



Idaho Department of Commerce • Economic Development Division

Idaho Joint Land Use Study

Technical Working Group Summary

Mountain Home Air Force Base

Mountain Home Range Training Complex

May 19, 2009 • 9:30 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. It is an 18-month study that will be complete in Fall 2009.

Two study 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 third workshop of the JLUS Technical Working Group for the Mountain Home Air Force Base and Range Training Complex. The workshop was held at the Mountain Home City Hall Council Chambers on May 19. Summaries of previous workshops, including the January 2009 and Fall 2008 committee workshops, the May 2009 workshop for the Mountain Home AFB Policy Committee and both Gowen Field/Orchard Training Area committees, are available separately.

Prepared by: RBCI
For: Idaho Department of Commerce

Workshop Objectives & Format

The purpose of the May 2009 workshop was to:

- Provide a study update
- Review the structure of the document
- Discuss the process of reviewing the draft JLUS; upcoming milestones

Handouts included:

- Workshop agenda
- List of compatibility issues

Committee members received an agenda and were seated at tables. Maps displayed in the conference room showed the study area, including land ownership, military training areas, land use and groundwater areas of concern. A PowerPoint presentation was provided.

Attendance

- Ron Swearinge, City of Mountain Home
- Rich Scheuch, Mountain Home AFB
- Byron Schmidt, Mountain Home AFB
- Brent Butler, Elmore County
- Alan Christy, Elmore County
- Katie Dennis, Idaho Dept. of Lands
- Kate Langford, Idaho Dept. of Lands
- Bill Richey, Mountain Home AFB
- Phil Choate, Idaho Transportation Department
- Rick Ward, Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game
- Gary Kuwabara, Office of Economic Adjustment
- Rick Ward, Office of Economic Adjustment
- Greg Seibert, Idaho Department of Commerce
- Gloria Mabbutt, Idaho Department of Commerce
- Rick Rust, Matrix
- Jon Vlaming, Matrix
- Kay Lynn Brown, RBCI

Workshop Highlights

Welcome and introductions

- Gloria Mabbutt of the Idaho Department of Commerce welcomed the committee and introduced Rick Rust, Matrix Design Group, Jon Vlaming from Matrix Design Group, and Gary Kuwabara from the Office of Economic Adjustment.
- Rick Rust explained the meeting agenda and summarized Tuesday's public workshop.

Review of JLUS document

Rick explained that the meeting goal was to review sections 1-4 and discuss the type of input needed from the technical committee. In general:

- The group should consider the level of detail provided in the study.
- All data came from existing documents.

- Yellow text boxes in the draft document will indicate questions for the committee.
- The goal is consensus.
- JLUS will result in a “to-do” list for every jurisdiction. Additional public hearings will be needed before JLUS can be implemented.

Rick then reviewed each section of the JLUS document and highlighted items for discussion or input:

Section One: Introduction/Broad Picture

This section covers the study boundaries and basic information about the JLUS process.

Section Two: Study Area Profile

This section defines the areas included in the study and highlights profiles and trends from the areas.

Section Three: Compatibility Issues

This section lists compatibility issues identified by the committees.

- Need committee’s feedback on missing issues. If problem isn’t identified, JLUS document won’t have a solution.

Section Four: Existing Plans and Programs

This section identifies tools already in place through state and local agencies.

- This section will suggest modifications if needed.
- “Deficiencies” is a term in this section; just means areas that could be modified. Sometimes timeline isn’t effective or geographic boundaries need to be modified.

Section Five: Strategy

This section will discuss recommendations and a strategy. Section Five should be ready for review in July.

- JLUS document will only include strategies that are locally supported. Document is a recommendation only.

Committee Discussion

Rick reviewed the 25 strategies that will be included in Section 5 of the draft JLUS document. Committee members were encouraged to ask questions and give comments. Notable comments and follow-up discussion are summarized here.

Why do you say the JLUS document does not recommend buffer zones? I thought there was a map with buffer zone.

A military map was misunderstood by the public.

Money is limited for implementation.

Could JLUS document be used in a court of law? Could a zoning decision be contested based on a recommendation that was not adopted?

JLUS is not a legal document. Individual property owners could contest county zoning codes and use JLUS for support documentation. A county may not adopt the entire JLUS document; only certain recommendations. Jurisdictions must agree on the strategies.

Are you anticipating that JLUS will be adopted at the state level?

