

Basing F-16 Fighting Falcon Fighter Squadron at
Gowen Field – Idaho Air National Guard Base



Scoping Information for the Beddown of an F-16 Fighting Falcon Squadron at Gowen Field – Idaho Air National Guard Base, Environmental Impact Statement

February 2026

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Purpose of Public Scoping

- Provide information regarding the proposal to locate an F-16 Fighting Falcon Fighter Squadron at the Idaho Air National Guard Base (ANGB) at the Boise Air Terminal/Gowen Field in Ada County, Idaho.
- Describe the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and objectives of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- Provide an Overview of Alternatives and Environmental Resources Considered for Analysis.
- Receive input on the Proposed Action and Alternatives.



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Purpose and Need

- The **purpose** of the Proposed Action is to maintain and enhance the combat capability and mission readiness for the 124th Fighter Wing (124 FW). This transition leverages the existing expertise of the 124 FW in fighter aircraft operations and maintenance, capitalizing on the unit's proficiency and the availability of existing training ranges and airspace. In addition to basing and operation of the F-16 aircraft, the proposed action also involves the addition of up to 70 personnel and infrastructure improvements (new construction and modifications/enhancements to existing facilities at BOI and IDANG Base) to support the F-16 mission. These construction projects and facility enhancements are necessary to accommodate the additional personnel and operational needs for basing the F-16s at IDANG Base and the 124 FW's use of the BOI airfield.

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National Environmental Policy Act

- Federal law that requires agencies to identify and consider the environmental consequences of implementing proposals.
- NEPA requires a rigorous process to be followed prior to making a final decision, including consideration of comments.
- The analysis of environmental consequences is presented in an EIS, which accomplishes the following objectives:
 - Identifies and describes the affected environment
 - Evaluates potential impacts from the proposed alternatives
 - Identifies permits or proposed mitigations that would avoid, minimize, or reduce the potential for adverse environmental impacts
- The NEPA process concludes with a Record of Decision that identifies which alternative is selected and outlines any mitigation measures that are required.

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Purpose and Need

- The A-10C is nearing the end of its service life due to aging and maintenance challenges, and it is no longer cost-effective to retain this fleet beyond FY 2029. In addition, no new A-10C aircraft are being produced. Therefore, the Department of the Airforce (DAF) **needs** to consider replacements to modernize the fleet, maintain mission capabilities, and meet its statutory requirement to train and equip personnel. The DAF is considering the F-16 Fighting Falcon as the replacement for the A-10C because it offers enhanced capabilities and provides a versatile platform that adapts to various mission profiles, which will ensure the DAF maintains its operational readiness and contributes to broader DAF objectives for air superiority and national security. While the A-10C specializes in close air support of ground forces and is built for low-speed, low-altitude maneuverability, the F-16 is capable of both close air support and high-altitude air-to-air combat.

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Proposed Action - Background

- The 124th Fighter Wing at Gowen Field ANGB, Idaho, is proposing to transition to an F-16 Fighting Falcon mission.
- The transition would better align the Department of the Air Force to support the National Defense Strategy and will allow the 124th FW to leverage existing fighter aircraft operations and maintenance expertise once its A-10 Thunderbolt IIs retire.
- The proposal to host the F-16 mission at Gowen Field ANGB came after assessing the area's ability to facilitate the mission and infrastructure capacity, while accounting for community support, environmental factors and cost.
- The Secretary of the Air Force announced the proposal on June 26, 2023.

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Proposed Action - Basing

- Basing of 21 F-16 aircraft (18 primary and 3 reserve) to replace 21 A-10 aircraft currently at Gowen Field.
- FY 2028 through FY 2029.
- Potential increase in staffing requirement of up to 70 additional personnel (1,505 personnel currently assigned to 124 FW).



