

October 24, 2017

Holloman AFB Airspace EIS
c/o Cardno
501 Butler Farm Road, Suite H
Hampton, VA 23666

Re: Opposition to EIS “No Impact” Finding
Failure of Due Process

Good day,

As Mayor of the Town of Silver City, Grant County, New Mexico with the full support of the Town Council, I am expressing the Town’s opposition to any expansion of the existing training fly-ways of Holloman AFB as contemplated in the instant case. The Town notes that no notice was given particularly to the Town or to Grant County. Further, although hearings were held for public comment in various communities in southern New Mexico, no hearings were held in Grant County, where significant impacts of the Holloman AFB proposal would most be felt.

The EIS draft decision does not appear to take local concerns and impacts particular to Grant County. The first impact is that a the Gila National Forest constitutes a large portion of Grant County and is particularly vulnerable to fire. At the fringes of the forest are a number of populated areas which would be immediately threatened by a forest fire. Among the contemplated activities by the Air Force training is the launching of flares and countermeasures. No mention of fire danger from those activities is addressed in the EIS.

Grant County is well-known for its abounding wildlife, which includes migratory activities of birds and large mammals. The Town is concerned that the proposed activities will negatively impact hunting and wildlife viewing which are leading tourist attractions and bring much needed revenue into the County and Town.

Further, we are concerned about the negative effects of dramatic noise upon Native American ruins, including the Gila Cliff Dwelling monument north of Silver City. The Town is aware that Native American ruins in other parts of the State of New Mexico have suffered accelerated deterioration due to sound vibrations caused by low-latitude training. Recall that some years ago in Mountainair, New Mexico, it was determined that low altitude fly-overs were responsible for damage to ancient Native American ruins. The EIS does not particularly address that issue.

The Town requests that its opposition to any expansion of training fly-ways, that would bring increased air traffic in closer proximity of Silver City and its suburbs, be noted in the record of this proceeding, and that this letter be entered into the case.

Very truly yours,

/s/

Ken Ladner
Mayor
Town of Silver City

cc: Senator Tom Udall
Senator Martin Heinrich
Congressman Steve Pearce
Commander, Holloman AFB