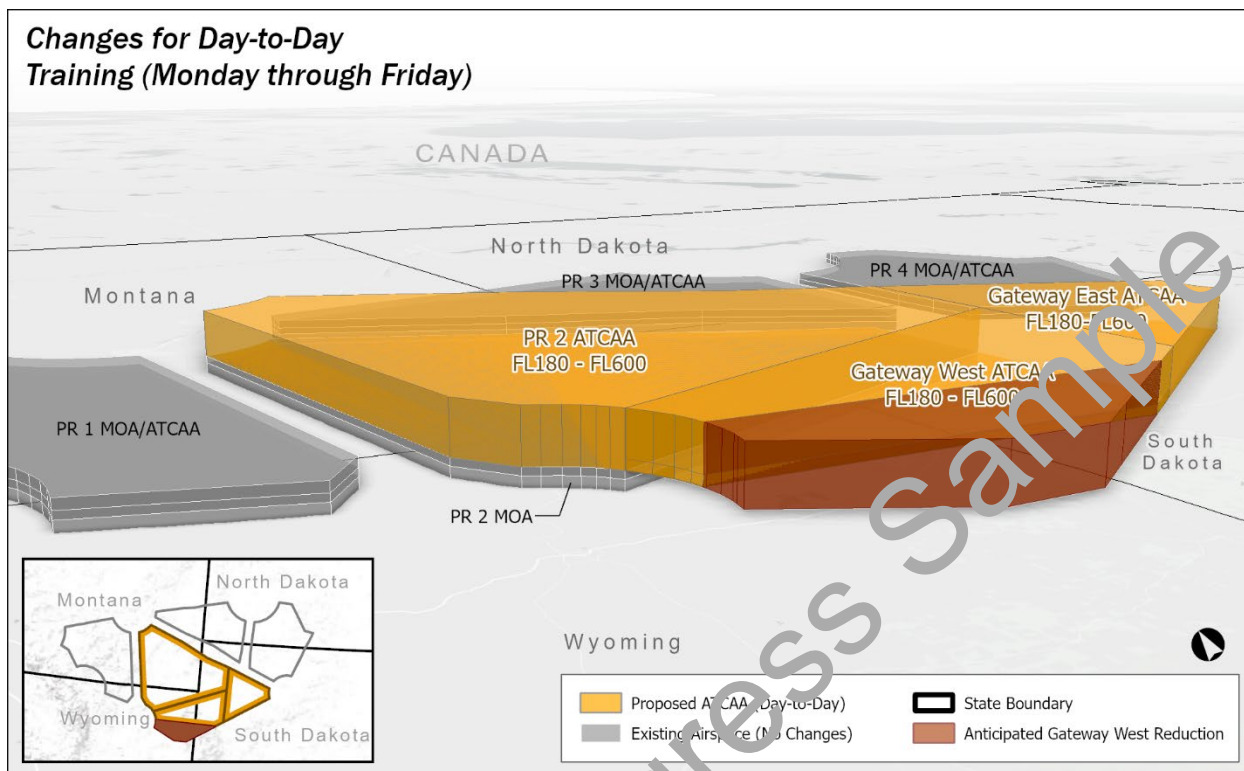
Changes for LFE Training (up to 30 days per year)



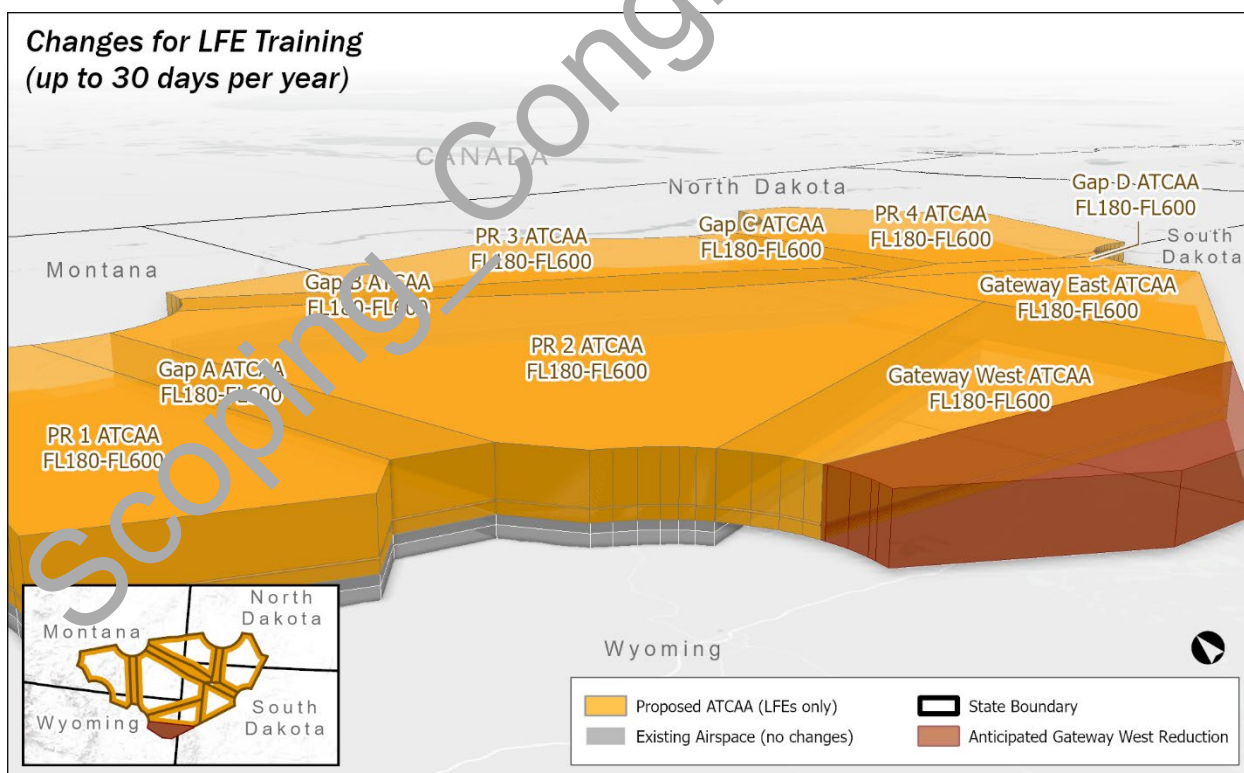
Legend: ATCAA = Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace; FL = Flight Level (represents hundreds of feet, i.e., FL180 is 18,000 feet); LFE = Large Force Exercise; MOA = Military Operations Area

Enclosure 2 – Alternative 2 Proposed Airspace Modifications

Changes for Day-to-Day Training (Monday through Friday)



Changes for LFE Training (up to 30 days per year)



Legend: ATCAA = Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace; FL = Flight Level (represents hundreds of feet, i.e., FL180 is 18,000 feet); LFE = Large Force Exercise; MOA = Military Operations Area

Enclosure 3 - Public Meetings

The DAF is hosting several in-person and virtual public meetings. The in-person meetings are Open House style, please attend at your convenience during the advertised time. The virtual meetings will begin with welcome remarks and an overview of the Proposed Action followed by a question-and-answer session.

City, State	Date	Time (Mountain Time)	Location
Hardin, MT	July 28, 2025	5:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Hardin High School Commons Area 721 North Miles Ave Hardin, MT 59034
Ashland, MT	July 29, 2025	5:00 – 7:00 p.m.	St. Labre Soaring Eagle Gymnasium 112 St. Labre Campus Dr Ashland, MT 59003
Baker, MT	July 30, 2025	5:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Fallon County Fair – Exhibit Hall 3440 Highway 7 Baker, MT 59313
Bowman, ND	July 31, 2025	5:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Bowman County Fairgrounds – West Wing 12 Highway 12 E Bowman, ND 58623
Elgin, ND	August 1, 2025	5:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Elgin Community Center 305 North Main St Elgin, ND 58533
Spearfish, SD	August 11, 2025	5:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Spearfish High School - CTE Center 1725 North Main St Spearfish, SD 57783
Bison, SD	August 12, 2025	5:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Bison School Gym 200 West Carr St Bison, SD 57620
Sundance, WY	August 13, 2025	5:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Crook County School District Gymnasium 122 State Highway 585 Sundance, WY 82729
Rapid City, SD	August 14, 2025	5:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Western Dakota Technical College Event Center 800 Mickelson Dr Rapid City, SD 57703
Virtual Meeting #1	August 19, 2025	5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Please register on the project website: www.PRTcairspaceEIS.com
Virtual Meeting #2	August 20, 2025	5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	
Virtual Meeting #3	August 21, 2025	5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 28TH BOMB WING (AFGSC)
ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE SOUTH DAKOTA**

Colonel Derek C. Oakley, USAF
Commander
1958 Scott Dr
Ellsworth AFB SD 57706-4710

Senator Greg Kessel
State Senate District
P.O. Box 1006
Belfield North Dakota 58622-1006

Dear Senator Kessel

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published times of use to align with how the complex is currently used for day-to-day training. Also under Alternative 1, the ceiling of all the PRTC airspace would be raised to 60,000 feet during LFEs and increase the LFE days from 10 days total per year to a total of 30 days per year. See Enclosure 1 for illustrations of the proposed airspace changes.