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Proposed Action – Operations

- Annual Flying Program – 250 hours per F-16 aircraft (same as current A-10 mission)
 - Total of 4,500 flight hours annually (same as current A-10 mission)
 - Average F-16 Sortie Duration = 1.4 hours
 - 3,215 F-16 sorties flown annually
 - Sortie is defined as a single flight/mission by a single aircraft (takeoff to landing)
 - Operation is defined as one aircraft movement that involves the use of a runway. Each sortie includes at least two operations (one takeoff and one landing) but may include additional operations performed during the sortie.
- F-16 training missions require flying during daylight and dark conditions, as well as under myriad weather conditions.

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Proposed Action – Operations

- Current and Proposed Annual Airfield Operations at BOI

Aircraft	Total Current Operations	Total Proposed Operations
A-10C	6,152	0
F-16	0	6,152
Other Aircraft (non-military)	145,227 *	158,547 **
Total Airfield Operations	151,379	164,699
Percent Change at Airfield	N/A	8.8%

* 2025 FAA Forecast

** 2030 FAA Forecast

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Proposed Action - Construction

- 25 supporting projects
 - New construction
 - Facility demolition
 - Facility renovation
- All within the current airport/ installation boundaries.
- See graphic on following slide.





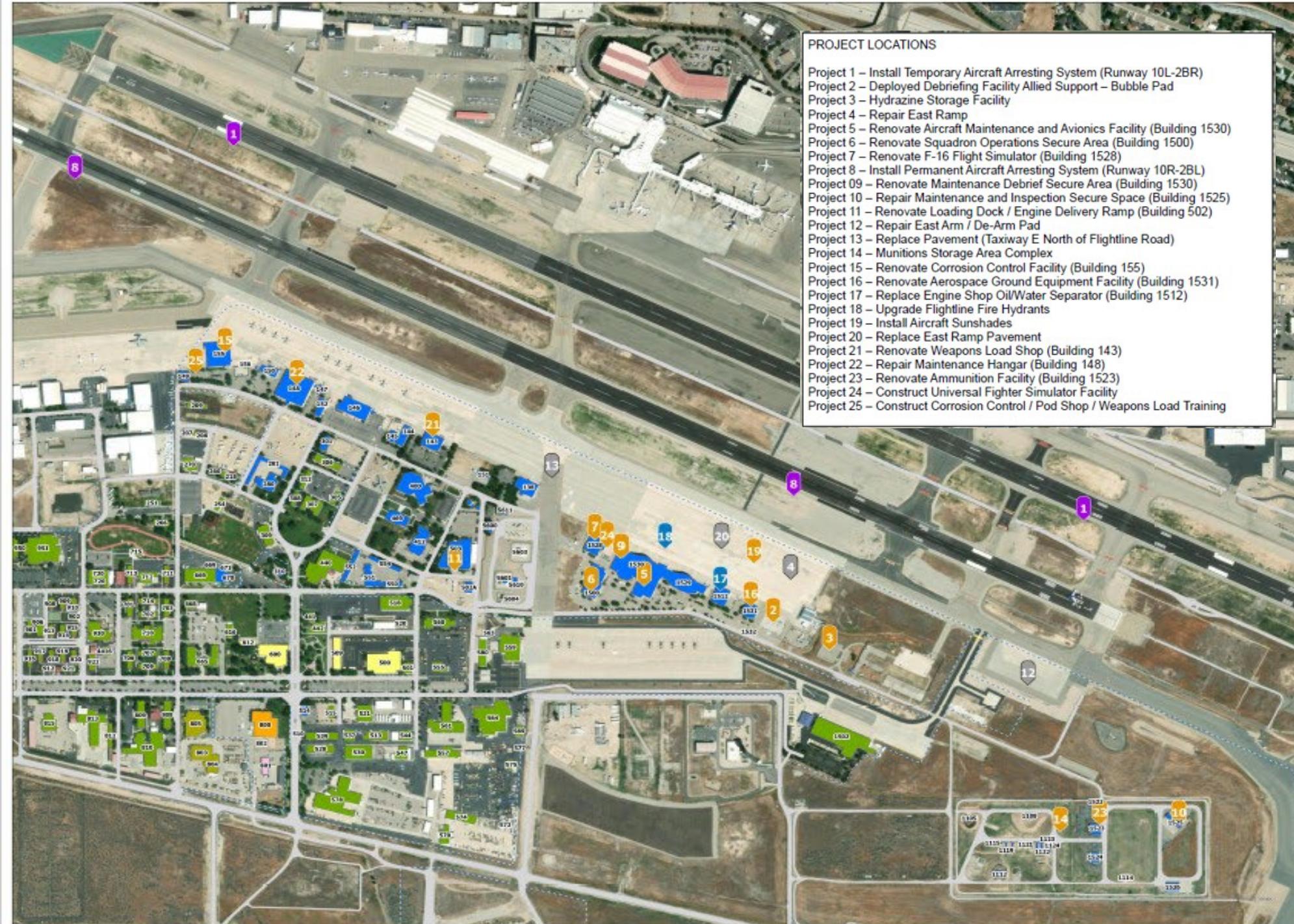
IDAHO AIR NATIONAL GUARD, GOWEN FIELD, F-16 CONVERSION PROJECT LOCATIONS

- FACILITY PROJECTS
- UTILITY PROJECTS
- RUNWAY PROJECTS
- PAVEMENT PROJECTS

