

**DISPOSAL OF LAKE CHARLES
AIR FORCE STATION
CALCASIEU PARISH, LOUISIANA**



**FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

MAY 2000

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

1.0 NAME OF ACTION

Disposal of the Lake Charles Air Force Station, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The United States Air Force (Air Force) Air Combat Command (ACC) proposes to dispose of all real property and facilities associated with the Lake Charles Air Force Station (LCAFS). The station, consisting of 4.43 acres and six buildings, is now closed and the only activity occurring is minor caretaker activities. Under the proposed action, administrative ownership of the LCAFS property would be transferred to the General Services Administration.

In addition to the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative was considered. Under the No-Action Alternative the Air Force would retain ownership of the Site, and there would be no disposal. An alternative eliminated from further consideration was reactivation of the facility to provide an alternate ACC mission. The high cost of modification, refurbishment, and subsequent maintenance, as well as a lack of an ACC mission for the site, make this alternative unfeasible.

3.0 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES


Implementation of the Proposed Action would have a minor beneficial impact to the local community. Disposal of the property would make the site available to the local community for potential redevelopment, and prevent degradation of the site building and other structures. The Proposed Action does not include demolition activities; therefore, asbestos-containing floor tiles would remain in a non-friable state and would not pose a threat to human health. No other significant impacts with regard to use, storage, or handling of hazardous materials or waste would occur as a result of the Proposed Action. Selection of the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to land use, local employment, biological resources, cultural resources, or other natural resources.

The LCAFS is located in Calcasieu Parish, a Federal attainment area for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Under the Proposed Action, air emissions would not change; therefore, no significant impacts to air quality are expected. Because the area is in attainment and no additional emissions would be produced, the Air Force would not be required to perform a conformity analysis for air pollutants.

Selection of the No-Action Alternative would result in no significant impacts to the environment. Under this alternative, the Air Force would retain ownership of the property and land use would not change. The property would remain vacant and would continue to deteriorate unless regular maintenance activities are established. The Air Force would be retaining property that has been declared excess, thus denying potential economic benefits from the reuse and development of the property by the local community.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the Environmental Assessment, the proposed action would have no significant impacts to human health or the natural environment. Therefore, issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact is warranted, and preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190), is not required.



MICHAEL R. PATRICK
Colonel, USAF
Chairperson, HQ ACC Environmental Leadership Board



Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED	1
1.1 Proposed Action	1
1.2 Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action	1
1.3 Decision To Be Made	1
1.4 Selection Criteria..	3
1.5 Relevant Environmental Issues	3
 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES	 5
2.1 Background	5
2.2 Proposed Action.	5
2.3 No-Action Alternative	7
2.4 Alternatives Eliminated From Further Consideration	7
 3.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT	 9
3.1 Land Use	9
3.2 Socioeconomics	9
3.3 Environmental Justice	9
3.4 Hazardous Substances.	10
3.4.1 Hazardous Materials	10
3.4.2 Hazardous Waste	10
3.4.3 Petroleum Storage Tanks	11
3.4.4 Environmental Restoration Program..	11
3.5 Natural Resources	11
3.5.1 Soils and Geology.	11
3.5.2 Water Resources..	11
3.5.3 Air Quality	12
3.5.4 Biological Resources	12
3.6 Cultural Resources	12
 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES	 13
4.1 Proposed Action	13
4.1.1 Land Use..	13
4.1.2 Socioeconomics	13
4.1.3 Environmental Justice	13
4.1.4 Hazardous Substances..	14
4.1.4.1 Hazardous Materials	14
4.1.4.2 Hazardous Waste..	14
4.1.4.3 Petroleum Storage Tanks	14
4.1.4.4 Environmental Restoration Program..	14
4.1.5 Natural Resources..	14
4.1.5.1 Soils and Geology.	14
4.1.5.2 Water Resources	15
4.1.5.3 Air Quality	15
4.1.5.4 Biological Resources	15
4.1.6 Cultural Resources	15
4.2 No-Action Alternative..	15

4.2.1	Land Use..	16
4.2.2	Socioeconomics	16
4.2.3	Environmental Justice..	16
4.2.4	Hazardous Substances..	16
4.2.4.1	Hazardous Materials	17
4.2.4.2	Hazardous Waste	17
4.2.4.3	Petroleum Storage Tanks..	17
4.2.4.4	Environmental Restoration Program.....	17
4.2.5	Natural Resources..	17
4.2.5.1	Soils and Geology	17
4.2.5.2	Water Resources	17
4.2.5.3	Air Quality	17
4.2.5.4	Biological Resources..	17
4.2.6	Cultural Resources	17
5.0	CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION	19
6.0	REFERENCES	21
Appendix A: Acronyms		
Appendix B: Correspondence		

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Regional Location Map, Lake Charles AFS	2
Figure 2.	Site Plan of Lake Charles AFS	6

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Inventory of Buildings	5
----------	------------------------------	---

1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

1.1 Proposed Action

The U.S. Air Force (Air Force) proposes to dispose of all real property and facilities associated with the Lake Charles Air Force Station (LCAFS) located in Calcasieu Parish Louisiana, approximately three miles southeast of the City of Lake Charles, Louisiana (Figure 1). The station, consisting of 4.43 acres and 6 buildings, is now closed and the only activity occurring on the property is minor caretaker activities (mowing of vegetation).

This Environmental Assessment (EA) documents the environmental effects of the proposed disposition and alternatives. It has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) implementing regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508). Acronyms or abbreviations used within this document are listed in Appendix A.

1.2 Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

In the early 1990s, Congress mandated through the Base Closure and Realignment Act that certain Air Force bases and facilities be closed. Closures of Chennault Air Force Base (AFB), England AFB, development of satellite early warning technology, and an overall reduced force structure in the military has made the LCAFS facility excess to Air Combat Command (ACC) needs. Air Force Instruction (AFI) 32-9004, Disposal of Real Property, requires that the Air Force dispose of all excess property that does not support the Air Force mission. Additionally, the Community Environmental Response Facilitation Act (CERFA, Public Law 102-426, 42 United States Code [USC] 9620) requires:

Each Department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States, in cooperation with local communities, should expeditiously identify real property that offers the greatest opportunity for reuse and redevelopment on each facility under the jurisdiction of the department, agency, or instrumentality where operations are terminating . . . and, . . . each department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States, in accordance with applicable law, should make available without delay such excess real property.

The purpose of this EA is to document the environmental impacts of the proposed disposal. The EA has been prepared in accordance with the NEPA of 1969 and the CEQ regulations implementing the NEPA.