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Sincerely

OAKLEY.DER
EK.CHRISTIA
N.1141333921

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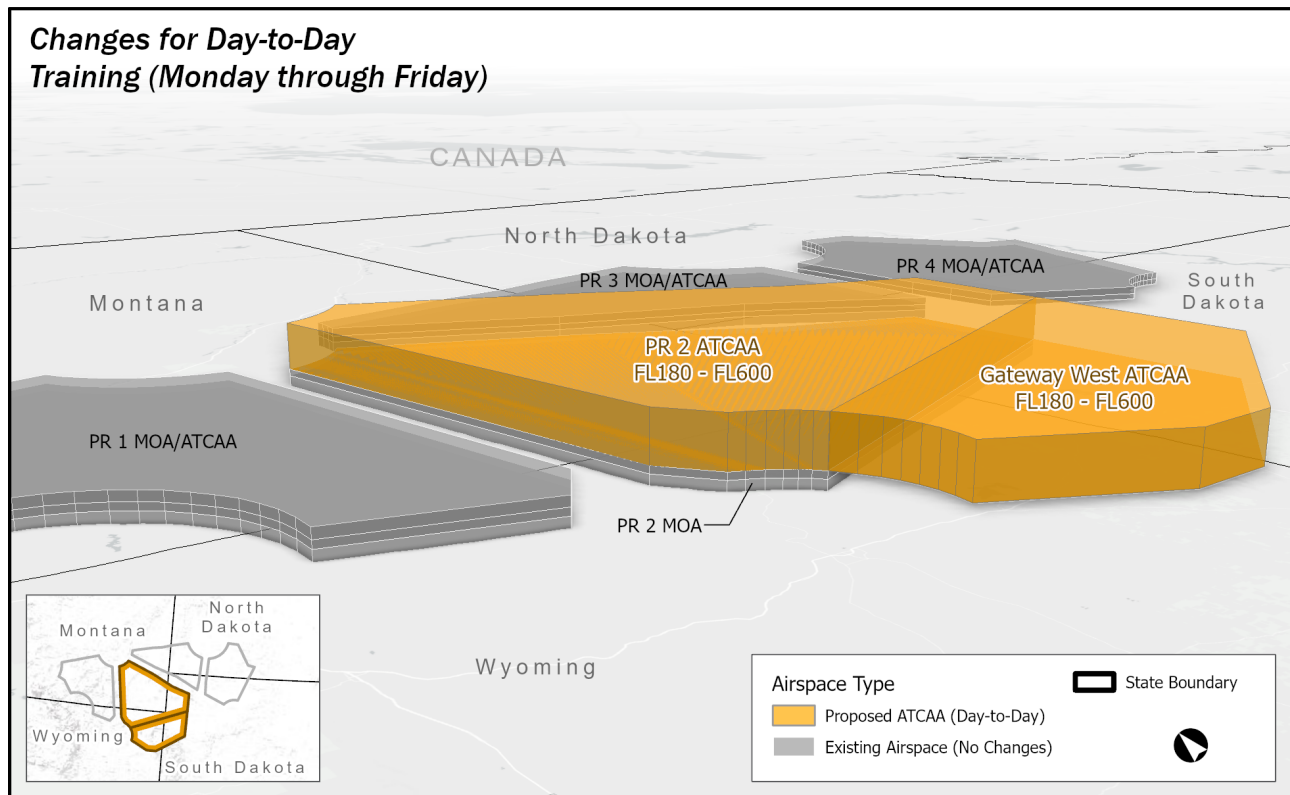
DEREK C. OAKLEY, Colonel, USAF
Commander

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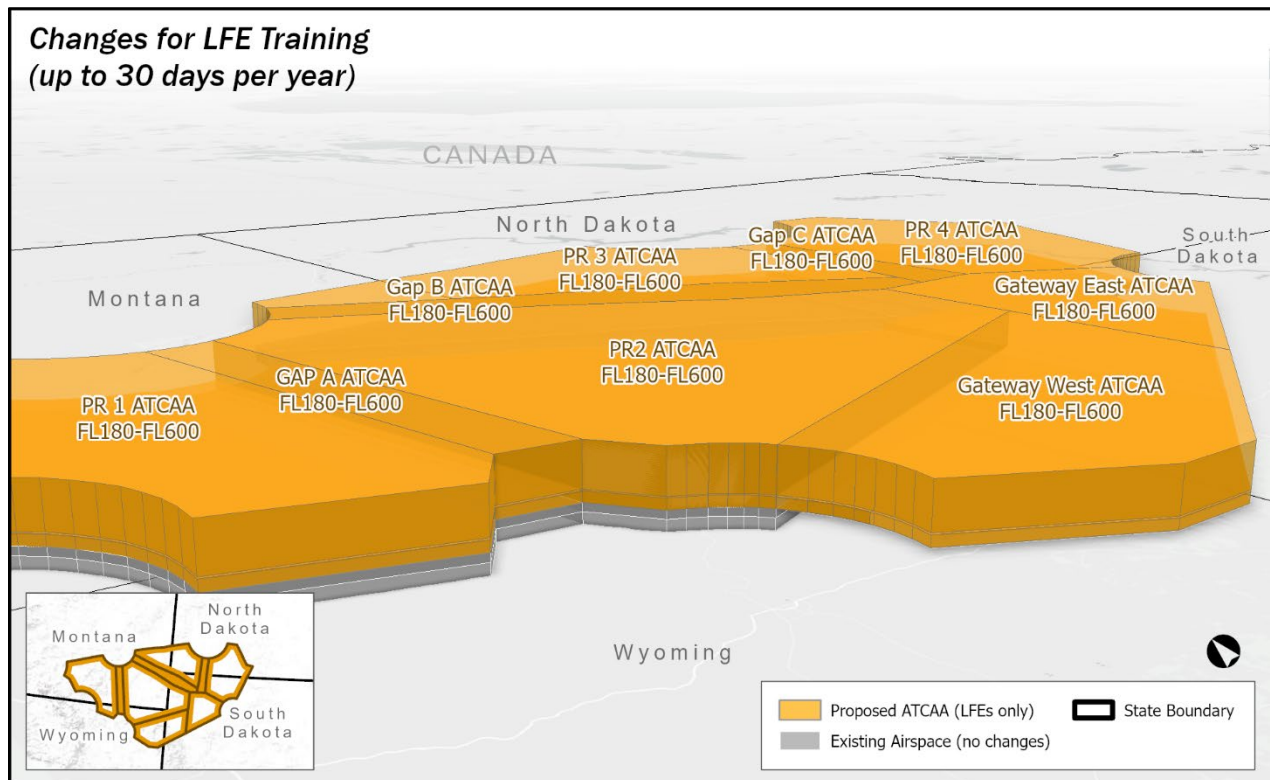
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Enclosure 1 – Alternative 1 Proposed Airspace Modifications

Changes for Day-to-Day Training (Monday through Friday)