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PROJECT LOCATIONS

- Project 1 – Install Temporary Aircraft Arresting System (Runway 10L-2BR)
- Project 2 – Deployed Debriefing Facility Allied Support – Bubble Pad
- Project 3 – Hydrazine Storage Facility
- Project 4 – Repair East Ramp
- Project 5 – Renovate Aircraft Maintenance and Avionics Facility (Building 1530)
- Project 6 – Renovate Squadron Operations Secure Area (Building 1500)
- Project 7 – Renovate F-16 Flight Simulator (Building 1528)
- Project 8 – Install Permanent Aircraft Arresting System (Runway 10R-2BL)
- Project 9 – Renovate Maintenance Debrief Secure Area (Building 1530)
- Project 10 – Repair Maintenance and Inspection Secure Space (Building 1525)
- Project 11 – Renovate Loading Dock / Engine Delivery Ramp (Building 502)
- Project 12 – Repair East Arm / De-Arm Pad
- Project 13 – Replace Pavement (Taxiway E North of Flightline Road)
- Project 14 – Munitions Storage Area Complex
- Project 15 – Renovate Corrosion Control Facility (Building 155)
- Project 16 – Renovate Aerospace Ground Equipment Facility (Building 1531)
- Project 17 – Replace Engine Shop Oil/Water Separator (Building 1512)
- Project 18 – Upgrade Flightline Fire Hydrants
- Project 19 – Install Aircraft Sunshades
- Project 20 – Replace East Ramp Pavement
- Project 21 – Renovate Weapons Load Shop (Building 143)
- Project 22 – Repair Maintenance Hangar (Building 148)
- Project 23 – Renovate Ammunition Facility (Building 1523)
- Project 24 – Construct Universal Fighter Simulator Facility
- Project 25 – Construct Corrosion Control / Pod Shop / Weapons Load Training