1.3 Decision To Be Made

The decision to be made is whether the Air Force should dispose of the LCAFS or retain ownership of the subject property and facilities. The EA is intended to provide the decision maker with sufficient information with respect to the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed action and all reasonable alternatives.

1.4 Selection Criteria

The following selection criteria were used in evaluating the proposed action and alternatives. Any alternative considered must: (a) fulfill the requirements of CERFA, (b) fulfill the requirements of

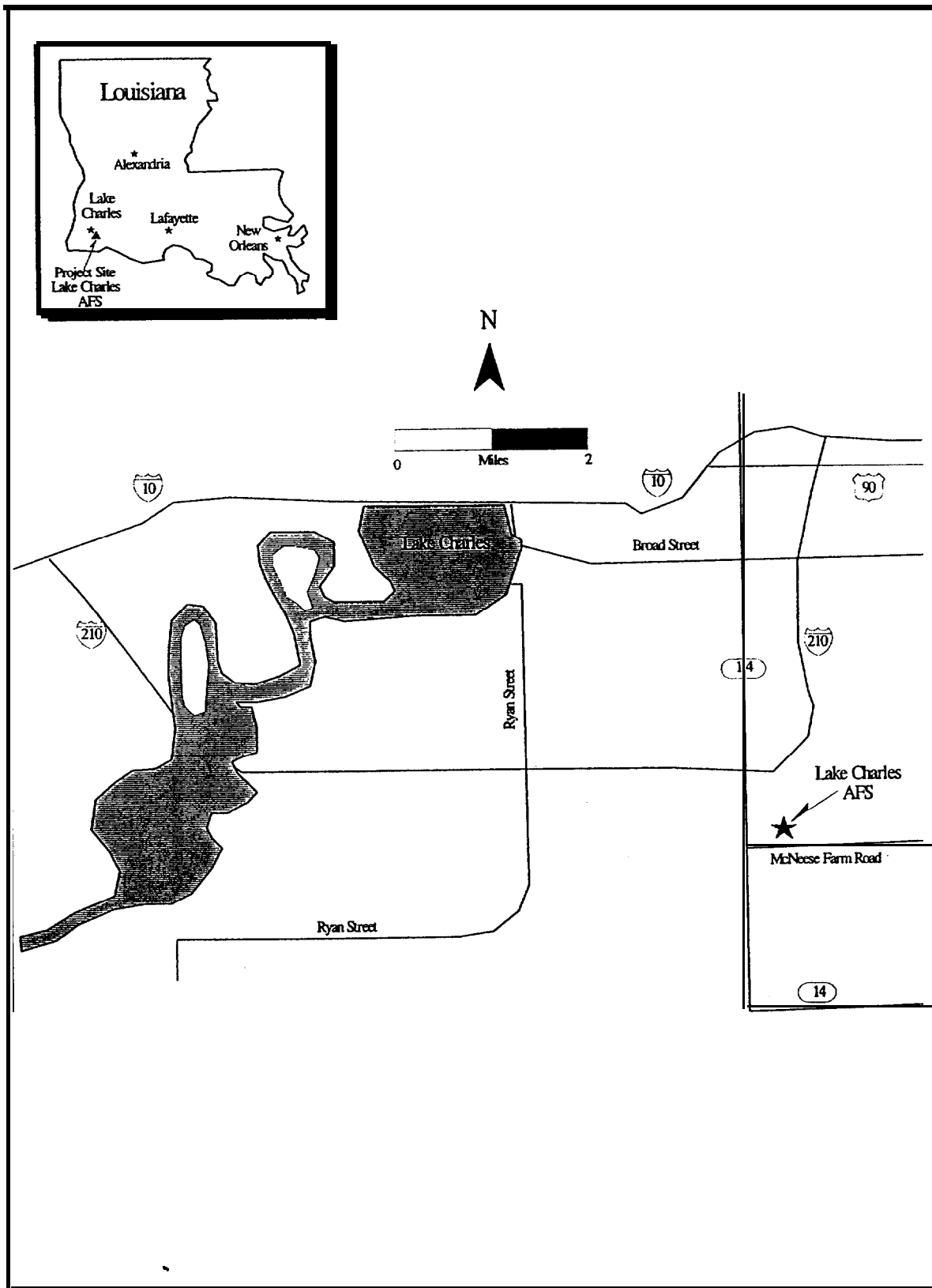


Figure 1. Regional Location Map, Lake Charles Air Force Station.

AFI 32-9004, and (c) allow for the greatest reuse and development of the site property and infrastructure.

1.5 Relevant Environmental Issues

The potential environmental effects of the proposed action are associated only with the disposal of the LCAFS. The Air Force intends to dispose of the property as is, without additional construction, demolition, or other modifications. Thus, there would be no direct impacts to local utility or transportation networks, nor any impacts associated with increased noise levels typical of construction-related projects. Since these resources would not be affected, they are not considered further in this document. An elementary school is located near but not adjacent to the LCAFS. No other sensitive receptors such as hospitals, apartment buildings, or retirement homes are located nearby. The property to the south is owned by the ~~McNeese~~ State College, however, this is a dairy operation for use in teaching agricultural classes and not a traditional college campus.

Relevant pertain to the effect the disposition, or continued ownership by the government, would have on the local economy and the local environment, including effects of the proposed action on air quality, water resources, biological resources, endangered species and sensitive habitats, and cultural resources. The past presence of petroleum storage tanks (PSTs) on-site, and the status of soil and groundwater contamination by petroleum products are also considered relevant.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Background

The LCAFS is located on U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) property in Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, approximately three miles southeast of the City of Lake Charles (see Figure 1). Land for the site was first appropriated for military use by the 812th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma. The squadron relocated to the LCAFS in April 1957. In 1961, the LCAFS was redesignated as a Prime Site for the 653rd Radar Squadron at England AFB. This activity was terminated in April 1963. The property was disposed at that time via the General Services Administration (GSA), and was privately leased or owned from 1963 to 1973. In 1974, in response to a Russian airliner landing undetected at the New Orleans airport, the Aerospace Defense Command issued Special Order G-309. This order **officially** reactivated the 634th Radar Squadron and authorized repurchase of 4.43 acres and 11 buildings of the original 14.0 acre LCAFS site. Radar data-gathering operations at LCAFS continued until advances in satellite and civilian radar technology made the site obsolete. In May 1996, operations at the LCAFS ceased and the station was closed except for caretaker activities. Presently, five buildings have been removed and only six remain (Table 1; Figure 2) (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [USACE] 1997) (Angerstein 1998) (Krampien 1998).