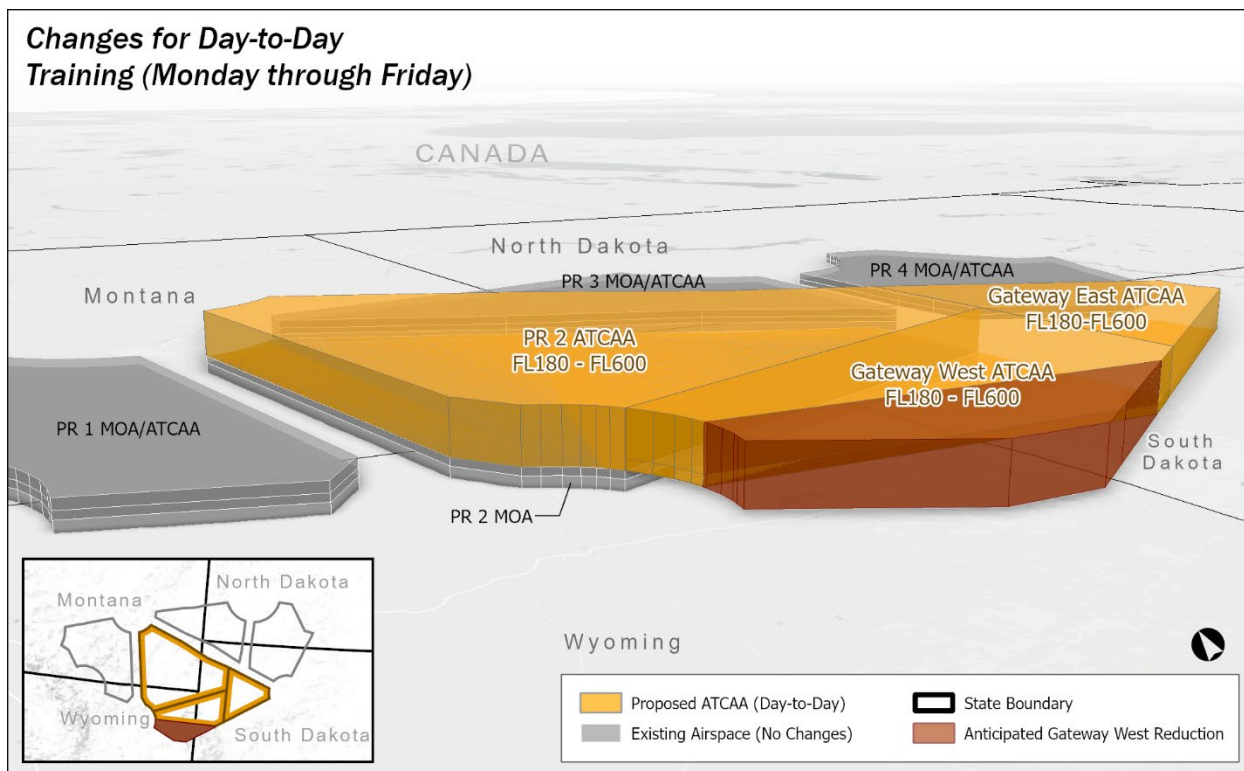
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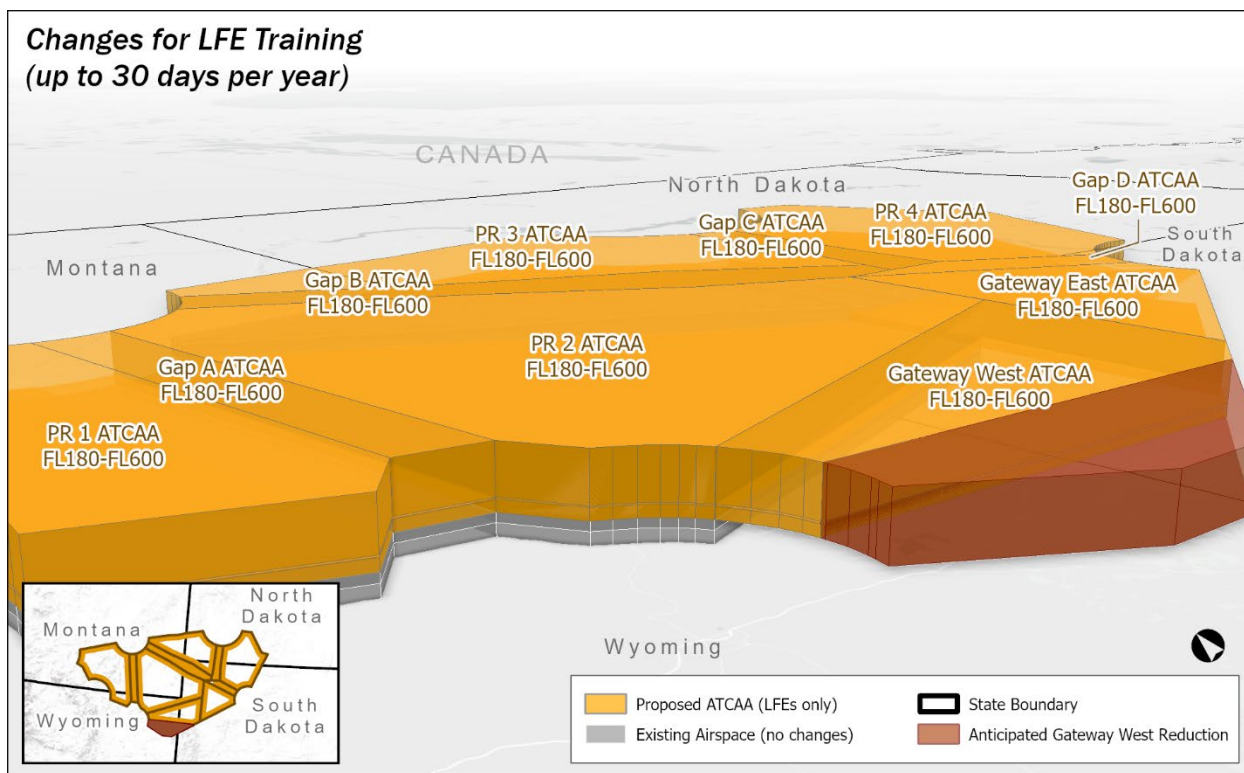
Legend: ATCAA = Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace; FL = Flight Level (represents hundreds of feet, i.e., FL180 is 18,000 feet); LFE = Large Force Exercise; MOA = Military Operations Area

Enclosure 2 – Alternative 2 Proposed Airspace Modifications

Changes for Day-to-Day Training (Monday through Friday)



Changes for LFE Training (up to 30 days per year)



Legend: ATCAA = Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace; FL = Flight Level (represents hundreds of feet, i.e., FL180 is 18,000 feet); LFE = Large Force Exercise; MOA = Military Operations Area

Enclosure 3 - Public Meetings

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 28TH BOMB WING (AFGSC)
ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE SOUTH DAKOTA**

Colonel Derek C. Oakley, USAF
Commander
1958 Scott Dr
Ellsworth AFB SD 57706-4710

Ms. Molly Kruckenberg
Director
Montana Historical Society
P.O. Box 201201
Helena Montana 59620-1201

Dear Ms. Kruckenberg

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Department of the Air Force (DAF) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of addressing shortfalls in aircrew readiness in the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC). The PRTC is the training airspace used by aircrews at Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB) and Minot AFB for day-to-day training and it is also used for Large Force Exercises (LFEs) a few times a year that bring together joint forces to participate in realistic combat training scenarios. The PRTC was originally established in 2015 and overlaps parts of South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana. The proposed action includes improvements to the airspace structure to address shortfalls in day-to-day training and increasing LFE capability to meet emerging threats to National Security. We encourage you to visit our project website for additional details: www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com.

The DAF has identified two preliminary alternatives to evaluate in the EIS along with the No Action Alternative:

For Alternative 1, the ceiling of two of the primary airspace segments used for day-to-day training, named Powder River (PR) 2 and Gateway West Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspaces (ATCAAs), would be raised to 60,000 feet from the current 26,000 feet improving the high-altitude training capability. This alternative also includes an administrative change to the published times of use to align with how the complex is currently used for day-to-day training. Also under Alternative 1, the ceiling of all the PRTC airspace would be raised to 60,000 feet during LFEs and increase the LFE days from 10 days to 30 days per year. See Enclosure 1 for illustrations of the proposed airspace changes under Alternative 1.

For Alternative 2, the ceiling of three airspace segments would be raised to 60,000 feet from the current 26,000 feet to include PR 2, Gateway West, and Gateway East ATCAAs. Currently Gateway East ATCAAs is only available for LFEs. Under this alternative, the lateral dimensions of Gateway West and Gateway East ATCAAs would be reduced. Other changes would be the same as Alternative 1 and would include an administrative change to the published times of use for day-to-day training, raising the ceiling of the entire complex to 60,000 feet during LFEs, and increasing the total LFE days to 30 days per year. See Enclosure 2 for illustrations of the proposed airspace changes under Alternative 2.

For the No Action Alternative, DAF would not implement changes to the airspace structure or increase the total LFE days. Use of the PRTC for day-to-day training and LFEs would continue as it does currently.

The DAF is hosting several in-person and virtual public meetings to provide information on the proposed action and the preliminary alternatives described above. We would like to invite you to attend any of these meetings as part of the NEPA and Section 106 processes. See Enclosure 3 for a list of meeting dates and locations. We encourage you to visit the project website where you can obtain additional information about the project and preview all the materials that will be on display at the meetings.

The DAF is requesting to formally initiate consultation pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, Protection of Historic Properties. The DAF has determined that the project is an undertaking pursuant to Section 106 and that consultation will be carried out in parallel with the NEPA process, see Enclosure 4. The project is in the "scoping phase," during which time the DAF is seeking your concurrence with the Area of Potential Effects (APE), see Enclosure 5. The APE is the same for both alternatives. We respectfully request concurrence with the APE within 60 days of receipt of this letter to align with the mandated NEPA timeline. After the scoping period, the DAF will continue consultation first on the identification of historic properties, and then on the assessment of effects to historic properties. This consultation will inform the Draft EIS analysis, and you will be notified when the Draft EIS is available for review and comment.

The DAF is committed to sustained, meaningful and respectful consultation, and appreciates your input at this early stage to inform the path forward for this undertaking and the EIS. My point of contact for this project is Mr. John Carreiro, Cultural Resources Manager, who can be reached via email at john.carreiro@us.af.mil, phone at 605-385-2690, or mail at 28 CES/CIE, 2125 Scott Dr, Ellsworth AFB SD 57706. Please reach out if you have any questions or would like to discuss this project in more detail. I look forward to receiving any input you may have regarding this endeavor and our continued consultation. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this effort.

