

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT for RESUMPTION OF YEAR-ROUND FIRING OPPORTUNITIES ON FORT RICHARDSON

Written Comments:

Comments are due Tuesday, May 11, 2010

Ms. Carrie McEnteer
Directorate of Public Works
Attn: IMPC-FWA-PWE (C. McEnteer)
1060 Gaffney Road, #4500
Fort Wainwright, AK 99703-4500
Fax: (907)361-9867
Email: carrie.mcenteer@us.army.mil

Taking points:

- The live-fire bombing of Eagle River Flats has resulted in severe physical and toxic damage to the estuary of the Eagle River. Contamination from the use of white phosphorus has resulted in the deaths of thousands of waterfowl each year.
- Although the Army discontinued the use of white phosphorus, it failed to address the contamination from the more than 10,000 unexploded bombs and other munitions at Eagle River Flats, harm to water quality, salmon habitat, and the Cook Inlet beluga whale population.
- Eagle River Flats is an important feeding area for the endangered Cook Inlet beluga whale. According to their Draft Environmental Impact Statement, 5-30 beluga whales were spotted per month in the Eagle River Flats area in 2007 and 2008. Belugas have been spotted by the USGS as far as 1.5 miles upriver from the mouth of Eagle River. Belugas are known to be extremely sensitive to noise.
- After the Army restricted firing on Eagle River Flats to the winter months, the waterfowl population in the area markedly increased. Resuming year round firing would threaten waterfowl and migratory birds who use this coastal estuary.
- The Environmental Protection Agency has only held the U.S. Army accountable for white phosphorus and not for the numerous other toxins that are still poisoning our waterfowl, fish, wildlife and humans who catch a fish that has visited the Eagle River Flats estuary.
- Among numerous other toxic substances found in munitions, migratory birds and other wildlife are exposed to:
 - Lead, a serious nervous system toxin;
 - Other dangerous heavy metals, including cobalt, chromium, beryllium;
 - Dinitrotolulene, a known carcinogen in people;
 - RDX, also known to be carcinogenic to people

- Lindane, a dangerous pesticide that is extremely toxic and is internationally banned by the **Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants**, a global treaty to protect human health and the environment from chemicals that remain intact in the environment for long periods.
- Alternative #1 is a No Action Alternative
- Alternative #2 would allow year-round Live Fire Training at Eagle River Flats
- Alternative # 3 would impact 2,000 acres of land in close proximity to Chugach State Park. The Snowhawk valley, not in the Park boundaries, would be off limits permanently; portions would be clear-cut.

For more information: http://www.usarak.army.mil/conservation/NEPA_DEIS_Year-Round_Firing.asp