Table 1. Inventory of Buildings

BUILDING NUMBER	BUILDING USE
101	Administration
102	Picnic Pavilion
201	Lift Station
209	Emergency Generator Building
210	Supply Building
212	Maintenance Building

Adapted from: USACE 1997

2.2 Proposed Action

Under the proposed action, administrative ownership of the LCAFS property would be transferred over to the GSA for disposal. The GSA would then notify other government entities of the availability of the facilities. If not required for use by other government agencies, the facility would then be made available for purchase to the highest qualified private bidder. Disposition of the facilities include the property as is, and includes some potentially hazardous conditions in the administration building, including asbestos-containing material (ACM) and lead-based paint (LBP), both in good condition. Any receiving entity would be responsible for managing these materials upon transfer of ownership of the facilities.

2.3 No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, the LCAFS would continue to be owned by the Air Force and there would be no transfer of fee-owned property to the GSA for eventual disposal. This alternative would not satisfy selection criteria (a) and (b) described above because the Air Force would be retaining property that has been declared excess to its needs. Minor caretaker activities

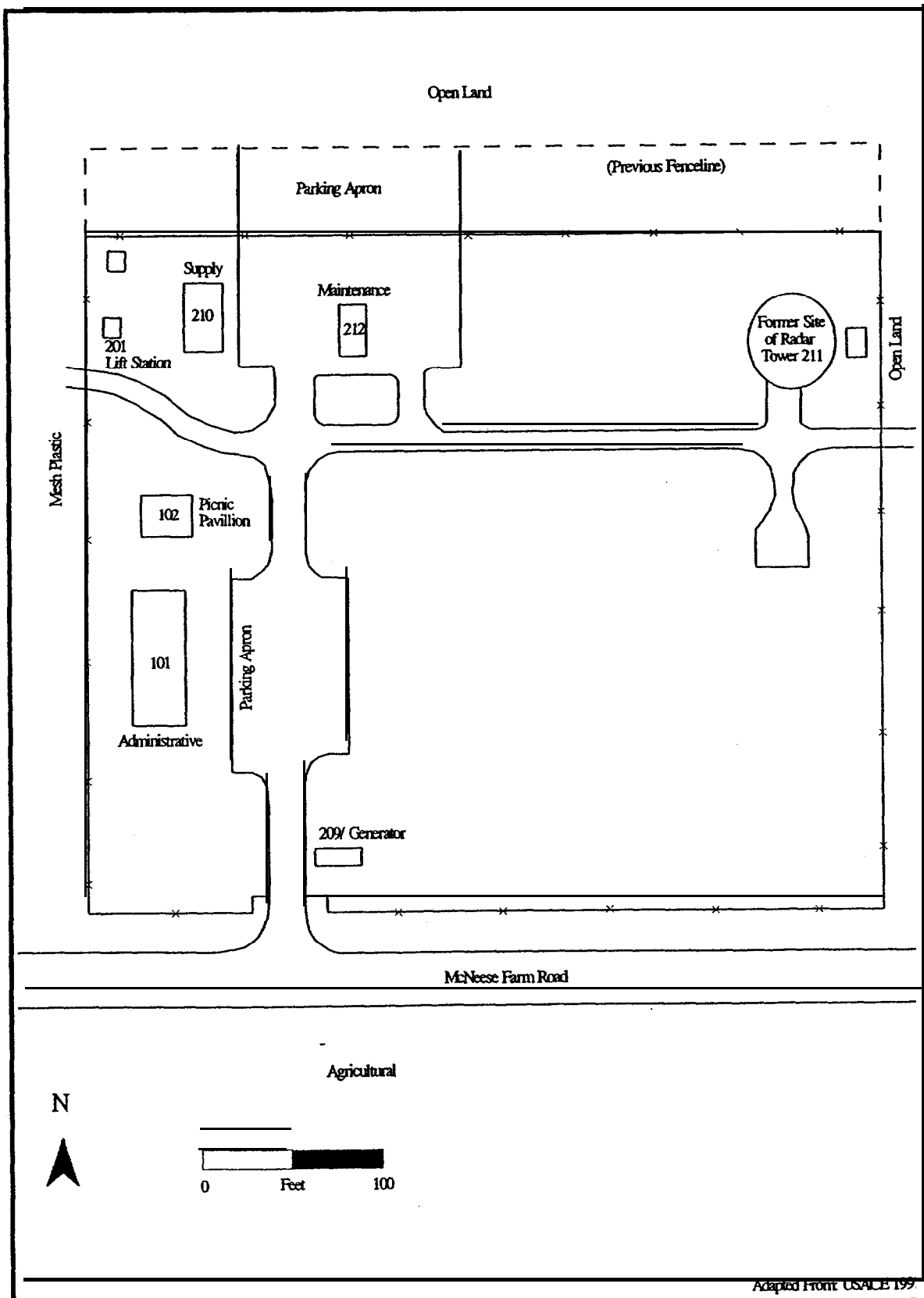


Figure 2. Site Plan of Lake Charles Air Force Station

would continue indefinitely. Retention of the LCAFS facilities by the Air Force would deny potential economic benefits from the development of the site by another government agency or by the local community.

2.4 Alternatives Eliminated From Further Consideration

The Air Force considered keeping the LCAFS to provide support for an alternate Air Force mission. However, retaining ownership would involve extensive refurbishment of the facilities to current standards. Additionally, a new mission supported by the LCAFS may involve a larger effort than could be maintained by the current facilities, and purchase of additional real estate and new construction could potentially be required. There are no new AF missions which require the unique facilities or location offered by LCAFS. Closure of both Chennault AFB and England AFB have also eliminated nearby sources of support for the LCAFS. Consequently, costs of retaining the site were considered economically unfeasible. This alternative was eliminated from further consideration and is not addressed in this document.

3.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Land Use

Current land use in the general area of the LCAFS is a mix of agricultural, residential, and light industrial (see Figure 2). Property to the north is used for agriculture, to the east is a private residence, and to the south a dairy farm owned by **McNeese** State College. Immediately to the west is Mesh Plastics, Inc., formerly known as Mesh Composites. This facility once manufactured plastic helicopter components, but is now closed. Located to the west of Mesh Plastics is an elementary school.

The Lake Charles City Zoning and Planning Department has zoned the area of the LCAFS as Mixed Use (X), which allows mixed commercial and residential uses with the (X) signifying review only and no public hearing required for a planned development in the area (Benoit 1998). Planned developments are those that are greater than 3 acres in size. Several hundred yards to the east is the city limit for Lake Charles and where Calcasieu Parish authority begins. According to the Parish planning office, the area is zoned for agricultural use. This zoning allows residential as well as agricultural land use.