Sincerely

OAKLEY.DER
EK.CHRISTIA
N.1141333921

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OAKLEY.DEREK.CH
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Date: 2025.07.01
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DEREK C. OAKLEY, Colonel, USAF
Commander

6 Attachments:

1. Request for Concurrence
2. Enclosure 1 - Alternative 1 Proposed Airspace Modifications
3. Enclosure 2 - Alternative 2 Proposed Airspace Modifications
4. Enclosure 3 - Public Meetings
5. Enclosure 4 - NEPA and NHPA Process Timeline
6. Enclosure 5 - Area of Potential Effect

The Montana SHPO **concurs** with the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the proposed undertaking (Alternatives 1 and 2).

Molly Kruckenberg
Director
Montana Historical Society

Date _____

The Montana SHPO **does not concur** with the APE for the proposed undertaking (Alternatives 1 and 2) and provides the following comments.

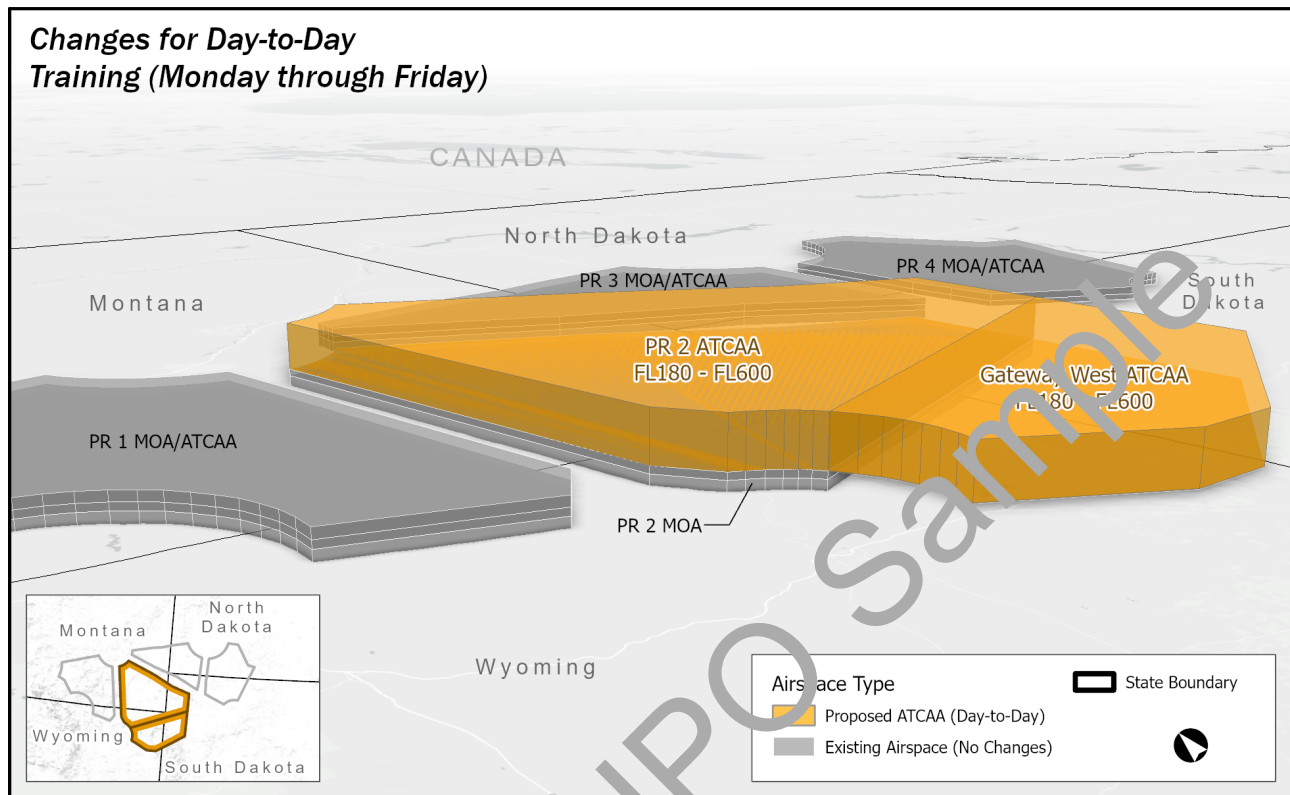
Molly Kruckenberg
Director
Montana Historical Society

Date _____

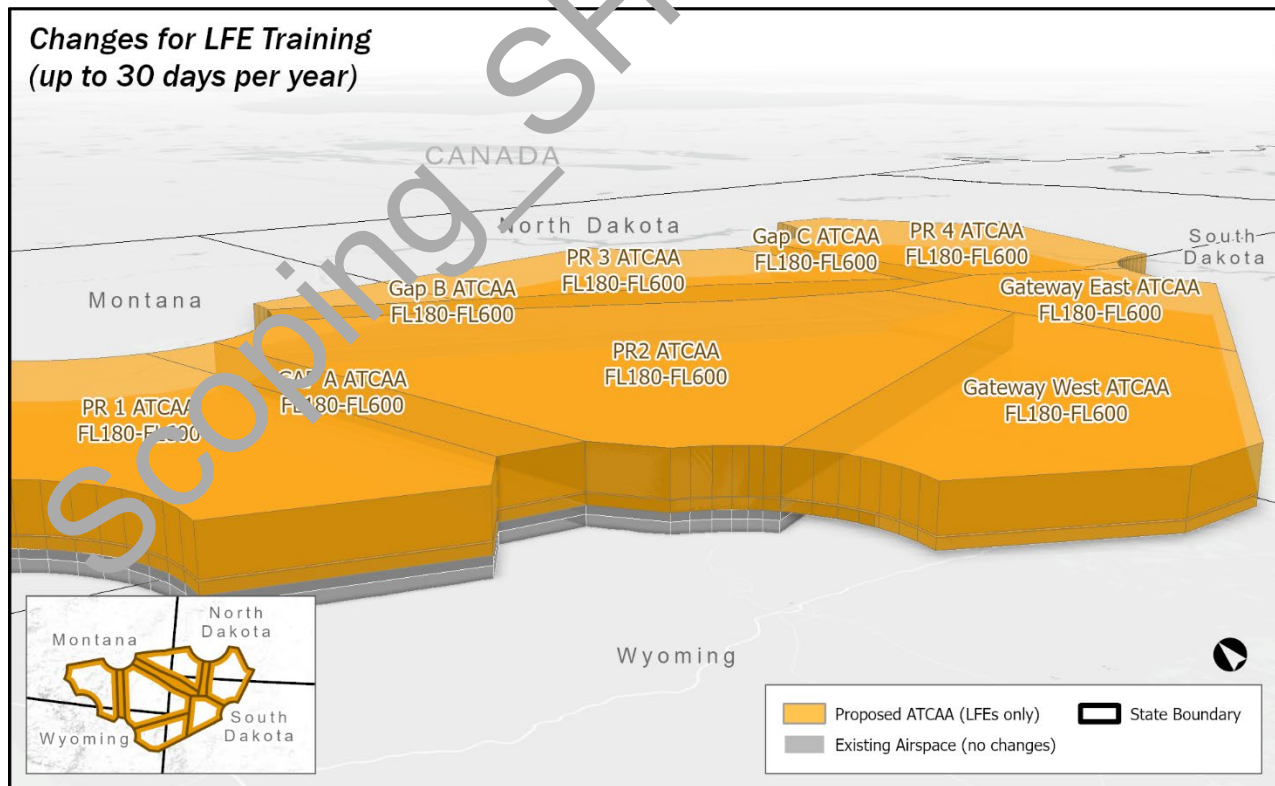
Comments:

Enclosure 1 –Alternative 1 Proposed Airspace Modifications

Changes for Day-to-Day Training (Monday through Friday)