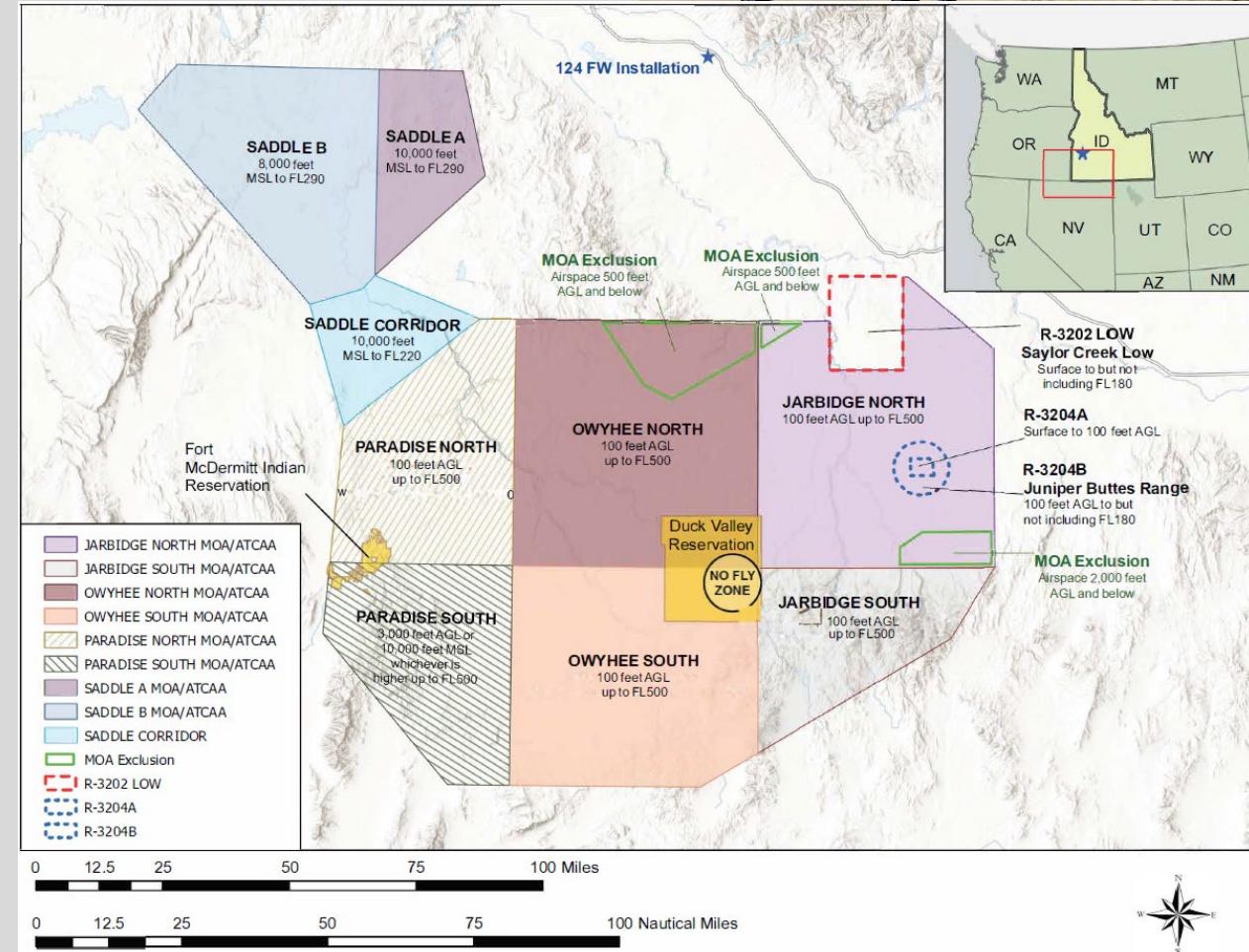


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Proposed Action - Airspace

- All flight operations would take place within designated military airspace and military training ranges.
- No additions or alterations of training airspace are proposed.
- Activities include supersonic operations and use of defensive countermeasures (chaff and flare).
- Air-to-ground ordnance is not released from training aircraft.
- Flight operations would comply with existing regulations and directives.



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No Action Alternative

- The consideration and analysis of the No Action Alternative is required by NEPA for the purpose of presenting a comparative analysis to the action alternatives.
- Under the No Action Alternative:
 - The F-16 Fighting Falcon mission would not transition to the 124 FW;
 - No training activities by the 124 FW F-16 operational aircraft would be conducted in the airspace;
 - Construction required to base the F-16 mission at the IDANG Base would not occur; and
 - 124 FW would continue to conduct their current mission using the A-10C aircraft until the mission is retired.
- The No Action Alternative does not meet the purpose and need of the project.