3.2 Socioeconomics

The region of influence (ROI) for the disposal action includes Calcasieu Parish and the Lake Charles Metropolitan area in southwestern Louisiana. Total population of the ROI in 1996 was 178,094 which ranks 7th in the state. The ROI population is distributed 76 percent white and 23 percent black, while the remaining one percent are of different ethnic backgrounds. The largest city in the ROI is Lake Charles (U.S. Department of Commerce [USDC] 1998; U.S. Department of Labor 1996).

Total employment for the ROI in 1996 was 97,422. Employment in the ROI is concentrated in the service, retail trade, and government sectors which combined to represent 61 percent of total employment in 1996. The largest employment sector is services which account for 30 percent of the total. The leading income generating sectors include services, non-durable goods manufacturing, and government. Combined, these sectors produce 63 percent of the income in the region. Per capita personal income was \$20,084 in 1996 which was higher than the state average of \$19,709, but significantly lower than the national average of \$24,436 (USDC 1998).

The LCAFS is exempt from the city and parish tax rolls. As such it is a non-contributor to the local tax base. Currently, the land comprising the LCAFS property is informally assessed at \$2,220 and the improvements at \$5,000. These values are considered about 10 percent of the current market value for property in the area (Barrs 1998).

3.3 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, requires all federal agencies to make achieving environmental justice part of their mission. Environmental Justice has both direct and indirect links to pollution prevention since the aim is to lower the environmental and health impacts borne by any segment of the population. Although there are several residences within the general project area, there are no large residential areas and no minority or low-income

populations located near the LCAFS. The nearest population center is located in Lake Charles, several miles to the northwest.

More recently, in April 1997, Executive Order 13045, *Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks (Protection of Children)*, was issued. This order directs federal agencies to “make it a high priority to identify and assess environmental health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children and...ensure that [their] policies, programs, activities, and standards address disproportionate risks to children that result from environmental health risks or safety risks.” The only receptor regarding children located near the LCAFS is a school located about 400 meters to the west. Other than the school, there are no day-care centers, nurseries, or medical facilities near the LCAFS.

3.4 Hazardous Substances

For the purpose of the following analysis, the media addressed as “hazardous” are limited to hazardous substances as defined by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), 42 USC 9601*et seq.* and the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), 42 USC 6901-6992. In general, this includes substances that, because of their quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may present substantial danger to public health, welfare, or the environment when released to the environment. This section will address those hazardous substances identified as having been used or stored at the site, and contaminated areas affected by past operations, including clean-up activities.

3.4.1 Hazardous Materials

Currently, there are no hazardous materials used or stored at the LCAFS other than miscellaneous cleaning supplies and two lead acid batteries used in the emergency generator building. During operation of the radar activity, chemicals kept on-site consisted of those typical of an Air Force radar installation (i.e., paints, thinners, solvents, water treatment chemicals, etc). None of these chemicals are suspected of having been used in large quantities (i.e., usually a gallon or less at a time). Lubricating oil was used in relatively large quantities for the rotating search radar and a tank holding this oil was apparently located at the former radar tower building. Other hazardous materials known to be present at the LCAFS administration building include interior and exterior LBP, sprayed-on ACM, and ACM floor tile (both in good condition). No problems were observed on-site with regard to hazardous materials use or storage during the Environmental Baseline Survey (EBS) inspection (USACE 1997). Maintenance and caretaker activities are restricted to lawn mowing and vegetation control using mostly mechanical means. No herbicide is currently being used by the caretaker, and if any is required only Round-up™, a non-persistent, household-type herbicide, would be used (Boudreaux 1998).

3.4.2 Hazardous Waste

Presently, the LCAFS is closed to all activity and no wastes remain on the facility. However, the LCAFS does have a history of spills and resultant contamination of soil. Sampling during the EBS investigation found lead concentrations above action levels in sludge within a drainage ditch. Soil containing total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) above regulated state action levels was identified in the pedestal area of the former search radar tower site. All lead contaminated sludge and portions of the TPH contaminated soil have been removed (Krampien 1998). More

TPH contaminated soil currently remains and the Air Force is consulting with Louisiana regulatory agencies concerning the recommended course of action to address this issue.

3.4.3 Petroleum Storage Tanks

The LCAFS formerly operated a diesel-powered generator fueled from a 1,000-gallon aboveground storage tank (AST). This tank was surrounded by a concrete, secondary containment system designed to hold the entire contents of the tank in the event of a leak or spill. Recently, the generator and the tank were removed from the site. Tank closure procedures followed all state and federal regulatory requirements (Robertson 1998; Sterba 1998).

3.4.4 Environmental Restoration Program

The Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) is a DoD program to identify, characterize, and remediate environmental contamination resulting from DoD activities. Although widely accepted at the time, procedures followed prior to the mid-1970s for managing and disposing of many wastes often resulted in contamination of the environment. The ERP has established a process to evaluate past disposal sites, control the migration of contaminants, and control potential hazards to human health and the environment. Section 211 of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), codified as the Defense Environmental Restoration Program (of which the Air Force ERP is a subset), ensures that the DoD has the authority to conduct its own environmental restoration programs. DoD coordinates the ERP activities with the EPA and appropriate state agencies.

3.5 Natural Resources

3.5.1 Soils and Geology

The site is located on the relatively level Gulf Coastal Plain with less than three degrees slope across the site. Soils at the site are fluvial Pleistocene-age deposits overlain with sand, silt and clay deposits of recent age. The Pleistocene Prairie Formation, consisting of Chicot Sands, is thought to be present near the land surface of the site. This formation serves as the upper groundwater aquifer for the Lake Charles area (USACE 1997).

3.5.2 Water Resources

The Chicot Sands are actually layers of sand interspersed with clay. The primary water-bearing units are the "ZOO-foot," "500-foot" and "700-foot" sands, all of which are separated by distinct clay layers. Surface bodies of water or wetlands were not observed on the site. A 220-foot well, no longer in use, is located at the LCAFS. This well was used as a drinking water supply for the LCAFS until the site was connected to city water in the early 1970s (USACE 1997).

Surface stormwater is drained off-site via a system of small ditches that bisect the property. A main ditch drains off-site to the south where it parallels McNeese Farm Road. Several smaller ditches drain off to the east, north, and south. No water accumulates on LCAFS property. Wastewater at the LCAFS has been collected and pumped to the city of Lake Charles via a lift station since 1971 and no treatment of wastewater has occurred on the LCAFS since that time. There are no surface water resources at or adjacent to the LCAFS (USACE 1997).