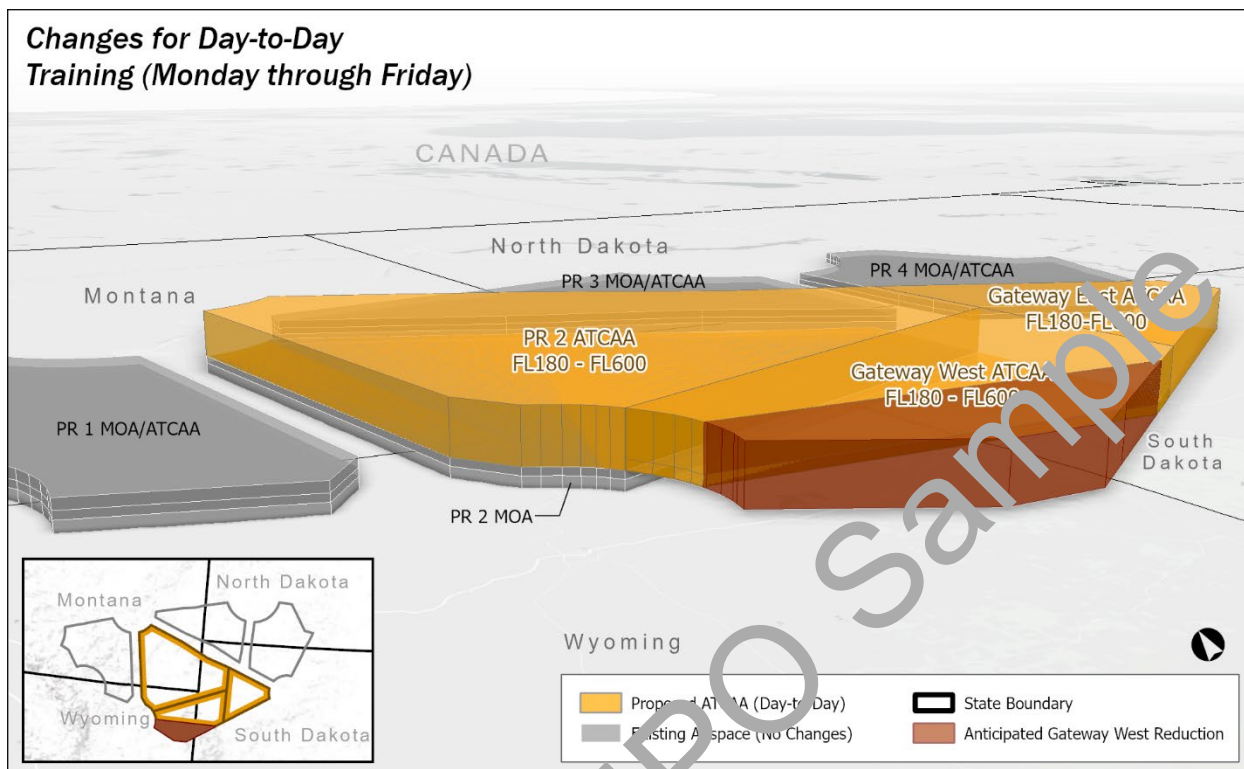
Changes for LFE Training (up to 30 days per year)



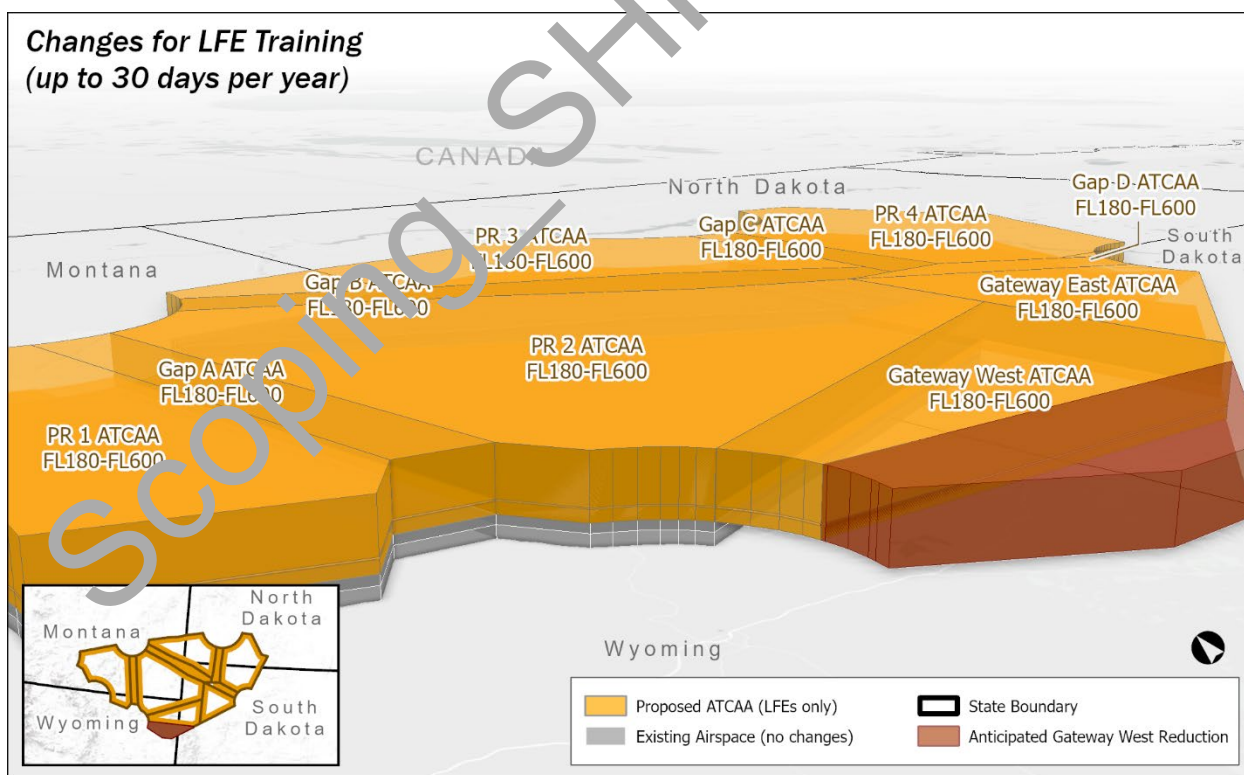
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Enclosure 2 – Alternative 2 Proposed Airspace Modifications

Changes for Day-to-Day Training (Monday through Friday)



Changes for LFE Training (up to 30 days per year)



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Enclosure 3 - Public Meetings

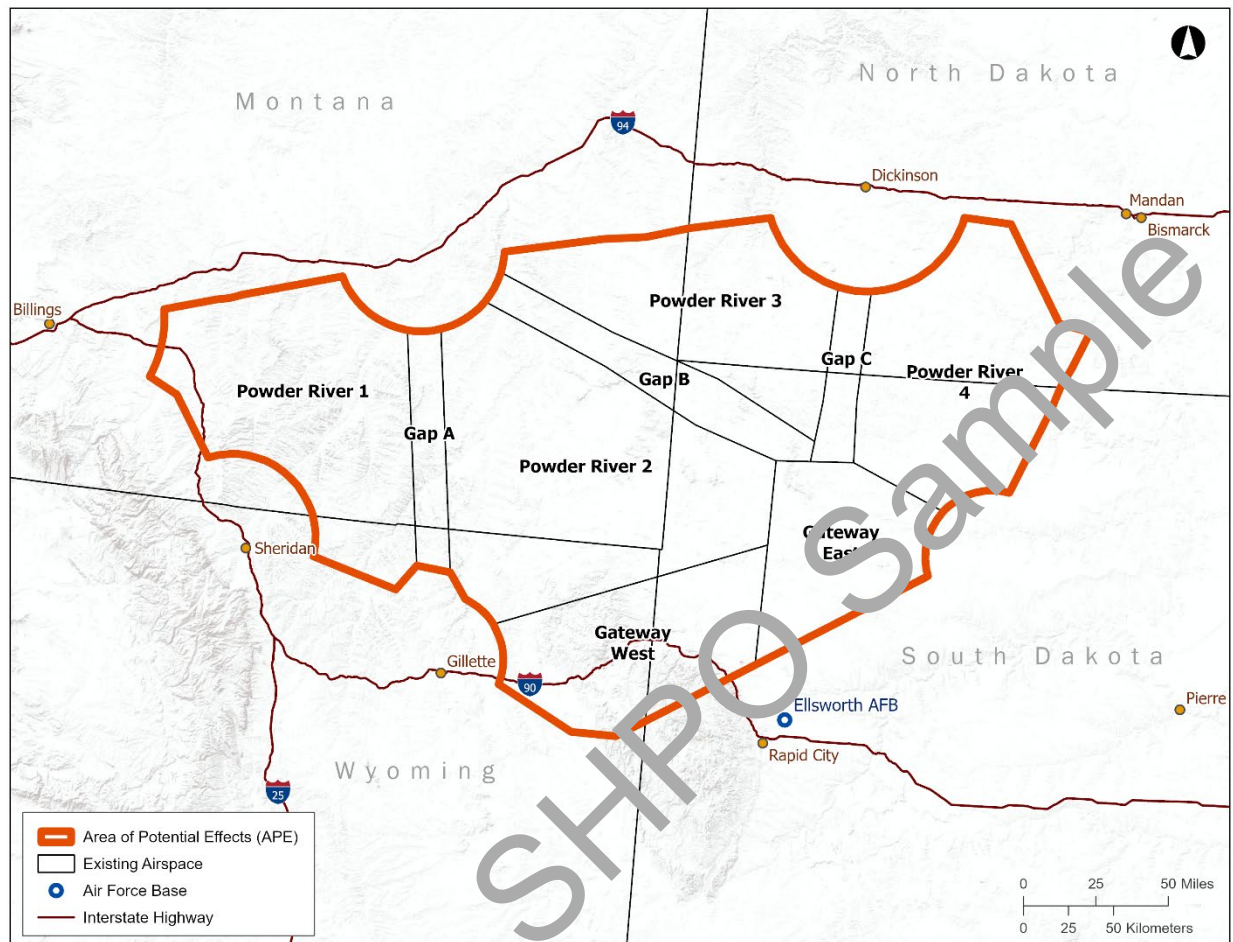
The DAF is hosting several in-person and virtual public meetings. The in-person meetings are Open House style, please attend at your convenience during the advertised time. The virtual meetings will begin with welcome remarks and an overview of the Proposed Action followed by a question-and-answer session.

