3.6 LAND USE AND RECREATION

3.6.1 INTRODUCTION

3.6.1.1 Overview

Land use refers to the management and use of land by people. The attributes of land use include general land use patterns, land ownership, land management plans, and special use areas (e.g., parks, wildlife management areas, designated wilderness). General land use patterns characterize the types of uses within a particular area. Specific uses of land typically include residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, military, public/institutional, and recreational. Land use also includes areas set aside for preservation or protection of natural resources, wildlife habitat, vegetation, or unique features. Management plans, policies, ordinances, and regulations determine the types of uses that are allowable, or the types of uses that protect specially designated or environmentally sensitive areas. Recreational uses, as used in the context of this chapter, refer to outdoor recreation activities in the area, which include hunting and trapping fur-bearing animals, camping, hiking, horseback riding, fishing, bird watching, and operating off-highway vehicles.

3.6.1.2 Regulatory Framework and Management Practices

Most land beneath the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) airspace is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), but it also includes land managed by the United States (U.S.) Forest Service (USFS), the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the U.S. Department of the Navy (Navy), Native American tribes, and private land owners. Programs, policies, and local land use plans (cities with a population of 25,000 or more and all counties with a population of 40,000 or more are required to create a planning commission that shall prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the city, county, or region) for surrounding areas are discussed within this section.

In 2011, Navy prepared a Range Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (RAICUZ) study for the FRTC in accordance with Office of the Chief of Naval Operations Instruction (OPNAVINST) 3550.1A, *Range Air Installations Compatible Use Zones Programs*. The purpose of a RAICUZ study is to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare and to prevent encroachment from degrading the operational capabilities of Navy air-to-ground (A-G) ranges. The RAICUZ study is implemented in coordination with federal, state, and local officials. The study contains range safety and noise analysis as well as compatible land use recommendations. At the core of the RAICUZ program is a land use plan, which recommends land uses for areas exposed to different levels of potential weapons impact and noise.

3.6.1.3 Approach to Analysis

The impact analysis for land use considered possible changes to existing land uses and land use compatibility that could result from the Proposed Action or conflicts with future land use plans as adopted by the jurisdictions affected by the Proposed Action. Such changes could arise from proposed increases in training activities and proposed use of additional platforms and systems. Factors used in determining whether impacts on land use would be significant include the degree to which existing land uses would change, the extent to which noise and safety hazards associated with the Proposed Action would cause land use compatibility issues, and the extent to which public access and usability would be affected.

3.6.2 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.6.2.1 Regional Setting and Land Ownership

The FRTC is in the high desert in northern Nevada, approximately 65 miles east of the city of Reno. The FRTC airspace overlies approximately 10.4 million acres (ac.) (4.2 million hectares [ha]) of land, including large parts of Churchill, Lander, and Eureka Counties as well as small portions of Pershing County in the north, Nye County in the south, Mineral County in the southwest, and Lyon County in the west (see Figure 1-1). The city of Fallon, 6 miles (9.7 kilometers) northwest of Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon, and the communities of Austin, Crescent Valley, and Gabbs are beneath the FRTC airspace. Highway 50 bisects the FRTC and is the main east-west transportation route through the complex. Approximately 94 percent of the lands beneath the FRTC airspace are federally managed public lands.

The Navy manages approximately 230,000 ac. (approximately 93,078 ha) of land beneath the FRTC airspace. These FRTC land assets are in Churchill County and comprise training ranges Bravo (B)-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20; the Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTA); and the Shoal Site. Management of the FRTC land assets occurs under several agency authorities, depending on whether the asset is acquired (purchased by the Navy), withdrawn, or a combination of acquired and withdrawn. Withdrawn land assets may be open or closed to public by various federal agencies, including the BLM, BOR, Department of Defense, and Department of Energy (Table 2-1).

3.6.2.2 Region of Influence

The region of influence for the land use and recreation analysis is the same as the FRTC Study Area depicted in Figure 2-1 and described in Section 2.2 (Description of the Fallon Range Training Complex Study Area).