3.5.3 Air Quality

Calcasieu Parish is either in attainment or unclassified for all National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) parameters (EPA,1998). The LCAFS facility is located in a semi-rural and agricultural portion of the City of Lake Charles and no significant source of air pollutants is located in the immediate area.

3.5.4 Biological Resources

The Lake Charles facility is located in the southeastern Gulf of Mexico Coastal Plain physiographic zone. Representative vegetation for this zone include: **longleaf** pine, slash pine, loblolly pine (higher positions); sweetgum, red oak, white oak, water oak, elm, pecan, green ash, sycamore, cottonwood (stream bottoms); and various grasses, forbs, and ferns. Representative wildlife species include: white-tailed deer, grey squirrel, fox squirrel, cottontail rabbit, raccoon, woodcock, quail and non-game birds. Open agricultural lands within the parish are represented by wildlife species such as: mourning dove, bobwhite quail, woodcock, snipe, and cottontail rabbit (McNab & Avers 1994). Presently, vegetation at the site consists completely of mowed native and introduced grasses, a monoculture not conducive to a high diversity of species.

The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was contacted on the potential for federally listed species to occur in the vicinity of the LCAFS. According to the service, there are no listed species that occur at or near the station (Watson 1998, Appendix B).

3.6 Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are districts, sites, structures, artifacts, or any other aspect of human activity considered important to humanity for scientific, traditional, religious, or other reasons. According to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended, all federally-owned buildings greater than 50 years of age are potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and must be identified and inventoried. The Air Force is also required to inventory all buildings and structures associated with the Cold War, regardless of age. All buildings meeting the above stated parameters are then evaluated for significance according to NRHP criteria A, B, C, D, and G as defined in National Register Bulletin 15 (USDI 1990). Structures at the LCAFS are concrete block and constructed of similar design to those of many small military stations throughout the country. These structures are not considered unique nor special to the Cold War effort and do not meet any of the NRHP criteria.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

4.1 Proposed Action

4.1.1 Land Use

There would be no impacts to area land use if the LCAFS property is disposed by the Air Force. The general area of the facility is zoned for mixed use which includes light industrial activities such as the former radar installation. The City of Lake Charles Planning and Zoning Department reviews and approves of all new commercial activities within the town limits. This agency would oversee the new use of the LCAFS property to assure that no adverse impacts to area land use would occur as result of the disposition. The department also cooperates with the Calcasieu Parish Planning Department to assure land use within the outlying areas of the city is compatible with surrounding non-city land use.

4.1.2 Socioeconomics

No significant impact on socioeconomic resources would occur due to the implementation of this action. The LCAFS is unmanned and termination of activities at this site would not result in an emigration of personnel, and no impact on regional sales is expected.

The LCAFS is currently exempt from taxation and is a non-contributor to the city and parish tax-base. Current appraisals for the LCAFS are estimated at 10 percent of market value. Another tax exempt entity such as a government agency or public school (McNeese State College) would be expected to apply for ownership transfer of the LCAFS property. In this event, the property would continue to be exempt and no change to tax revenues would occur. However, if a private entity gains ownership of the site, it would be eligible for collection of taxes. The appraised value would eventually reflect both the bid amount submitted by the receiving entity and the appraiser's new estimate of the property value (Pascal 1998). The new valuation would be used for a property taxing assessment and the resulting receipts placed into the city and parish operating budgets. A minor beneficial impact could therefore occur as a result of the proposed action by the gain of tax revenues if private ownership results from the disposition of the site.

4.1.3 Environmental Justice

No impacts with regard to environmental justice would occur as a result of the proposed action. Since the LCAFS is closed and unmanned, disposition of the property would not result in loss of employment opportunities that would affect low-income or minority populations within the region.

Children using the elementary school located to the west of the site would not be impacted by the proposed action. Disposition of the site would not create emissions or the potential for release of toxic materials that would impact children in the area. Since the property is within the city limits of Lake Charles and under the jurisdiction of the Zoning and Planning Department, incompatible land use of the LCAFS property would not be allowed. Adverse uses of the site after the disposition would not be expected to indirectly result from implementation of the proposed action.

4.1.4 Hazardous Substances

4.1.4.1 Hazardous Materials

With the exception of ACM and LBP located within the administration building, there are no hazardous materials left on the LCAFS (Scott 1998). No future issues with hazardous substances at the site are expected as a result of the property disposal.

Both the ACM and the LBP remaining in the administration building are in good condition and would not be affected by the disposition of the LCAFS since no demolition will occur. The Air Force intends to dispose of the property as is, and any receiving entity would assume responsibility for managing these materials. No impacts to public health would occur as a result of the proposed action.

4.1.4.2 Hazardous Waste

Since there are no hazardous wastes remaining at the LCAFS, the proposed disposition would have no effect on the management of these substances. Contaminated soils at the site contain low levels of petroleum lubricants. These soils are not located near a drinking water source and do not represent a significant impact to human health or the natural environment (Scott 2000).

4.1.4.3 Petroleum Storage Tanks

The AST associated with the generator has been removed from the LCAFS property (Sterba 1998). Since the tank has been removed, no issues exist as a result of the proposed action with regard to PST management.

4.1.4.4 Environmental Restoration Program

Since the LCAFS is not an ERP designated site (Scott 1998), the proposed action would have no impacts on this military program.

4.1.5 Natural Resources

4.1.5.1 Soils and Geology

The LCAFS is within the city limits in a mixed use area and does not contain soils considered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as prime farmland. The 4.43 acre tract is too small to be considered for any special conservation effort. Additionally, since the proposed action is the disposition of the property only and no construction would occur, there would be no impact on soils at the site.

Geological resources below the LCAFS consist of clay deposits that separate deep, water-bearing sand layers. These clay layers act as a barrier to the flow of potential contaminants into the water table and would not be compromised as a result of the proposed action. The proposed action does not include any sub-surface drilling or installation of deep wells that would open up avenues for contaminants to flow past the clay. The proposed action would have no effect on the geological resources of the area.

4.1.5.2 Water Resources

The proposed action does not involve any new construction or transfer of personnel to the site. Consequently, no new impacts to surface water or use of local water resources would result from implementation of the proposed action. No drilling of wells or test bores that could threaten groundwater resources are anticipated as a result of the proposed action. The proposed action would have no effect on the water resources of the area.