City, State	Date	Time (Mountain Time)	Location
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Enclosure 4 – NEPA and NHPA Process Timeline



Enclosure 5 – Area of Potential Effects





**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 28TH BOMB WING (AFGSC)
ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE SOUTH DAKOTA**

Colonel Derek C. Oakley, USAF
Commander
1958 Scott Dr
Ellsworth AFB SD 57706-4710

President Gene Small
Northern Cheyenne Tribe of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, Montana
600 Cheyenne Ave
PO Box 128
Lame Deer, MT 59043

Dear President Small

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Department of the Air Force (DAF) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of addressing shortfalls in aircrew readiness in the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC). The PRTC is the training airspace used by aircrews at Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB) and Minot AFB for day-to-day training and it is also used for Large Force Exercises (LFEs) a few times a year that bring together joint forces to participate in realistic combat training scenarios. The PRTC was originally established in 2015 and overlies parts of South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana. The proposed action includes improvements to the airspace structure to address shortfalls in day-to-day training and increasing LFE capability to meet emerging threats to National Security. We encourage you to visit our project website for additional details: www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com.

The DAF has identified two preliminary alternatives to evaluate in the EIS along with the No Action Alternative:

For Alternative 1, the ceiling of two of the primary airspace segments used for day-to-day training, named Powder River (PR) 2 and Gateway West Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspaces (ATCAAs), would be raised to 60,000 feet from the current 26,000 feet improving the high-altitude training capability. This alternative also includes an administrative change to the published times of use to align with how the complex is currently used for day-to-day training. Also under Alternative 1, the ceiling of all the PRTC airspace would be raised to 60,000 feet during LFEs and increase the LFE days from 10 days to 30 days per year. See Enclosure 1 for illustrations of the proposed airspace changes.

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For the No Action Alternative, DAF would not implement changes to the airspace structure or increase the total LFE days. Use of the PRTC for day-to-day training and LFEs would continue as it does currently.

The DAF is hosting several in-person and virtual public meetings to provide information on the proposed action and the preliminary alternatives described above. We would like to invite all members of your community to attend any of these meetings as part of the NEPA process. See Enclosure 3 for a list of meeting dates and locations. We encourage you to visit the project website where you can obtain additional information about the project and preview all the materials that will be on display at the meetings.

We are requesting to initiate government-to government consultation with your community pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, Protection of Historic Properties. The DAF has determined that the current project is an undertaking pursuant to Section 106 and that assessment will be carried out in parallel to the NEPA process, see Enclosure 4. The project is in the "scoping phase" during which time the DAF is seeking your concurrence with the Area of Potential Effects (APE), see Enclosure 5, and any information you wish to share regarding properties of traditional or cultural significance that you feel should be considered in the assessment of effects to historic properties. The assessment of effects to historic properties will be developed concurrent with the development of the Draft EIS. While there is no formal timeline for this consultation effort, we respectfully request you provide your comments or identify properties we should consider within 60 days of receipt of this letter to align with the mandated NEPA timeline (Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, 42 United States Code 4321 et seq.). The assessment of effects to historic properties and the Draft EIS will be provided to you for review and comment prior to any decision on the implementation of the Proposed Action.

The DAF is committed to sustained, meaningful, and respectful consultation with federally recognized Indian Tribes. My point of contact for this project is Mr. John Carreiro, Cultural Resources Manager, who can be reached via email at john.carreiro@us.af.mil, phone at 605-385-2690, or mail at 28 CES/CIE, 2125 Scott Dr, Ellsworth AFB SD 57706. Please reach out if you have any questions or would like to discuss this project in more detail. Should your tribe have no further interest in this project, please let us know in writing, via email or letter. We look forward to receiving any input you may have regarding this endeavor and our continued consultation. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this effort.

Sincerely

OAKLEY.DER
EK.CHRISTIAN.1141333921
N.1141333921
DEREK C. OAKLEY, Colonel, USAF
Commander

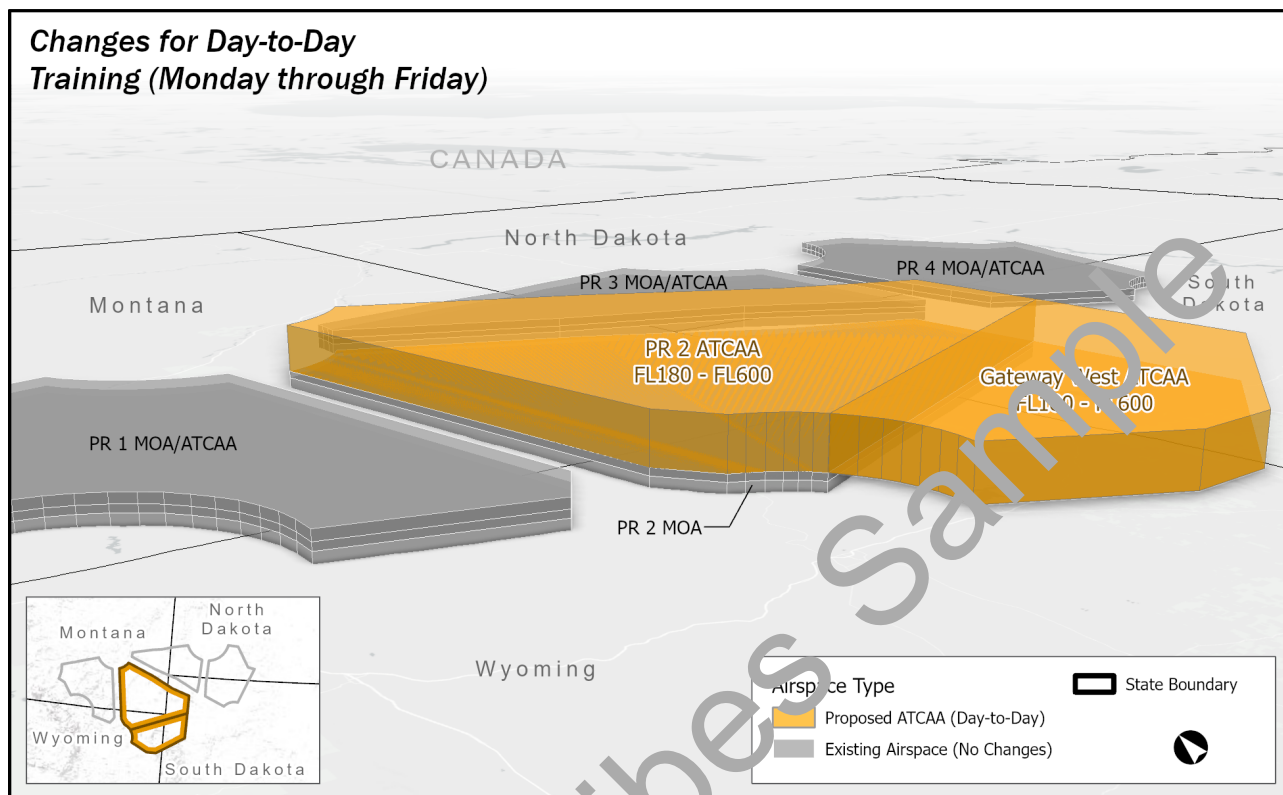
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5 Attachments