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Alternative Requirements

- Supporting the purpose of maintaining and enhancing the combat capability and mission readiness of the 124 FW.
- Maintaining the IDANG presence at Gowen Field/BOI, continuing the stated mission of properly equipping and training personnel in a high state of readiness for immediate tasking.
- Adequate facilities and infrastructure to maximize the efficiencies of the Proposed Action and to offer the ability to optimize the F-16 pilot training mission. The base should have available facilities, to include operations, maintenance, and academic training facilities; live munitions loading areas on the airfield; and adequate aircraft ramp space and existing infrastructure requiring only limited construction or renovation to support the mission.
- Adequate Airspace and Range Capacity and Availability. The proposed location must have access to existing airspace that is adequate in size and configured to permit the full spectrum of F-16 Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs). The airspace must be able to support aerial combat training missions; permit long-range, high-speed aircraft combat; and allow the F-16s to operate at a broad range of altitudes consistent with combat tactics. The airspace and ranges must be located within sufficient proximity to support unrefueled training to maximize training time. Available ranges must allow for the ability to drop training, inert, and live munitions.
- Supporting the DAF decision to retire the A-10C aircraft.

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Alternatives Considered but Eliminated

- Alternative Locations for Basing the F-16 Fighting Falcon Aircraft
 - Alternative locations in the region, including Mountain Home Air Force Base, ID, were considered for the Proposed Action.
 - Basing the F-16s at any alternative location would require space expansion, land acquisition, and significant new facility construction as existing operations already occupy existing land and facility space.
 - Therefore, this alternative has been eliminated from further consideration as this would not meet the purpose statement of maintaining and enhancing the combat capability and mission readiness of the 124 FW.

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Alternatives Considered but Eliminated

- Alternative Aircraft for the 124 FW Mission
 - Basing a different fighter platform, such as the F-15EX, has not been actively pursued due to procurement rates and potential cost considerations. The F-15EX is a larger and heavier aircraft than the A-10C or F-16, requiring substantial infrastructure modifications to taxiways, ramps, and maintenance facilities. Furthermore, the F-15EX program is facing delivery delays and future un-allocated operational squadrons would leave the 124 FW without a flying mission for an extended period of time.
 - Conversion to an alternative flying mission, such as a tanker role, has also not been considered a viable option. The associated conversion costs would be substantial, and the 124th FW's core expertise lies in fighter operations.
 - Therefore, this alternative has been eliminated from further consideration as this would not meet the purpose statement of maintaining and enhancing the combat capability and mission readiness of the 124 FW.

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Alternatives Considered but Eliminated

- Simulated Training Only
 - DAF has established procedures detailing the training and proficiency requirements for pilots and crew that include both simulator training and in-person flight time.
 - The DAF blended approach allows for cost-effective, safe practice of complex procedures in a simulator, while also ensuring pilots develop the essential skills and situational awareness that can only be gained from flying real aircraft.
 - Therefore, simulator training alone has been eliminated from further consideration as this alternative does not meet the purpose and need of this action as personnel would not be completely mission ready capable.

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Potential Environmental Resources Analyzed

- Noise
- Airspace Use and Management
- Air Quality
- Socioeconomics
- Land Use
- Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966
- Water Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Cultural Resources
- Safety and Occupational Health
- Hazardous Materials and Waste
- Biological Resources
- Visual Resources
- Infrastructure/Utilities/Transportation
- Health and Safety

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EIS Anticipated Schedule



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Scoping Comment Procedures

Comments may be submitted by:

 Project website: www.gowenfieldf16eis.com

 Project email: NGB.CCA4F.NEPACOMMENTS@us.af.mil. Please Include "F-16 Gowen Field EIS" in the subject line.

 US Mail:
NGB Project Manager
Attn: Gowen F-16 EIS
Whitetail Ayuda JV
P.O. Box 9235
Denver, CO 80209

Please submit comments by the end of the scoping public comment period on March 15, 2026, to ensure that your comments are addressed in the Draft EIS. Comments received after the close of the public comment period will be reviewed but may not be specifically addressed in the Draft EIS.