4.1.5.3 Air Quality

Under the Clean Air Act, a conformity analysis is required before initiating any new Federal action that may lead to nonconformance, contribute to a violation of the NAAQS, or delay an area's attainment schedule. A conformity determination would be specifically required where project emissions exceed certain defined de *minimis* levels. Calcasieu Parish is in attainment or unclassified for all Federal NAAQS parameters. The proposed action is the disposition of real property, an action which would not introduce new emission sources to the region. Thus, no impacts to the air quality of the region would occur and there would be no requirement to perform a conformity analysis.

4.1.5.4 Biological Resources

The proposed action does not include changes in any habitats or alterations of the topography that could affect biological resources. No scientific evidence or anecdotal information was found that indicated the LCAFS contained or was located near any critical habitat or sensitive area for listed plants or animals. The USFWS determined that listed species do not occur at the LCAFS. There would be no impacts to biological resources in general as a result of the proposed action,

4.1.6 Cultural Resources

No buildings or structures within the LCAFS are eligible for inclusion on the NRHP. The proposed action is therefore considered to have no effect on historic structures. The entire property (100 percent of the land surface) of the LCAFS is completely disturbed and contains no known significant cultural remains. Therefore, the proposed action would be expected to result in no adverse impacts to prehistoric or historic cultural resources.

No identification of Native American Traditional Resources has been conducted for the property. However, the proposed action would not be expected to result in adverse impacts if such resources are extant, given the long history of private and military control and use of the property, including extensive construction for the LCAFS facilities. However, coordination of any future findings with the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) would be performed in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA and 36 CFR 800.

4.2 No-Action Alternative

This alternative would not satisfy selection criteria (a) and (b) described in Section 1.4 above, because the Air Force would be retaining property that has been declared excess. Additionally, retention of the LCAFS by the Air Force would also deny potential economic benefits from the full reuse and re-development of the site by either another government agency or the local community.

4.21 Land Use

The no-action alternative would not change the current land use (an inactive military installation) of the LCAFS. Land use within the general area of the LCAFS is zoned for mixed use that includes commercial and residential uses. This zoning designation also includes radar antenna sites. Zoning and land use would therefore not be affected by the retention of LCAFS ownership by the Air Force (Benoit 1998).

4.2.2 Socioeconomics

Under the no-action alternative, the LCAFS would remain non-taxable federal property and no change to the current condition would occur. Since retention of the property precludes the possibility of private ownership of the property, the city would not realize the potential gain of tax receipts from the sale of the property. However, this would not constitute a severe hardship for the city of Lake Charles since budgetary expenditures have taken into consideration the tax exempt status of the LCAFS (Pascal 1998). Under the no-action alternative, no changes in local employment, movement of residents, or commercial sales would occur. The no-action alternative would have no effect on the local economy.

4.2.3 Environmental Justice

Since no change would occur to the present condition of the LCAFS, the no-action alternative would have no perceptible impact on minority or low-income groups that may exist within Calcasieu Parish.

4.2.4 Hazardous Substances

4.2.4.1 Hazardous Materials

Under the no-action alternative, the LCAFS would continue to be owned by the Air Force and there would be no change to the management of ACM and LBP at the site. Contaminated soils at the site contain low levels of petroleum lubricants. These soils are not located near a drinking water source and do not represent a significant impact to human health or the natural environment (Scott 2000). No significant impacts to hazardous materials management would occur as a result of the no-action alternative.

4.2.4.2 Hazardous Waste

The LCAFS is now closed and inactive and there is no generation of hazardous waste at the site. Retention of the property by the Air Force would not change this condition. Minimal caretaker activities, including lawn maintenance, would continue at the LCAFS but would not generate hazardous waste. Since no hazardous waste would be generated under the no-action alternative, no impacts to the hazardous waste management program would occur.

4.2.4.3 Petroleum Storage Tanks

Retention of the LCAFS by the Air Force would not change the status of **PSTs** at the LCAFS. The AST associated with the generator has been removed from the LCAFS property (Sterba 1998). Since the tank has been removed, no issues exist as a result of the proposed action with regard to PST management.

4.2.4.4 Environmental Restoration Program

There is no ERP designated clean-up at the site, therefore the no-action alternative would have no impact on this DoD program.

4.2.5 Natural Resources

4.2.5.1 Soils and Geology

Since the no-action alternative would not change the current condition of the site, there would be no impacts on soils or geology at the LCAFS. No subsurface disturbance or drilling that could affect soils or geology would occur as a result of the no-action alternative.

4.2.5.2 Water Resources

The no-action alternative would keep the LCAFS facilities at its current status as an inactive facility; and no increase in water usage at the site would occur. Consequently, the no-action alternative would not have a perceptible impact on the availability of water for the area.

Under the no-action alternative there would be no topographic alterations or construction at the LCAFS that could result in increased soil erosion or run-off. The no-action alternative would not impact surface water quality in the area.

4.2.5.3 Air Quality

Since the area is in attainment for the NAAQS and no new Air Force activity would be conducted under the no-action alternative, there would be no requirement for a conformity analysis. No impacts to regional air quality would occur as a result of the no-action alternative.

4.2.4.4 Biological Resources

The no-action alternative would not change the current condition of the site or alter existing habitat. Under this alternative, the Air Force would keep control of the property and would continue minor caretaker activities. No impact to natural resources, including endangered species, would be expected as a result of the no-action alternative.

4.2.6 Cultural Resources

There are no buildings or structures within LCAFS eligible for inclusion on the NRHP, no known cultural remains, or any Native American Traditional Resources located on the LCAFS. The no-action alternative is therefore considered to have no effect on historic structures, traditional cultural properties, or prehistoric sites.

5.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The Federal, state, local, and private agencies/organizations and persons that were contacted during the course of preparing this Environmental Assessment are listed below.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

United States Department of the Interior, Fish and **Wildlife** Service, Ecological Services
General Services Administration • Fort Worth District
Barksdale AFB Realty and Environmental Offices
Langley AFB • ACC Environmental Restoration Program

STATE AGENCIES

Louisiana Natural Heritage Program
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development

LOCAL/REGIONAL AGENCIES

Calcasieu Parish **Tax** Authority
Lake Charles Department of Zoning and Planning
Lake Charles Tax Assessor and Appraiser

LIST OF PREPARERS

Kelly L. Bowles, Project Manager, COMPA Industries, Inc.
John F. **Barrera**, Senior Environmental Scientist, Geo-Marine, Inc.

