



Idaho Department of Commerce • Economic Development Division

Idaho Joint Land Use Study

Technical Working Group Summary Gowen Field/Orchard Training Area

August 20, 2009 • 10 a.m.

Introduction and Background

The Idaho Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) is a joint venture planning effort between the military, the Idaho Department of Commerce and area stakeholders. It involves identifying strategies and developing recommendations to encourage compatible land use planning around military installations, airfields, ranges and military-controlled airspace in southwestern Idaho. The study will be complete in Winter 2010.

Two focus areas are included: Idaho National Guard at Gowen Field/Orchard Training Area (OTA) and the Mountain Home Air Force Base (AFB) and Range Complex. Each area is guided by two committees of city, county, Air Force, Idaho National Guard and other stakeholders.

- The JLUS Technical Working Group identifies technical issues to assist in development and evaluation of JLUS strategies and tools.
- The JLUS Policy Committee guides development of the study, approves policy recommendations, approves draft and final reports, and monitors implementation of policies.

This document summarizes the fifth workshop of the JLUS Technical Working Group for Gowen Field/Orchard Training Area. The workshop was held at the Idaho Department of Commerce in Boise on Aug. 20, 2009. Summaries of previous workshops and the Mountain Home committees are available separately.

Workshop Objectives & Format

The purpose of the workshops was to:

- Provide a study update
- Present Section 5 of the study
- Gather input on Sections 1 through 5

Handouts included:

- Workshop agenda
- Working draft of Section 5, highlights from strategy summary and a map showing military influence areas (MIAs)

Committee members received an agenda and were seated at tables organized in a U-shape. A PowerPoint presentation was provided.

Attendance

- Chris Rood, MSG/CC Air Guard
- Bill Moore, USDA/NRLS SW Idaho RC&D
- Joel Price, Idaho Army National Guard
- Tom Rasmussen, Id. Army National Guard
- Charlie Chambers, Id. Army National Guard
- Becky Evans, Idaho Dept. of Lands
- Steve Douglas, Idaho Dept. of Lands
- Jennifer Tomlinson, City of Boise
- Bob Taunton, Elmore-Ada Water Project
- Bill Moore, Southwest Idaho RC & D/USDA-NRCS
- Jay Gibbons, Ada County Planning and Zoning
- Rick Solander, Office of Economic Adjustment
- Greg Seibert, Idaho Department of Commerce
- Gloria Mabbutt, Idaho Department of Commerce
- Rick Rust, Matrix Design Group
- Jon Vlaming, Matrix Design Group
- Chereen Langrill, RBCI

Workshop Highlights

Welcome and introductions

- The Idaho Department of Commerce and Matrix consulting team were introduced.
- Rick Rust of Matrix distributed material from Section 5 of the study.

Duck Valley Indian Reservation update

- Greg Seibert shared highlights from a meeting held Aug. 18 with representatives from the Shoshone- Paiute Tribes at the Duck Valley Indian Reservation.
- The tribes are interested in becoming involved in the study. They will go through the same process followed by the committees, but instead of joining existing committees they will meet on their own.
- The tribes will follow their own Wings and Roots process.
- Ted Howard (Cultural Resources Director) was designated the tribes' lead staff person, and Doug McConnaughey (tribal advocate) is the contact.

- Two sets of workshops will be held at the reservation between September and November.
- Input gathered from the tribes will be incorporated into the document, either in an additional section or as part of the existing section(s) (depending on what type of input is produced from the workshops).
- The inclusion of the Tribe will extend the JLUS process into January or February. Committees will meet again to discuss the outcome of the tribes' meetings. The public will comment on the study in January or February.

Committee discussion:

Question: Will the tribes go through the process the way we did?

Greg Seibert: Wings and Roots is the process they chose to use. They will follow their own process, called Wings and Roots.

Comment: We (Air Guard) use Wings and Roots to consult with the tribes. We can brief you on what the process is for Wings and Roots.

Rick Rust: They will have two meetings and follow the same steps used by the committees. Then we'll want to take it out for public comment and then have another meeting to discuss public comments. We would like to meet to discuss the outcome from the tribe before it goes out to the public. In yesterday's meeting, it was requested that both technical and policy groups come together in Boise and Mountain Home to make sure everyone is on the same page.

Question: When?

Rick Rust: We hope to be finished with the Tribe in November, and meet as a group in December or at the beginning of the year.

Review and Comments on Sections 1 – 4

- Jon Vlaming told the group that so far 91 comments have been received from 10 people.
- Matrix will continue to accept comments on Sections 1 – 4 until the end of September. Committee members will be notified two weeks before comment period ends.
- Within a week, committee members will receive a copy of the comments to review what has been said so far.

Overview of landowner meeting

A meeting for land owners was held at 8 a.m. Aug. 20 at the Idaho Department of Commerce, Conference Room A/B. Rick Rust provided an overview of the meeting.