3.6.2.3 Existing Land Use at the Fallon Range Training Complex

3.6.2.3.1 Churchill County

Churchill County covers approximately 3,144,320 ac. (1,272,463 ha) and accounts for approximately 4.4 percent of Nevada's total surface area. The federal government controls and manages 68 percent of the land in Churchill County. Of these federally managed public lands, approximately 2,059,268 ac. (833,357 ha) of Churchill County are managed by the BLM, 76,799 ac. (31,080 ha) are managed by the USFWS, and 8,347 ac. (3,378 ha) are managed by the BOR.

The Churchill County Master Plan, adopted by the Churchill County Board of Supervisors on September 2, 2010, provides the blueprint for land use development in unincorporated areas of Churchill County, Nevada. While the project area is located in Churchill County, the County has no land use jurisdiction over federally owned public lands. Unincorporated lands surrounding the FRTC ranges are primarily zoned RR-20, Rural Resource District, by Churchill County (Churchill County 2010a). Churchill County also designates a 3-mile (4.8-kilometer) Navy Notification Area around the FRTC ranges (Churchill County 2010b).

All FRTC training ranges are in Churchill County. Most of the existing land use on lands nearest B-17, B-19, and B-20 is classified by the county as "vacant" and is open space, with some parcels classified as irrigated agricultural land. Much of this land is managed by the BLM and includes permitted livestock grazing and recreational uses, including camping, hiking, horseback riding, and bird watching. Most recreation within the FRTC occurs in Dixie Valley and in the Horse Creek area. The irrigated lands are part of the BOR Newland's Irrigation Project.

The Lahontan Valley has served as the county's center for population growth and economic development since the late 19th century because of the natural fertility of this area, its ready access to other northern Nevada population centers, and the availability of water from the Carson River. Today, agriculture continues to be the predominant economic driver within Churchill County—the area known as the "Oasis of Nevada." Alfalfa, other dry hay, and wheat are the main crops in the county. Beef cattle, sheep, hogs, horses, and dairy cows are raised as well. Additional features of the valley include the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Indian Reservation/Colony, Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, and Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The refuges are managed by the USFWS.

3.6.2.3.2 Lander County

Lander County covers approximately 3,597,440 ac. (1,455,835 ha) and accounts for nearly 5.1 percent of Nevada's total surface area. The federal government controls and manages 93 percent of the land in Lander County. Of these federally managed public lands, approximately 3,010,516 ac. (1,218,314 ha) are managed by the BLM, 296,107 ac. (119,830 ha) of the Toiyabe National Forest are managed by the USFS, and 29,884 ac. (12,094 ha) are managed by the BOR.

Lander County comprises vast uninhabited stretches of land spread across two of Nevada's 14 major watersheds. Interstate 80 traverses the county in an east-west fashion on the northern end, as does U.S. Highway 50 on the southern end. State Highway 305, which runs north-south, bisects the county, linking the cities of Battle Mountain and Austin. The town of Kingston is in the southern part of the county on Highway 376. Development is concentrated in the north along Interstate 80 and in the south along Highway 50.

While agriculture plays a significant role in the local economy, in recent years Lander County's economy has been dominated by mining, primarily gold and precious stones production. Over the years, agriculture's share of total jobs has declined, primarily due to the growth of the county's mining industry. Other industries and land uses include ranching, forestry, fishing and hunting, and educational, health, and social services.

3.6.2.3.3 Eureka County

Eureka County covers approximately 2,676,480 ac. (1,083,135 ha) and accounts for 3.8 percent of Nevada's total surface area. The federal government controls and manages 81 percent of the land in Eureka. Of these federally managed public lands, approximately 2,017,406 ac. (816,416 ha) are managed by the BLM and 144,139 ac. (58,331 ha) are managed by the USFS. The acreage managed by the USFS includes primarily lands of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest (the largest U.S. national forest outside of Alaska) and lands within the northernmost end of the Monitor Range.

Eureka County is traversed by Interstate 80, Highway 50, and the mainline Union Pacific/Southern Pacific rail lines. Population nodes are concentrated around the unincorporated town of Eureka in the southeastern corner and in Crescent Valley and Beowawe in the north.