6.0 REFERENCES

- Angerstein, B. 1998. Personal communication between Ben Angerstein, former caretaker of the LCAFS, and John **Barrera**, Geo-Marine, Inc. 18 October.
- Barrs, M. 1998. Personal communication between Mary **Barrs**, Lake Charles Ward Master at the Tax Assessor **Office**, and John **Barrera**, Geo-Marine, Inc. 20 October.
- Benoit, J. 1998. Personal communication between Jason Benoit, City of Lake Charles Zoning Administrator, and John **Barrera**, Geo-Marine, Inc. 21 October.
- Boudreaux, B. 1998. Personal communication between Bob Boudreaux, caretaker of the Lake Charles AFS, and John **Barrera**, Geo-Marine, Inc. 22 October.
- EPA. 1998. Nonattainment Areas for Criteria Pollutants. EPA Office of Air and Radiation **Website**. www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/greenbk/. October.
- Krampien, J. 1998. Personal communication between John Krampien, Project Manager, Raytheon Corporation, and John **Barrera**, Geo-Marine, Inc. 20 October.
- McNab**, W.H. and P.E. Avers 1994 Ecological Subregions of the United States. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forestry Service. Washington D.C. July
- Pascal, C. 1998. Personal communication between Connie Pascal, Calcasieu Parish Taxing Authority, and John **Barrera**, Geo-Marine, Inc. 22 October.
- Robertson, R. 1998. Personal communication between Wallace Robertson, Environmental Coordinator at Barksdale AFB, and John **Barrera**, Geo-Marine, Inc. 18 October.
- Scott, S. 1998. Personal communication between Stan Scott, ACC ERP Manager and Tony Cecchi, Geo-Marine, Inc. 1 April.
- Sterba, B. 1998. Personal communication between Becky Sterba, Realty Officer at Barksdale AFB, and John **Barrera**, Geo-Marine, Inc. 18 October.
- United States Army Corps of Engineers. 1997. Environmental Baseline Survey at Lake Charles Air Force Station, Lake Charles, Louisiana. Ft. Worth District. March.
- United States Department of Commerce, 1998. Regional Economic Information System 1969-1996 CD-ROM. Bureau of Economic Analysis.
- United States Department of Labor, February 1996. News - **United States Department of Labor**. Table 3. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- Watson, R.C. 1998. Written correspondence between Russell C. Watson, Acting Field Supervisor, and John **Barrera**, Geo-Marine, Inc. 26 March.

APPENDIX A
ACRONYMS

Acronym List

ACC	Air Combat Command
ACM	asbestos-containing material
AF	Air Force
AFB	Air Force Base
AFI	Air Force Instruction
AST	aboveground storage tank
CEQ	Council of Environmental Quality
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CERFA	Community Environmental Response Facilitation Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DoD	Department of Defense
DOI	Department of the Interior
EA	Environmental Assessment
EBS	Environmental Baseline Survey
GSA	General Services Administration
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ERP	Environmental Restoration Program
LBP	lead-based paint
LCAFS	Lake Charles Air Force Station
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
PST	petroleum storage tank
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
ROI	region of influence
SARA	Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act
s c s	Soil Conservation Service
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
TPH	total petroleum hydrocarbons
U.S.	United States
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USC	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDC	United States Department of Commerce
USDI	United States Department of the Interior
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service

APPENDIX B
CORRESPONDENCE



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

825 Kaliste Saloom Road
Brandywine Bldg. II, Suite 102
Lafayette, Louisiana 70508

March 26, 1998

Mr. John Barr-era
Senior Environmental Scientist
GEO-MARINE, INC.
150-A North Festiva! Drive
El Paso, Texas 799 12

Dear Mr. **Barrera**:

Please reference your February 20, 1998, letter, requesting a list of endangered, threatened, and sensitive species for Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, and Monroe County, Florida. Geo-Marine requested that information to prepare their Environmental Assessment of a 4.6-acre tract of land on Lake Charles Air Force Range in Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana. This office has reviewed the information provided, and offers the following comments, pertaining only to the site in Louisiana, in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 153 1 et seq.).

No Federally listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species, presently occur within or near the Lake Charles Air Force Range. For information concerning the presence of listed species in Monroe County, Florida, please contact the Service's Jacksonville, Florida office at 904/232-2580.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this matter. If you need further assistance, please contact George Hart (3 18-262-6662, extension 223) of this office.

Sincerely,

Russell C. Watson
Acting Field Supervisor

cc: USFWS, Jacksonville, FL
LDWF, Natural Heritage Program, Baton Rouge, LA

State of Louisiana



James H. Jenkins, Jr.
Secretary

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Post Office Box 98000
Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000
(504)765-2800

M.J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.
Governor

March 2, 1998

John Barrera
Geo-Marine, Inc.
150-A North Festival Drive
El Paso, TX 799 12

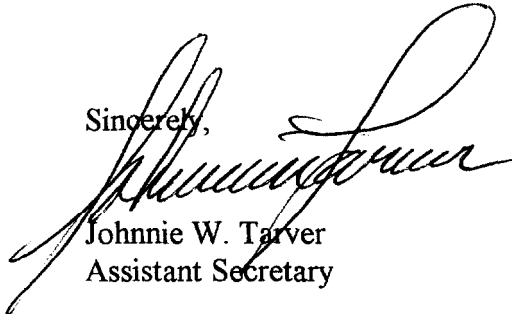
RE: Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species List for Calcasieu Parish, LA

Dear John Barr-era:

Enclosed you will find the rare, threatened and endangered species information that you requested. If you have any questions or require any further information, please contact Karl Mapes at (504) 763-3973.

The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program has compiled data on rare, endangered, or otherwise significant plant and animal species, plant communities, and other natural features throughout the state of Louisiana. Heritage reports summarize the existing information known at the time of the request regarding the location in question. They should not be considered final statements on the biological elements or areas being considered, nor should they be substituted for on-site surveys required for environmental assessments. The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program requires that this office be acknowledged in all reports as the source of all data provided here.