- Five people attended the meeting. Two people were new to the JLUS process.
- During the meeting someone asked for additional information about the Guard's typical activities in the Gowen/OTA areas.
- Another discussion focused on how the public could co-exist with the military on Orchard Access Road (the roadway is located in southeast Ada County). Someone asked if the Orchard Access Road could be blocked from public use.

Discussion:

Comment: There is some concern about defining how often certain activities are conducted in the Gowen/OTA areas. The concern is that it would only reflect current trends, and if a national emergency dictated a change in those activities, it would be in conflict with what has been said in the document.

Rick Rust: I think the landowners are just trying to get a handle on typical, but we need to caveat that extensively to show this does not indicate future trends.

Comment: Anything we give out would just be a guess. We have never had reason to keep track of that information. I understand what the landowners are looking for, and I can give it to you. But at best it will be a guess.

Rick Rust: If there aren't specifics than we won't have any to give.

Comment: I've met with a couple developers about this same subject. Our concern was that they want to change traffic significantly, for example, changing stoplights and having houses facing Orchard Road. We are certainly very concerned about trying to adjust to changes in traffic flow, such as stop lights and traffic circles.

Comment: They showed us their plans and it was to the point of moving the road and running it through the subdivision.

Rick: Is it appropriate to have a strategy that discusses the Orchard Access Road as a limited access facility?

Comment: What we don't want to do is to be diverted to Simco permanently.

The idea was 'Well, the military can just use Simco Road.' That's a significant inconvenience for us, to say the least, to convoy up I-84 and then go 15 or more miles out of our way.

Comment: I think Ada County will keep this as a through road. That's what is being advocated.

Comment: I'd be careful of the term 'limited access.' That can be different things.

Greg Seibert: We can check into that.

Rick Rust: We'll look into Sections 1 – 4 and see how we described it.

Overview of Section 5 (provided by Rick Rust)

- Make sure it is clear how to use this section. Use the next month to review it and let us know if there is something that needs more detail.
- Not all tools were necessary, so some weren't included in the strategy toolbox.
- How to view tables: A comment from the Mountain Home meetings suggested this should be enhanced, even using a pullout sheet to explain how to use it. Matrix may create a small tutorial as part of the document.
- Remember that when this document is completed, it isn't binding. It is a suggestion.
- The abbreviation "ID" will be replaced with "NG" under the focus area to make it clear that it refers to National Guard and not Idaho.
- Within the MIA zones, look at strategies themselves and make sure the locations where they are applied make sense. For example, sound attenuation is only needed in areas with sound issues.

- Note the difference between solid squares and hollow squares. Solid squares indicate primary responsibility, and hollow squares indicate partnership with an agency or jurisdiction.
- It was suggested to take away State of Idaho column (under Responsible Entity/Partner Agency) and replace it with BLM. State of Idaho could be included in the “other” category.
- Timing column: Think about what is realistic in these time frames. If it isn’t realistic to do something within the first three years, push it into the next category. “Ongoing” reflects ongoing process and review.
- Sensitive land uses are defined.
- MIA definitions: Look at boundaries to make sure we didn’t cut them too short. “A” indicates it is a communication zone defined by major physical features. “B” is a general zone with non-geographic features.
- Flight corridors and range spaces will shift based on discussions from the Mountain Home meetings (regarding low level flights). For MIA 3, “A” is an airspace use zone covering the entire range area. “B” is a ground operations zone.
- Regarding MIA 4 (Gowen Field zones): “A” indicates an airport zone and “B” indicates an airport influence zone. “C” is a vertical obstruction zone.

Discussion:

Question: What are sensitive uses that should be excluded? I thought that category might be a little broad.

Rick Rust: We will look into this specific area.

Question: Regarding the Mountain Home example, we haven’t incorporated Gowen Field’s closed patterns. We actually fly in similar patterns. The biggest noise complaint we get is about the northwest end of runway because of close pattern noise.

Rick Rust: We may want to have you look at the area and strategies applied to it and see if it needs to be adjusted. If you could send us your electronic flight patterns we can make sure we haven’t missed anything.

Comment: We’re trying to save the northwest end for development anyway. That covers our airport influence area and residential development is still allowed there.

Comment: A mile area covers the noise vibration zone around the tank trail. The tank trail has some issues. That’s where they want to put in a subdivision and traffic circles. Maybe we should rename this as OTA egress/ingress routes.

Comment: We need to address all three routes, and if we could, lump those together (Orchard Access Road, Pleasant Valley Road and Simco Road).

Rick Rust: We can look at this in a broader sense regarding how to put this together. It could be that automobile traffic moves off there sometimes.

Does limited access eliminate stoplights? Could tanks go through stoplights (rolling through the way emergency vehicles do)?