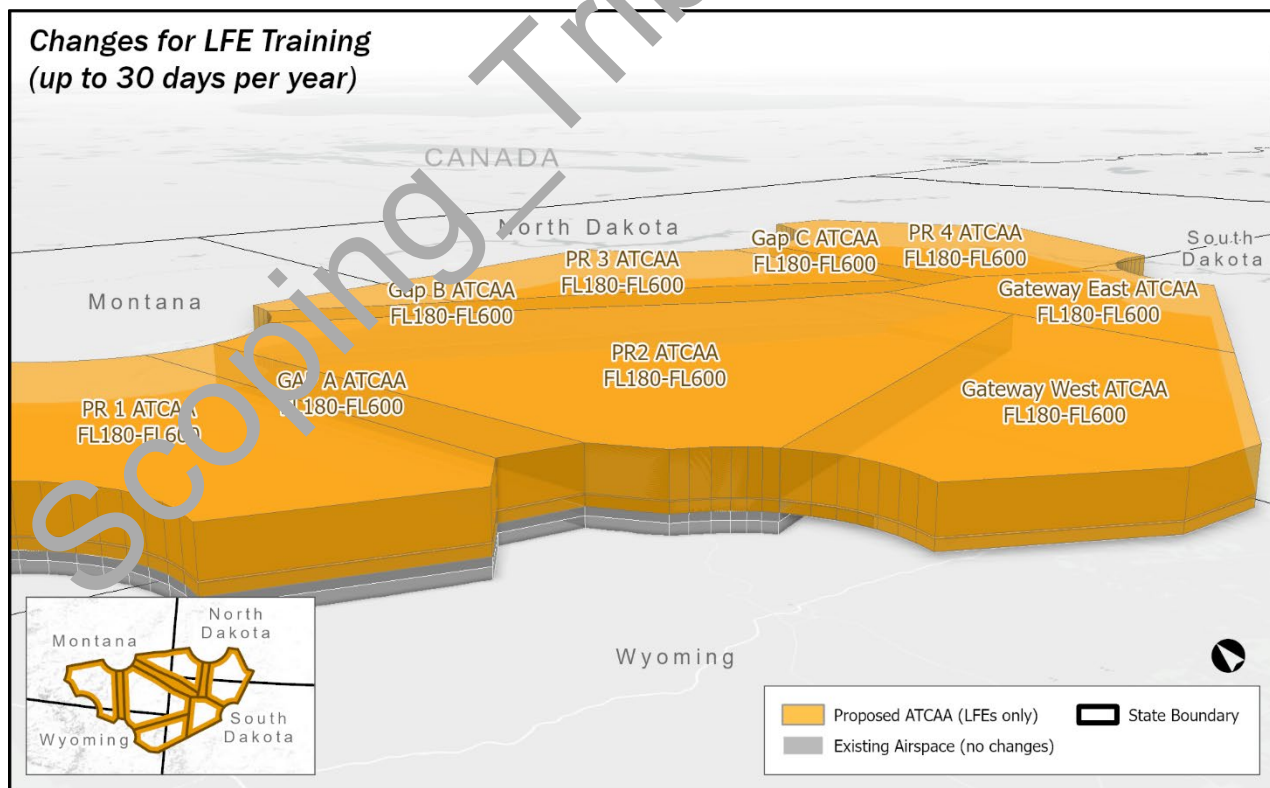
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Enclosure 1 – Alternative 1 Proposed Airspace Modifications

Changes for Day-to-Day Training (Monday through Friday)



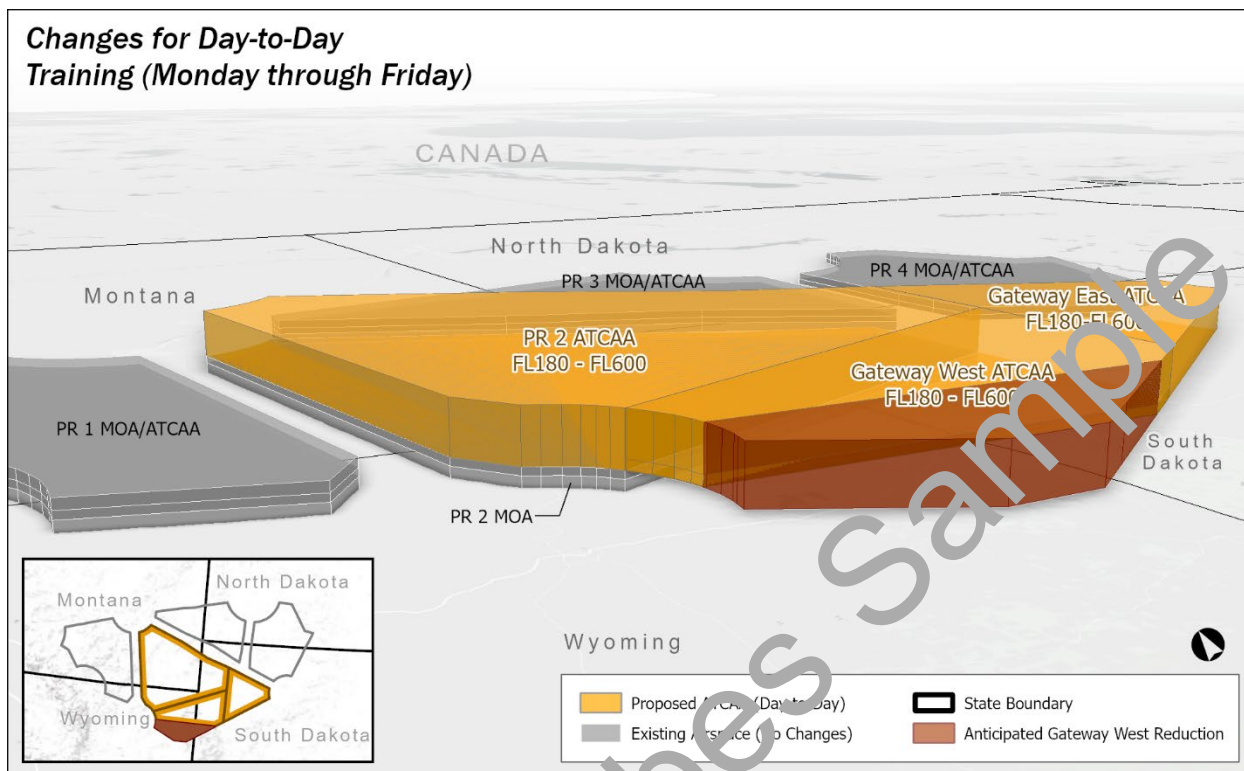
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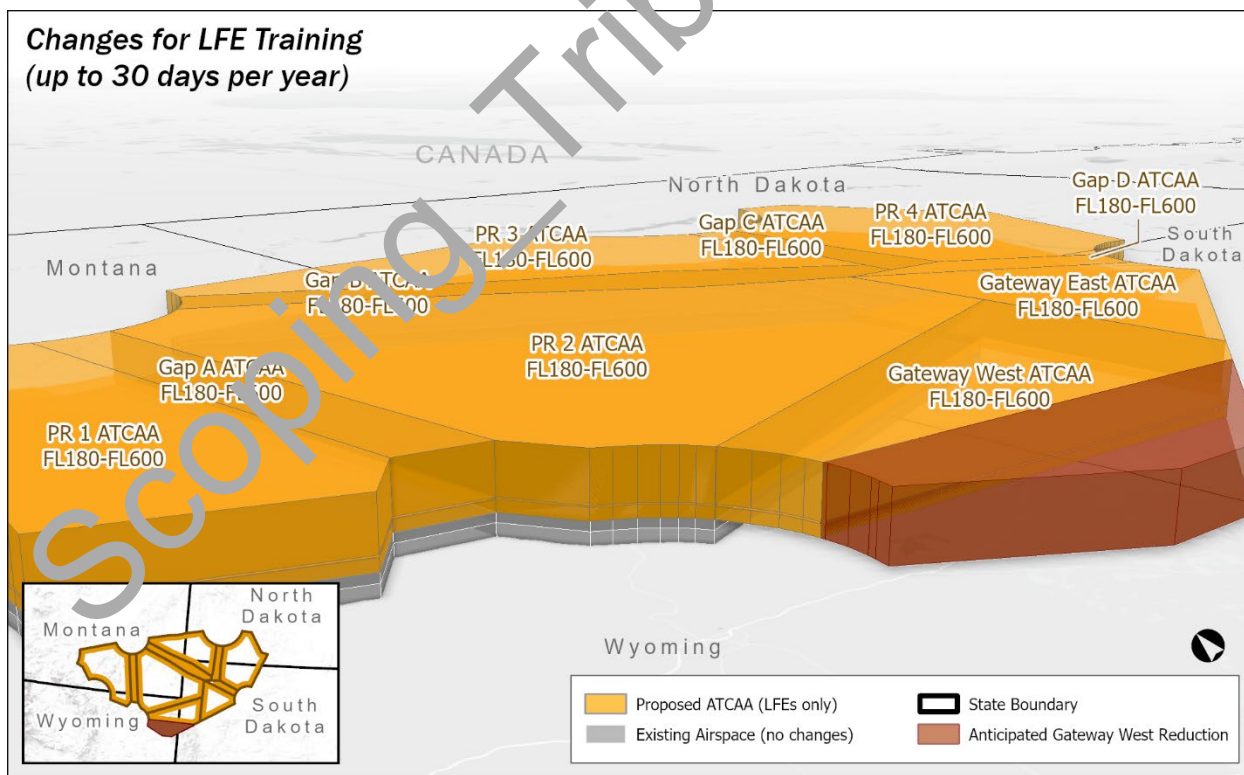
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Enclosure 2 – Alternative 2 Proposed Airspace Modifications

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Changes for LFE Training (up to 30 days per year)



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Enclosure 3 - Public Meetings