Sincerely,


Johnnie W. Tarver
Assistant Secretary

JWT:kam
enclosure: Invoice # 9803020 1

An Equal Opportunity Employer

*** Calcasieu Parish

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	S RANK	G RANK	USES A
<u>ANIMALS</u>				
AJAIA AJAJA	ROSEATE SPOONBILL	s3	G5	
HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS	BALD EAGLE	S2N,S3	G4	LTNL
CARACARA PLANCUS	CRESTED CARACARA	S1	G5	LTNL
GRUS CANADENSIS	SANDHILL CRANE	S1N	G5	
AIMOPHILA AESTIVALIS	BACHMAN'S SPARROW	s3	G3	c2
POLYODON SPATHULA	PADDLEFISH	S2S4	G4	c2
REITHRODONTOMYS HUMULIS	EASTERN HARVEST MOUSE	S3S4	G5	
SPILOGALE PUTORIUS	EASTERN SPOTTED SKUNK	s2	G5	
TERRAPENE ORNATA	ORNATE BOX TURTLE	s2	G5	
ORCONECTES BLACKI	CALCASIEU STREAM CRAWFISH	s2	G2	
FALLICAMBARUS DISSITUS	PINE HILLS CRAWFISH	s2	G3	
FALLICAMBARUS MACNEESEI	OLD PRAIRIE CRAWFISH	s2	G2	
BRACHYCERCUS FLAVUS	YELLOW BRACHYCERCUS MAYFLY	S1?	GH	C2*
STROPHITUS SUBVEXUS	SOUTHERN CREEKMUSSEL	S1	G2	
<u>PLANTS</u>				
AMSONIA LUDOVICIANA	LOUISIANA BLUE STAR	s3	G3	3c
CHAETOPAPPA ASTEROIDES	CHAETOPAPPA	s2	G5	
MONARDA LINDHEIMERI	LINDHEIMER'S BEE-BALM	S1S2	G4	
PHYSOSTEGIA LONGISEPALA	LONG-SEPALED FALSE DRAGON-HEAD	s2	G2G3	c2
SCUTELLARIA CARDIOPHYLLA	HEART-LEAVED SKULLCAP	s2	G4?	
LUDWIGIA MICROCARPA	SMALL-FRUITED WATER-WILLOW	S1	G5	
SAMOLUS EBRACTEATUS	BROOKWEED	S1	G4G5	
SALIX HUMILIS	DWARF GRAY WILLOW	s2	G5	
ELEOCHARIS TRICOSTATA	THREE-ANGLE SPIKERUSH	S1?	G4	
RHYNCHOSPORA DIVERGENS	BEAK-RUSH	S1	G4	
PSILOCARYA NITENS	SHORT-BEAKED BALD-RUSH	S2S3	G4	
SCLERIA VERTICILLATA	LOW NUTRUSH	S1	G5	

*** Calcasieu Parish

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	S RANK	G RANK	USES A
<u>PLANTS (CONT.1)</u>				
HERBERTIA LAHUE SSP CAERULEA	HERBERTIA	S?	G4G5T4	
COOPERIA DRUMMONDII	EVENING RAINLILY	S1S2	G5	
SACCHARUM BREVIBARBE	SHORT-BEARD PLUMEGRASS	S1?	G3G5	
SPOROBOLUS SILVEANUS	SILVEUS DROPSEED	S2S3	G4	
XYRIS FIMBRIATA	YELLOW-EYED GRASS	S4	G5	

COMMUNITIES

BRACKISH MARSH	S3S4	
BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST	s4	
COASTAL PRAIRIE	S1	G2Q
PINE SAVANNAH	S2S3	
WESTERN SALINE LONGLEAF PINE	S1	G1

OTHER

WATERBIRD NESTING COLONY

EXPLANATION OF RANKING CATEGORIES EMPLOYED BY NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAMS NATIONWIDE

Each element is assigned a single global rank as well as a state rank for each state in which it occurs. Global ranking is done under the guidance of the Science Department of the Nature Conservancy, Washington D.C. State ranks are assigned by each state's Natural Heritage Program, thus a rank for a particular element may vary considerably from state to state. Federal ranks are designated by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

FEDERAL RANKS:

L = Listed as threatened or endangered by US FWS

E = Endangered - in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

T = Threatened - likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Cl = Category 1 - substantial biological information on file to support the appropriateness of proposing to list a taxon as endangered or threatened. An asterisk (*) indicates taxa which may be extinct.

C2 = Category 2 - current information indicates that proposing to list a taxon is possible, but that substantial biological information is not on file to support such action.

3A = Persuasive evidence of extinction; if rediscovered such taxa might acquire high priority for listing.

3B = Names which do not represent distinct taxa (based on current taxonomic understanding).

3C = Taxa proven to be more abundant or widespread than previously believed, and/or not subject to any identifiable threat.

P = Proposed to be listed as endangered or threatened.

GLOBAL ELEMENT RANKS:

G1 = Critically imperiled globally because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer known extant populations) or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extinction.

G2 = Imperiled globally because of rarity (6 to 20 known extant populations) or because of some factor(s) making it very vulnerable to extinction throughout its range.

G3 = Either very rare and local throughout its range or found locally (even abundantly at some of its locations) in a restricted range (e.g., a single physiographic region) or because of other factors making it vulnerable to extinction throughout its range (21 to 100 known extant Populations).

G4 = Apparently secure globally, though it may be quite rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery (100-1000 known extant populations).

G5 = Demonstrably secure globally, although it may be quite rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery (1000+ known extant populations).

GH = Of historical occurrence throughout its range, i.e., formerly part of the established

GU = Possibly in peril range-wide but status uncertain; need more information.

G? = Rank uncertain. Or, 4 range (G3G5) delineates the limb of uncertainty.

GQ = Uncertain taxonomic status.

GX = Believed to be extinct throughout its range (e.g., Passenger Pigeon) with virtually no likelihood that it will be rediscovered.

T = Subspecies or variety rank (e.g., GST4 applies to a subspecies with a global species rank of G5, but with a subspecies rank of G4).

STATE ELEMENT RANKS:

S1 = Critically imperiled in Louisiana because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer known extant populations) or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extirpation.

S2 = Imperiled in Louisiana because of rarity (6 to 20 known extant populations) or because of some factor(s) making it very vulnerable to extirpation.

S3 = Rare and local throughout the state or found locally (even abundantly at some of its locations) in a restricted region of the state, or because of other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation (21 to 100 known extant populations).

S4 = Apparently secure in Louisiana, with many occurrences (100-1000 known extant populations).

S5 = Demonstrably secure in the state (1000+ known extant populations).

SA = Accidental in state, including species (usually birds or butterflies) recorded once or twice or only at great intervals, hundreds or even thousands of miles outside their usual range.

SH = Of historical occurrence in Louisiana but no recent records verified within the last 20 years; formerly part of the established biota, possibly still persisting.

SR = Reported from Louisiana, but without conclusive evidence to accept or reject the report.

SU = Possibly in peril in Louisiana but status uncertain; need more information.

SX = Believed to be extirpated from Louisiana.

SZ = Migrants which occur in an irregular, transitory, or dispersed manner.