Eureka County is valued for its historical significance, mountain scenery, and rich natural resources. Its mild temperatures, along with the surrounding Alpine Mountains and Humboldt River, make it an attractive place for outdoor enthusiasts. In the northern portion along the Humboldt River Basin and the Carlin Trend, expansive geological formations of microscopic gold deposits have been found. In addition, commercial-quality geothermal, oil, and mineral resources can be found within Eureka County.

Eureka County has a strong history of mining that continues to support a stable economy with large-scale operations. Mining dominates all other industry sectors, including agriculture and ranching. Most of the mines along the Carlin Trend are in the northern part of the county, where there is limited infrastructure and housing; consequently, most of Eureka County's more than 4,000 mining workers live in nearby Elko County. Other industries and land uses include agriculture, forestry, and fishing and hunting.

3.6.2.3.4 Pershing, Nye, Mineral, and Lyon Counties

In addition to large parts of Churchill, Lander, and Eureka Counties, the FRTC Study Area encompasses small portions of Pershing County in the north, Nye County in the south, Mineral County in the southwest, and Lyon County in the west. Within the FRTC Study Area, most of the land area in these counties consists of vast open tracts of land with scattered parcels of irrigated agricultural land. No major population centers in Pershing, Nye, or Mineral Counties are within the FRTC Study Area.

3.6.2.3.5 Bureau of Land Management

The BLM, as designated by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, is responsible for the stewardship of federal public lands for the American people for all times. Management strategies are based on the principles of multiple use and sustained yield resources, environmental responsibility, and scientific technology.

FRTC land assets are primarily withdrawn from public use under BLM management (see Table 2-1). Per the Military Lands withdrawal Act (Public Law 106-65), the Secretary of the Interior shall manage the FRTC land assets for the period of withdrawal in consultation with the secretary of the military. BLM management responsibilities for FRTC land assets are outlined in the 2001 Navy integrated natural resource management plan amendment to the BLM Lahontan resource management plan (U.S. Department of the Navy 2001). Management responsibilities outlined in the 2001 integrated natural resource management plan amendment include BLM management of organized recreation activities in consultation with the Navy; BLM management of livestock grazing on open withdrawn lands at B-19, portions of Dixie Valley, and the Shoal Site; BLM management of saleable minerals on Navy-owned and withdrawn lands in Dixie Valley; and inclusion of FRTC land assets into the BLM fire management plan. The BLM and the Navy jointly manage wildlife, wetland, and riparian resources in coordination with the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Additionally, 7.6 million ac. (3.1 million ha) underlying FRTC airspace are managed by the BLM. Most BLM-administered land underlying FRTC airspace assets (excluding withdrawn FRTC land assets) are managed by the Carson City and Battle Mountain District Offices. These lands are managed in accordance with applicable BLM resource management plans for multiple uses, including recreation, livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, wild burros and horses, development of energy and mineral resources, and off-highway vehicle recreation uses.

Fourteen BLM-designated wilderness study areas totaling 995,994 ac. (403,065 ha) are wholly or partially within the FRTC Study Area (see Figure 4-1). BLM district offices manage these areas to preserve their suitability for potential designation as wilderness areas.

3.6.2.3.6 United States Forest Service

The USFS Austin and Tonopah Ranger Districts manage the 1.2 million ac. (0.5 million ha) of the Toiyabe National Forest that underlie the FRTC airspace for development of mineral resources, dispersed

recreation, and intensive wildlife uses. The Toiyabe National Forest includes three designated wilderness areas. The Arc Dome Wilderness Area and portions of the Alta-Toquima and Table Mountain Wilderness Areas are within the FRTC Study Area. Wilderness management, as outlined in Chapter 2320 of the Forest Service Manual (U.S. Department of Agriculture 2006), prohibits new mining, timber harvest and commercial uses. No roads are maintained in wilderness areas and, excluding administrative and emergency use, motorized transport is prohibited. Additionally, low-level flight within 2,000 feet of the ground surface is discouraged except in emergencies or for essential military missions.