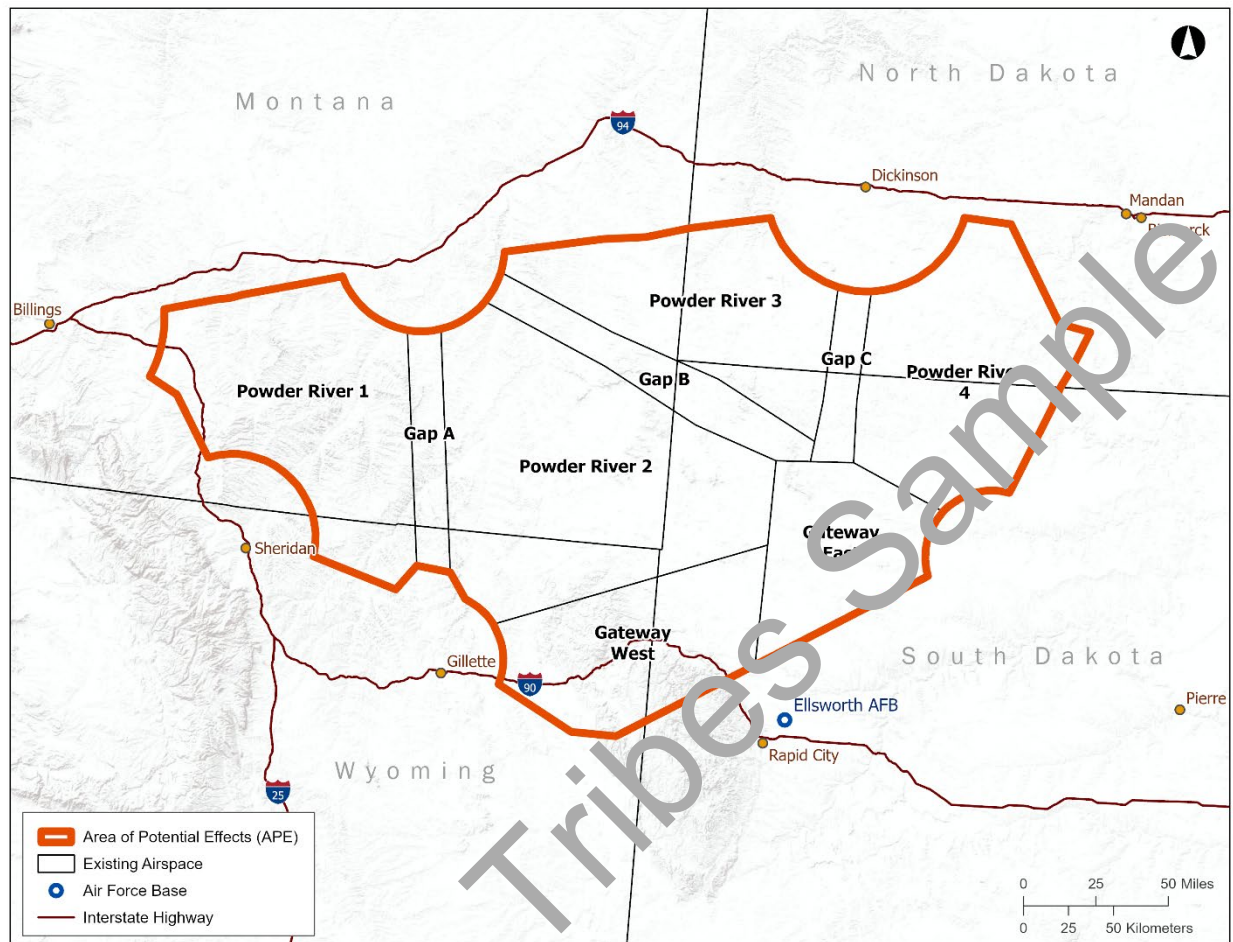
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Enclosure 4 – NEPA and NHPA Process Timeline



Enclosure 5 – Area of Potential Effects



ENCLOSURE C
SAMPLE NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT

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NorthWestern Energy, Montana utility board dial back electricity rate increase

AMANDA EGGERT
Montana Free Press

NorthWestern Energy customers will see some relief, at least temporarily, from the increased rates the utility has been charging customers for the past month and a half.

Late last month Montana's largest utility filed an electricity rate structure with state regulators seeking to replace the rate hike the company implemented in late May with a more modest increase outlined in a settlement the utility reached this spring with the Montana Consumer Counsel and about a dozen of its largest customers.

Under the new rate structure, the average Montana household using 750 kilowatts of electricity should expect to spend \$115 per month on that portion of their power bill. Under the now-moot rates that NorthWestern put into place without regulators' approval in late May, that figure was \$119.



CREDIT: AMANDA EGGERT / MTFP

Approximately 50 people gathered outside the Montana Public Service Commission headquarters in Helena on June 9, 2025, to protest NorthWestern Energy's request to collect another \$156.5 million annually from its customers' base rates.

NorthWestern's move to roll back some of its earlier rate increase, a possibility the company's CEO Brian Bird signaled a willingness to do last month, created confusion among the five Republican officials Montanans elected to serve on the Public Service Commission and the state employees who work at the agency. During

the commission's July 1 meeting, commissioners and agency staff grappled with where utility authority ends and commission authority begins, ambiguity in Montana law for such situations and the utility's motivations for voluntarily backing off its self-implemented rate hike.

The rate NorthWestern incorporated in customers' bills in May,

without regulators' approval, relied on a little-known, rarely used state law that allows a monopoly utility to adopt its proposed rate structure if the PSC hasn't acted on its rate hike request within nine months. Under that law, the utility must refund customers any charges the commission deems excessive — with interest.

With a 3-2 vote on

July 1, the commission agreed to go along with NorthWestern's proposal to replace the self-implemented rates with the ones outlined in the settlement. Commissioners Jeff Welborn and Anne "Annie" Bukacek followed the lead of commission Vice President Jennifer Fielder in adopting the recommendation of Lucas Hamilton, the agency's top lawyer.

After outlining the legal questions at play and the applicability of a somewhat similar scenario involving a water and wastewater utility in Big Sky named HLH, Hamilton told commissioners at their morning business meeting that maintaining higher rates that even the utility no longer wants would be an "absurd result" and called for the commission to deem the settlement rates appropriate.

"In this particular circumstance, given NorthWestern's posture, given that no

party in this proceeding has advocated for a rate as high as NorthWestern's originally proposed rate ... I would submit to you that it is better to avoid the result where the rates are higher," Hamilton said.

Fielder moved successfully to codify that approach "so that we can see these rates reduced and see the company stop overcharging customers ... effective immediately."

PSC President Brad Molnar and Commissioner Randy Pinocci voted against Fielder's motion.

Molnar argued that the commission's decision in the HLH matter was too dissimilar from the current proceedings to offer a "high-quality guide."

"The HLH case is very different from NorthWestern Energy's demand to implement a different rate to replace the current one. The stipulations were agreed to by all and never challenged by the PSC. I don't think there's a single penny in [NorthWestern Energy's] rate case that isn't contested," he said. "The [NorthWestern] rate decrease may be illusory and the increase may be simply stalled."

Molnar offered that the utility may be using the rate decrease as a "communications tool" to shore up public opinion following its unpopular self-implemented increase. He argued that the more prudent course of action would be to ratchet rates back down to the interim rates the commission signed off

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Department of the Air Force (DAF) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed optimization of the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC) to support aircrew training.

Proposed Action: The Proposed Action includes: (1) improvements to the airspace structure at PRTC to address shortfalls in day-to-day training for aircrews from Ellsworth and Minot Air Force Bases and (2) increasing Large Force Exercise capability at PRTC to meet threats to National Security. The PRTC airspace overlies portions of South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana.

Public Comments: The DAF is soliciting comments on the preliminary alternatives, environmental and social concerns, and any other relevant information, studies, or analyses that should be considered in the development of the Draft EIS. Written comments can be submitted at in-person public meetings, online at the project website (www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com), or by mailing to: PRTC Airspace EIS, c/o Stantec, 501 Butler Farm Rd., Suite H, Hampton, VA 23666. Please submit comments by **September 9, 2025** to ensure sufficient time for consideration in the Draft EIS.

In-Person Public Meeting: An in-person public meeting in your area is identified below (please see website for full list of meetings). All meetings will be open-house style; there will not be a formal presentation; please attend at your convenience during the times listed. DAF representatives will be available to answer questions about the proposal.

July 29, 2025, 5:00 – 7:00pm
St. Labre Soaring Eagle Gymnasium
112 St. Labre Campus Dr
Ashland, MT 59003

Virtual Meeting: Virtual meetings will be held on August 19, 20, and 21, 2025. Please visit the project website to register for a virtual meeting.

Independent Press
Serving all of Rosebud County

The Independent Press is the official newspaper of Rosebud County. It is published by Adams Publishing Group weekly.

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