Yes, this has been done in the past. The Idaho State Planning Act could recognize the JLUS. State Planning Act lays out requirements that must be included in comprehensive plan. Inclusion in the State Planning Act should be a JLUS recommendation.

Recommendations should be practicable and flexible. Air Force needs to demonstrate that it has cared about compatibility for a long time.

Less infrastructure (roads, etc.) means fewer houses. Realtors make big promises, and homeowners don't know what to expect. Early involvement with developers is needed.

How far should you go in educating the public about military activities? We don't want to say too little or too much. For example, there is not much ground activity now, but it could increase in the future. We think you'll see increasing scope ("mission creep") of military activity.

Tell the public what could happen. Don't be specific in listing weapons; make broad statements about activities.

Committee should look at mission statement in JLUS and make corrections.

We have issues with Federal Aviation Administration; where it can fly and when, etc.

Can the governor's office be an information clearinghouse? We need a broader umbrella than just the county level.

Governor's office has a military-affairs liaison. State oversight could be a recommendation in the JLUS document. Gloria and Greg will follow up with this idea.

American Planning Association could train commissioners; they have a local chapter who could do just the training aspect. Federal involvement could be problematic.

JLUS document is only valuable if implemented. Policy committee needs to discuss how committed they are to implementation. A grant is available from Office of Economic Adjustment for this phase.

What would the implementation grant cover?

Policy committee would be converted to an implementation committee to monitor what local jurisdictions are doing with JLUS recommendation. Web forum could be set up for jurisdictions to exchange documents and templates or ask for comments on documents. This would lower travel costs. Office of Economic Adjustment will entertain a wide range of things for an implementation grant. Will look at the quality of the JLUS document first.

Could there be a recommendation by the technical committee that the policy committee was not willing to adopt?

The recommendation would be removed from the JLUS document in this case. It is important for technical committee and policy committee to talk. Policy committee needs to have enough information to make a decision.

What if jurisdictions didn't agree?

Many recommendations are location-specific. In one case in California, a small city did not have the resources to implement a recommendation. They were not included in that recommendation of the JLUS.

Air force commander changes every 18 months; commanders have different philosophies and priorities. Buy-in will be important.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) can help with this problem.

Who develops the MOU? We don't want 21 different MOUs.

Coordinating committee would draft MOUs.

It is important to get buy-in from new commanders and know where their priorities are.

MOUs can help with this problem.

We need to communicate with the public about how the military industry affects them.

How are these recommendations prioritized? Some are easy to implement, others are not.

The plan will identify what to do in first two years.

Need to clarify "buffer" and "impact area" terminology.

Land use has two levels: the landowner/developer, and property owner who inherits after the developer is done. It's important to set expectations for homeowners.

The water issue that prevents development in Elmore County will go away.

If you change the type of air force mission, it will change the noise map. Different weapons have different frequencies. The noise level (peak) might not change, but frequency would. We will have difficulties with noise in the future.

Do we have a visualization of what the noise contour would look like and how it could expand? Air Installation Compatibility Use Zone (AICUZ) will change. It's better to have a defensible area for a buffer. AICUZ doesn't capture everything, and the historical record only captures 60 percent of activities.

This JLUS is about protecting current land use. Committee should consider how to handle information about the future and new equipment. Should there be a recommendation of further study? We don't know yet. Remember past examples of Federal Aviation Administration and others.

We are conservative in Idaho about land planning. Without a map, officials are reluctant to make policies that are based on theoretical information.

Who is on the policy committee? We can't engage them without knowing who they are.

Gloria will send a list of policy committee members.

We need someone on the policy committee who knows planning and zoning. Nick

Nettleson would be helpful.

Will document be posted on Web site?

Orphan page will be sent to committee.

What format will the document be in?

PDF is preferable for Matrix

Action items and next steps

- There will be a 30-day review for the JLUS document with a public workshop for comment. Committees will review the Q&As from the public.
- Committee members are available for another meeting in August. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday are best.
- First four sections will be circulated in late June or early July.
- Section 5 will be circulated the first week of July.
- Contact Gloria or Greg with questions.
- Summaries are public record, but will not include names.

Administrative Information

- The workshop PowerPoint will be placed on study website www.landusecompatibility.com The website is being used as a major communication tool as the study progresses.
- Contact Gloria Mabbutt, Idaho Department of Commerce, with any questions or concerns. Call (208) 334-2650 ext. 2139 or e-mail gloria.mabbutt@community.idaho.gov.