Comment: I’d compare Orchard Access Road to Eagle Road. Stoplights aren’t an issue. You don’t have houses facing Eagle Road. There’s a berm that protects kids and residents. We don’t want to put residents at risk. We will change our procedure before we put anyone at risk.

We don’t want driveways on the road.

Even with tanks, because of restricted speed, the vibration is minimal outside of 100 yards. They are restricted to 5 miles an hour.

Rick Rust: Noise studies aren't needed. It's more about notifying people when this is going to happen.

Rick Rust: A Birds of Prey discussion came up earlier. Is there any concern between the Center and your vehicles?

It's on the west side of South Cole. We haven't had any issues with them.

Comment: I think the limited access approach is reasonable. And the military should have a chance to review or comment on any changes to the roads or route changes (traffic lights, signals, etc).

Rick Rust: There are changes to discuss for the Orchard Training Area. Residents can change a designation. We propose that you change this area to become more restrictive. Within the area we'd also do noise attenuation, taking it out to a broader area. The question is how far is that and why? Noise studies have been done out there. There is some area where we'd like to have attenuation required if there's going to be residential development. We'll have to have some justification for distance. Something that can indicate this isn't like average noise. In the next couple months this needs to be defined.

Comment: I drive that line and I can explain it. *Note: Person making this comment goes to the map to highlight major noise centers.* A 130-decibel line goes around each area. Around that line is a 115-decibel line. Air Force says you have to be below 75 decibels for residential construction. Low frequency noise like this carries for miles and miles.

I have done my own study and it carries for 5 miles. So there should be a 5-mile buffer. Beyond the 115-decibel line it is more of a vibration than a noise. It doesn't hurt your ears. It's more pressure.

Rick Rust: We need to tweak this to figure out what the number is. We will play with that more, but with this group I want to make sure the change sounds appropriate.

Comment: There are about 2,400 acres owned by around 20 people.

The zone will change regarding zones for instantaneous noise level. We need to determine whether we are talking about noise or vibration.

Rick Rust: We agree we'll have these three zones. The second zone is vibration.

Comment: Maybe we could look at an avigation easement. I realize that is normally for aircraft. But maybe we could have residences sign avigation easements.

Rick Rust: We can talk about different levels of disclosure. Our document lists three different types: deed restriction, real estate restriction, and avigation easement.

Comment: Elmore County has already implemented that within a 5-mile buffer. They notify us about any land use changes. That process has worked pretty well. If we got the same thing from Ada County that would be very reasonable.

Comment: One person commented they couldn't do a residential development off Simco Road.

Rick Rust will check on avigation easement, and what Elmore County is doing already. He will also check Camp Ripley in Minnesota to see what they have.

Comment: How can area plans be moved forward? This is a common issue. The original comprehensive plan called for funding some area studies, but (Ada County) can't do that now. Funding isn't available for an entire study unless financial partners are found.

Rick: Do we want to press to have these area plans done, or do we just say it would be nice to have it happen?

Comment: There hasn't been an official hearing yet.

Comment: ACHD is not mentioned as a responsible agency but they do have jurisdiction on all our local roads.

Comment: MIA 6, OTA Zone B only discussed light pollution as a factor. I want to include vibration in the document.

Comment: Night training goes on in the south half of Range Road. There are lots of lights in this area. It is a 2-mile area, all public land. But it is still defined as a zone where we have night vision training.

Comment: A couple weeks ago I trained out there and there was a bad dust issue. My eyes were swollen shut. That stuff just hangs in the air. It is currently defined as a 5-mile area, and that is just right.

Rick Rust: Orchard Road will be indicated with the letter "B" and Simco Road will be indicated with the letter "C."

Most likely four different MIAs will come out of this to include light and dust and vibrations along with noise.

Action Items

- All final comments on Sections 1 – 4 are due by the end of September.
- Before the end of the year, committee members should meet with their decision makers to review the draft study. The goal is to make sure everyone is on the same page when the process moves forward at the first of the year. Greg Seibert and Gloria Mabbutt are available to help facilitate meetings.
- Handouts and copies of the PowerPoint will be posted to www.landusecompatibility.com. Committee members are encouraged to look at studies in other areas for reference.

Next Committee Workshops

- A meeting will be arranged for the technical and policy members to attend together.
- The next meeting will be in November or December.
- The goal is to have a final meeting in January or February, when the study will be presented to the public for comment.

Administrative Information

- The workshop PowerPoint will be placed on the study Web site: www.landusecompatibility.com. The site will be a major communication tool as the study progresses.

- Contact Gloria Mabbutt or Greg Seibert, Idaho Department of Commerce, with any questions or concerns. To reach Gloria, call (208) 334-2650 ext. 2139 or e-mail gloria.mabbutt@community.idaho.gov. To reach Greg, call (208) 334-2650 ext 2131 or e-mail greg.seibert@business.idaho.gov.

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