3.6.2.3.7 Native American Tribes

Four Indian reservations (Walker River Indian Reservation, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Reservation, Pyramid Lake Reservation, and Yomba Indian Reservation) partially or wholly underlie the FRTC airspace. A total of 345,515 ac. (139,825 ha) of reservation lands underlie FRTC airspace.

3.6.2.3.8 Bureau of Reclamation

The mission of the BOR is to "manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public" (Bureau of Reclamation 2003). The BOR Lahontan Basin Area Office has jurisdiction over a large portion of Nevada, including approximately 246,711 ac. (99,840 ha) adjacent to training ranges B-16 and B-20. Projects currently managed by the Lahontan Basin Area Office include the Newlands Project, Washoe Project, Truckee Storage Project, and Humboldt Project. The Newlands Project was authorized by the passage of the 1902 Reclamation Act and has been instrumental in the development of Churchill County.

3.6.2.3.9 United States Fish and Wildlife Service

The USFWS manages the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (80,000 ac. [32,375 ha]) and the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge (15,000 ac. [6,070 ha]) underlying FRTC airspace. The USFWS mission with regard to the refuges is to ensure that fish, wildlife, and plant resources endure and that their needs are prioritized first within the refuges. Both areas are open to the public and allow hunting (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2002).

3.6.2.4 Recreational Interests

The vast expanses of undeveloped public lands within the FRTC Study Area support a variety of outdoor recreational activities. As discussed above, most of the public lands in the Study Area are managed for multiple uses, including outdoor recreation. Common recreational activities in the area include hunting and trapping fur-bearing animals, camping, hiking, horseback riding, fishing, bird watching, and operating off-highway vehicles. The Pony Express National Historic Trail runs parallel to Highway 50 within the FRTC. An annual trail ride along the Pony Express route takes place in June. The trail is part of the American Discovery Trail, a coast-to-coast hiking trail.

About 61 percent of the approximately 230,000 ac. (approximately 93,078 ha) of Navy-administered land within the FRTC is closed to the public to safeguard against potential hazards (Table 2-1). The remainder of the Navy-administered lands is open to the public. The BLM manages organized recreation activities in consultation with the Navy on open withdrawn lands.

3.6.2.5 Current Requirements and Management Practices

Current requirements and management practices applicable to land use within the FRTC Study Area are agency specific and are discussed in respective subsections in Section 3.6.2.3 (Existing Land Use at the Fallon Range Training Complex).

Based on the *Fallon Range Training Complex Range Air Installations Compatible Use Zones Study* (U.S. Department of the Navy 2011), land uses within the FRTC Study Area are compatible with current training activities. Land compatibility is based on Navy guidelines outlined in the joint Navy and U.S. Marine Corps instruction, OPNAVINST 3550.1A, *Range Air Installations Compatible Use Zones Program* (U.S. Department of the Navy 2008). The study includes training range safety and noise analyses and provides land use recommendations that are compatible with training range operations and the associated noise levels. Noise associated with training activities, as well as compatibility of noise levels with existing land use and sensitive noise receptors, is addressed further in Section 3.4 (Noise [Airborne]) of this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Safety associated with land use is of interest in areas proximate to B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20, where A-G delivery of ordnance occurs. Accordingly, range compatibility zones are developed for all targets. Range compatibility zones translate aviation and ordnance delivery safety concerns into degrees of safety that can be reasonably attained on the ground.

3.6.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section evaluates how and to what degree the activities described in Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) could impact land use within the Study Area. The analysis focuses on potential impacts and overall changes as they relate to land use compatibility and public access. Table 2-4 presents the baseline and proposed training activities for each alternative.

3.6.3.1 No Action Alternative

3.6.3.1.1 Land Use Compatibility

Because training activities would continue at current levels and within established ranges, training areas, and airspace, there would be no changes to the current noise levels associated with these activities. Based on the *Fallon Range Training Complex RAICUZ Study* (U.S. Department of the Navy 2011), land uses within the FRTC Study Area are compatible with current training activities. The study includes training range safety and noise analyses and provides land use recommendations that are compatible with training range operations and the associated noise levels. Noise associated with training activities, as well as compatibility of noise levels with existing land use and sensitive noise receptors, is addressed further in Section 3.4 (Noise [Airborne]) of this EIS.

