

HQ Air Force Press Release  
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Air Force announces plans for evaluating environmental impacts of F-35 at Eglin

WASHINGTON -- The Air Force is preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement that will further evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with the beddown of the F-35 at Eglin AFB, Fla.

In Feb. 2009, the Air Force signed a Record of Decision establishing that 59 F-35 Primary Assigned Aircraft (PAA) will be stationed at Eglin AFB to satisfy 2005 Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) requirements.

The SEIS will analyze how to beddown the 59 F-35 PAA identified in the ROD and the consequences and potential mitigations associated with the beddown of up to 48 additional F-35 aircraft.

The ROD for the SEIS, expected in September 2010, will address the final beddown location and operation of the initial 59 F-35 PAA aircraft previously identified to implement the BRAC requirement to create an initial joint training site at Eglin AFB. A decision on the additional 24 or 48 F-35 PAA will be made at a later date.

"This Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is an important step to bringing the F-35 to Eglin," said Ms. Kathleen Ferguson, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, "It's important to the Air Force, and to local communities and residents, on and off base."

"This SEIS will take a hard look," continued Ms. Ferguson, "at where the maximum supportable number of F-35 aircraft may ultimately beddown on the Eglin Reservation, how they might be operated, and the degree to which other mitigation measures are possible."

The temporary operational limitations imposed in the February 5th ROD to avoid and minimize noise impacts, will remain in place until the SEIS has been completed and the Air Force has decided how best to proceed.

The Air Force is conducting scoping meetings to solicit public input starting tonight.