Safety associated with land use is of interest in areas proximate to B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20, where A-G delivery of ordnance occurs. Under the current RAICUZ study land use designations, Range Compatibility Zone-I areas for B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20 fall within the range boundaries on Navy-controlled lands, which is consistent with the requirements of the Navy RAICUZ Plan for the FRTC. Range Compatibility Zone-II in association with the No Action Alternative for B-17 and B-19 fall primarily over vacant open space land, with the exception of the southern edge of B-19, which extends into Walker River Paiute tribal land. The Range Compatibility Zone-II for B-20 overlaps parts of the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, and the Stillwater Wilderness Study Area, but these land uses are compatible based on overflight restrictions mandated by the Navy when operating in these areas. Range Compatibility Zone-III comprises the military operations areas around the training ranges. Lands falling under Range Compatibility Zone-III are mostly agricultural or open space land uses with a small amount of commercial and residential land uses. Based on current Navy guidelines, all of these land uses are compatible with operations in Range Compatibility Zone-III under the No Action Alternative.

Ground training would continue at current levels under the No Action Alternative (Table 2-4). Ground training activities include Convoy Operations, Tactical Ground Mobility, Ground Maneuver Tactics, and

Marksmanship on the small arms range at B-19. Insertion and Extraction and some Strike Warfare training activities such as Close Air Support and Combat Search and Rescue also include ground training components. Most ground training occurs on closed (primarily B-16) and open (DVTA, Shoal Site, and portions of B-16) Navy-administered lands, but on occasion and with prior approval, BLM lands may be used for some types of ground training.

All ground training on Navy-administered lands is scheduled through the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center (NSAWC) Range Office, and standard range safety policies and procedures apply. Ground training on closed Navy-administered lands does not present land use compatibility concerns because the training activities and any associated hazards are contained within the fenced range boundary.

Open Navy-administered lands available for ground training include DVTA, Shoal Site, and portions of B-16. Ground training is not authorized on portions of the open lands at B-16 and all of the open lands at B-19. Open Navy-administered lands are joint use and open to public access for recreational, livestock grazing, and other purposes. Training activities on open lands are restricted because of the limited amount of land available, public safety, and environmental concerns. Land use conflicts on open lands are avoided through implementation of policies and procedures in the *FRTC Range Operations Manual*, which include:

- Ground training requests must be submitted to the NSAWC Range Office 45 days in advance.
- Contact with civilians should be anticipated. Open Navy lands are joint-use with the public. The military has no authority to ask civilians to exit or leave open land areas.
- All personnel shall adhere to posted speed limits. Dirt and gravel road speed limits must be commensurate with road conditions and should not exceed 45 miles per hour.
- Only blank ammunition, smoke, and flares are allowed on any of the open training areas. Flares and other pyrotechnics may be restricted during fire season. Laser use is not authorized on open lands.
- Helicopter landings on open lands may occur as long as the landing area avoids disturbing the public (if present).

Although not under the jurisdiction of the Navy, BLM lands may be available for limited ground training activities with proper and timely coordination with the NSAWC BLM liaison. The BLM Carson City District *Administrative Guide for Military Activities on and Over the Public Lands* (Bureau of Land Management 2012) provides for the use of public lands by the military under the concept of casual use. Casual use is not an authorization to train and does not provide special status for training to the military. The concept is that some civilian and military activities that have negligible impacts on the environment and other public land users can be conducted on the public lands without written authorizations or permits.

The BLM Administrative Guide and the FRTC Range Operations Manual contain coordination procedures to ensure that any ground training on public lands meets the definition of casual use. While training activities are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, the BLM Administrative Guide includes examples of activities that are or are not considered casual use. For example, any activity that uses live munitions, except blanks and certain pyrotechnics, is automatically considered above the threshold of casual use. If the proposed training requires any type of environmental assessment under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), then it is not considered casual use. An example of a training activity that may be considered casual use is an individual or small team (approximately 12 or fewer) conducting land navigation (map and compass training) with any motorized transport confined to appropriate existing

roads and trails. Based on the concept of casual use, ground training on BLM lands under the No Action Alternative would not create land use conflicts or land use compatibility issues.

3.6.3.1.2 Access

Under the No Action Alternative, training activities at FRTC would continue at baseline levels on lands and within airspace specifically designated for these activities. About 35 percent (81,092 ac. [32,817 ha]) of the approximately 230,000 ac. (approximately 93,078 ha) of Navy-administered land within the FRTC is joint use and open to public access for recreational, livestock grazing, and other purposes. The remainder of the Navy-administered land is closed to the public to safeguard against potential hazards (Table 2-1). The acreage of land closed to the public would not change under the No Action Alternative, and procedures in the FRTC Range Operations Manual would continue to be implemented to ensure that public access and joint-use of open lands continues. Within the FRTC Study Area, federal agencies manage over 9 million acres of public lands, most of which is open to the public for recreational and other uses. Training activities, including aircraft overflights and limited casual use of BLM land, would have no direct impact on accessibility to these public lands. The Navy-administered lands that are closed to public access (120,841 ac. [48,903 ha]) represent a very small percentage (about 1.3 percent) of the total public lands within the FRTC Study Area. Consequently, the No Action Alternative would have negligible impacts on public access.

In summary, land uses within the Study Area are compatible with the current types of training activities conducted at FRTC and current training has a negligible impact on access to public lands. Training activities conducted under the No Action Alternative would have no significant impact on land use and recreation.

3.6.3.2 Alternative 1

3.6.3.2.1 Land Use Compatibility

Under Alternative 1, the number of annual activities would increase for Combat Search and Rescue, Gunnery Exercise (A-G), High-speed Anti-radiation Missile Exercise (HARMEX), and Missile Exercise (A-G) (Table 2-4). Two new activities, Ground Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation (LASER) Targeting, and Dismounted Fire and Maneuver, would also be conducted. Additional platforms and systems would also be used during training activities under Alternative 1 (see Section 2.5.3, Proposed Additional Platforms and Systems). All training activities would continue to be conducted within existing training ranges, training areas, and airspace specifically designated for these activities. There would be no changes to training range or airspace boundaries under Alternative 1.

As discussed in Section 3.4 (Noise [Airborne]), changes in training activities and platforms under Alternative 1 would result in minor changes to the noise environment at FRTC. Noise modeling predicts that community sound levels from aircraft activities would continue to be compatible with noise-sensitive land uses. Noise modeling also indicates that contours for ordnance noise at B-16, B-19, and B-20 would not extend beyond range boundaries. At B-17, a noise contour extends just south of the range, but does not overlap with any sensitive receptors. Based on the results of noise modeling (Appendix E, Noise Study) and the analysis in Section 3.4 (Noise [Airborne]), land uses in the FRTC Study Area would continue to be compatible with training-related noise levels under Alternative 1.

Range Compatibility Zone-I areas for B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20 would remain within the range boundaries under Alternative 1 as required by Navy policy. Prior to using new platforms or systems at FRTC, parameters such as surface danger zones, weapons danger zones, and training tactics would be

evaluated. Adjustments to tactical release parameters or target locations would be made to ensure that all Range Compatibility Zone-I areas remain within the range boundaries. Therefore, existing land uses would remain compatible with operations in Range Compatibility Zone-I, Range Compatibility Zone-II, and Range Compatibility Zone-III under Alternative 1.

Changes in ground training for Alternative 1 include increases in Combat Search and Rescue and Marksmanship training, and reintroduction of Ground LASER Targeting and Dismounted Fire and Maneuver training. Other ground training would be identical to the No Action Alternative. All ground training would continue to be conducted in the same areas described for the No Action Alternative, primarily on closed and open Navy-administered lands. Some aspects of Ground LASER Targeting would be conducted on both closed and open Navy-administered lands (B-16, B-17, B-19, DVTA, and the Shoal Site), but LASERs would only be used on closed lands certificated for LASER use. During this training, LASERs would be used as aiming devices for small arms, as target scoring systems in lieu of live rounds, for range finding, to illuminate targets at night, and to mark targets for identification by aircraft. The hazard zone for LASER targeting would be contained within Navy-administered land where public access is restricted. Standard operating procedures would be implemented to protect the public from operational hazards related to LASER targeting. Dismounted fire and Maneuver would be conducted on B-17, which is closed Navy-administered land.

As discussed for the No Action Alternative, ground training on closed Navy-administered lands does not present land use compatibility concerns because the training activities and any associated hazards are contained within the fenced range boundary. Ground training activities on open Navy-administered lands would increase for Alternative 1, and the likelihood that military and public users would encounter one another could increase. However, continued implementation of policies and procedures in the *FRTC Range Operations Manual* would ensure compatible joint use of these open lands. Alternative 1 does not include any specific proposals to conduct ground training activities on BLM public lands. However, limited ground training activities may be conducted on BLM lands as casual use, with proper and timely coordination with the NSAWC BLM liaison. As discussed for the No Action Alternative, casual use, by definition, would have negligible impacts on the environment and other public land users. Ground training under Alternative 1 would not result in land use compatibility issues.

3.6.3.2.2 Access

Alternative 1 does not include any direct changes to land use, training range or airspace boundaries, or existing public access polices for open or closed Navy-administered lands. Training activities would continue to be conducted on lands and within airspace already designated for these activities. As discussed above, military and public users might encounter one another more frequently on open Navy-administered lands as a result of increased or new training activity. Increased encounters would not affect public access or usability because the military has no authority to ask civilians to exit or leave open land areas. Also, continued implementation of policies and procedures in the *FRTC Range Operations Manual* would ensure compatible joint-use of these open lands. The Navy-administered lands that are closed to public access (120,841 ac. [48,903 ha]) represent a very small percentage (about 1.3 percent) of the total public lands within the FRTC Study Area. Consequently, Alternative 1 would have negligible impacts on public access.

In summary, land uses within the Study Area would remain compatible with training activities conducted at FRTC under Alternative 1 and there would a negligible impact on access to public lands. Training activities conducted under Alternative 1 would have no significant impact on land use and recreation.

3.6.3.3 Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative)

3.6.3.3.1 Land Use Compatibility

Alternative 2 includes all elements of Alternative 1 and, with a few exceptions, a 10 percent increase in training activities compared to Alternative 1. The number of Long Range Strike for Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX) and Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX), Dismounted Fire and Maneuver, and Ground Maneuver Tactics activities conducted for Alternative 2 would be the same as Alternative 1. The additional platforms and systems would also be the same as under Alternative 1 (see Section 2.5.3). All training activities would continue to be conducted within existing training ranges, training areas, and airspace specifically designated for these activities. There would be no changes to training range or airspace boundaries under Alternative 2.

As discussed in Section 3.4 (Noise [Airborne]), changes in training activities and platforms under Alternative 2 would result in minor changes to the noise environment at FRTC. Noise modeling predicts that community sound levels from aircraft activities would continue to be compatible with noise sensitive land uses. Noise modeling also indicates that contours for ordnance noise at B-16, B-19, and B-20 would not extend beyond range boundaries. At B-17, a noise contour extends just south of the range, but does not overlap with any sensitive receptors. Based on the results of noise modeling (Appendix E, Noise Study) and the analysis in Section 3.4 (Noise [Airborne]), land uses in the FRTC Study Area would continue to be compatible with training-related noise levels under Alternative 2.

Range Compatibility Zone-I areas for B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20 would remain within the range boundaries under Alternative 1 as required by Navy policy. Prior to using new platforms or systems at FRTC, parameters such as surface danger zones, weapons danger zones, and training tactics would be evaluated. Adjustments to tactical release parameters or target locations would be made to ensure that all Range Compatibility Zone-I areas remain within the range boundaries. Therefore, existing land uses would remain compatible with operations in Range Compatibility Zone-I, Range Compatibility Zone-II, and Range Compatibility Zone-III under Alternative 2.

All ground training would continue to be conducted in the same areas described for the No Action Alternative and Alternative 1, primarily on closed and open Navy-administered lands. As discussed for the No Action Alternative, ground training on closed Navy-administered lands does not present land use compatibility concerns because the training activities and any associated hazards are contained within the fenced range boundary. Ground training activities on open Navy-administered lands would increase for Alternative 2 and the likelihood that military and public users would encounter one another could increase. However, continued implementation of policies and procedures in the *FRTC Range Operations Manual* would ensure compatible joint-use of these open lands. Alternative 2 does not include any specific proposals to conduct ground training activities on BLM public lands. However, limited ground training activities may be conducted on BLM lands as casual use, with proper and timely coordination with the NSAWC BLM liaison. As discussed for the No Action Alternative, casual use, by definition, would have negligible impacts on the environment and other public land users. Ground training under Alternative 2 would not result in land use compatibility issues.

3.6.3.3.2 Access

Alternative 2 does not include any direct changes to land use, training range or airspace boundaries, or existing public access polices for open or closed Navy-administered lands. Training activities would continue to be conducted on lands and within airspace already designated for these activities. As discussed above, military and public users might encounter one another more frequently on open Navy-

administered lands as a result of increased or new training activity. Increased encounters would not affect public access or usability because the military has no authority to ask civilians to exit or leave open land areas. Also, continued implementation of policies and procedures in the *FRTC Range Operations Manual* would ensure compatible joint-use of these open lands. The Navy-administered lands that are closed to public access (120,841 ac. [48,903 ha]) represent a very small percentage (about 1.3 percent) of the total public lands within the FRTC Study Area. Consequently, Alternative 2 would have negligible impacts on public access.

In summary, land uses within the Study Area would remain compatible with training activities conducted at FRTC under Alternative 2 and there would a negligible impact on access to public lands. Training activities conducted under Alternative 1 would have no significant impact on land use and recreation.

3.6.3.4 Proposed Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation Measures

3.6.3.4.1 Proposed Best Management Practices

Policies and procedures in the *FRTC Range Operations Manual* would continue to be implemented to avoid land use conflicts. No additional management practices are warranted for land use and recreation based on the analysis presented in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

3.6.3.4.2 Proposed Monitoring

No monitoring measures are warranted for land use and recreation based on the analysis presented in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences) and continued implementation of policies and procedures in the *FRTC Range Operations Manual*.

3.6.3.4.3 Proposed Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are warranted for land use and recreation based on the analysis presented in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences) and continued implementation of policies and procedures in the *FRTC Range Operations Manual*.

3.6.3.5 Summary of Effects and Conclusions

Table 3.6-1 summarizes the effects of the alternatives on land use and recreation.

Table 3.6-1: Summary of Effects and Conclusions for Land Use and Recreation

Stressor	Summary of Effects and National Environmental Policy Act Determinations
No Action Alternative	
Land Use Compatibility	• Existing land uses are compatible with training-related noise levels. • Existing land uses are compatible with operations in Range Compatibility Zone-I, Range Compatibility Zone-II, and Range Compatibility Zone-III under Alternative 1.
Access	• Current access restrictions on Navy-administered lands would not change, and impacts would be negligible.
Impact Conclusion	• The No Action Alternative would not result in significant impacts on land use and recreation.
Alternative 1	
Land Use Compatibility	• Existing land uses would remain compatible with training-related noise levels. • Existing land uses would remain compatible with operations in Range Compatibility Zone-I, Range Compatibility Zone-II, and Range Compatibility Zone-III under Alternative 1.
Access	• Training activities proposed for Alternative 1 would not result in changes to current access restrictions on Navy-administered lands, and impacts would be negligible.
Impact Conclusion	• Alternative 1 would not result in significant impacts on land use and recreation.
Alternative 2	
Land Use Compatibility	• Existing land uses would remain compatible with training-related noise levels. • Existing land uses would remain compatible with operations in Range Compatibility Zone-I, Range Compatibility Zone-II, and Range Compatibility Zone-III under Alternative 2.
Access	• Training activities proposed for Alternative 2 would not result in changes to current access restrictions on Navy-administered lands, and impacts would be negligible.
Impact Conclusion	• Alternative 2 would not result in significant impacts on land use and recreation.