

Idaho Department of Commerce • Economic Development Division

# Idaho Joint Land Use Study

## Summary of Public Workshops #4 May 2009

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### 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 process 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 fourth JLUS public workshop for the Gowen Field/Orchard Training Area.** The workshop was held at the Ada County Courthouse in Boise on May 19, 2009. Summaries of other workshops, including the Fall 2008 and January 2009 committee workshop and the May 2009 workshop for the Gowen Field/OTA Technical Working Group and both Mountain Home committees, are available separately.

## **Workshop Overview**

The Idaho Department of Commerce conducted two public workshops in May 2009 as a part of the Idaho Joint Land Use Study. Participants included representatives of the military, government agencies, and landowners. Workshops were held:

- May 18, 2009 at the Mountain Home City Hall in Mountain Home, Idaho
- May 19, 2009 at the Ada County Courthouse in Boise, Idaho

## **Workshop Purpose**

- Learn about current and future land uses near military installations and use areas.
- Gather issues and concerns from stakeholders regarding land use compatibility.
- Present an overview of the first four chapters of the Idaho Joint Land Use Study.

## **Notification**

Landowners and members of the public were notified of the workshops in several ways.

- Media releases were sent to six local media outlets, including the Associated Press bureau, Idaho Business Review, Idaho Press-Tribune, Idaho Statesman and Mountain Home News.
- Copies of the media release were sent to the public information officers of the Mountain Home Air Force Base and Gowen Field.
- Personal letters were sent to property owners within a one- or two-mile radius of each of the military installations. Mailing lists were provided by the county assessor's office of Ada, Elmore and Owyhee counties.

## **Participants and Format**

Participants were seated around a set of set of conference tables. Maps displayed in the entry of the conference room showed the study area, including land ownership, military training areas, land use and groundwater areas of concern. The meeting agenda was presented in a Power Point presentation.

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## **Workshop Highlights**

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Rick Rust of Matrix opened the workshops with introductions and a brief overview of the Idaho JLUS. This is the third public workshop and the fourth set of committee workshops. Until now, the process has focused on gathering information from existing studies and feedback and comments from landowners.

Other staff were asked to introduce themselves. Staff included Gloria Mabbutt of the Idaho Department of Commerce; Greg Seibert of the Idaho Department of Commerce, Rick Rust of Matrix Design Group, the prime consultant for the Idaho JLUS; Gary Kuwabara of the Office of Economic Adjustment; Rick Solander of the Office of Economic Adjustment; and public involvement consultant company RBCI.

Rick explained what typically happens at workshops and told the group that the agenda would include reviewing and discuss what people had said at previous JLUS workshops.

## **JLUS Overview and Objectives**

Rick Rust of Matrix Design Group provided a brief overview of the Idaho JLUS. The Idaho JLUS team is examining existing land use; growth trends and development potential; and existing regulations, plans and procedures near two military installations and use areas in Southwest Idaho: the Mountain Home Air Force Base (AFB) and Range Training Complex and the Gowen Field/Orchard Training Area (OTA).

### **The Idaho JLUS will:**

- Balance community and military needs and desires
- Encourage compatible land use planning to seek ways to reduce the impacts of communities on military activities and military activities on the communities
- Encourage collaboration and a common understanding of issues
- Equip citizens and stakeholders to be proactive when issues arise.
- Provide a set of tools, strategies, or procedures to promote compatibility.

### **Overview of chapters/sections 1-4 of draft JLUS**

- **Section One:** Introduction/broad picture; why study is necessary and who was involved.
- **Section Two:** Study area profile; details about land ownership, military installation and ranges.
- **Section Three:** Compatibility issues. This section includes a list of 24 standard compatibility factors that can be applied to all Joint Land Use Studies. Examples include noise, air quality and land use.
- **Section Four:** Existing plans and programs. Includes plans that installations cover, National Guard plans and other agency plans.
- **Section Five:** Recommendations.

Recommendations will be based on issues of concern to local jurisdictions, agencies, the public, and the military. Rick stressed the role of the public in helping ensure that recommendations meet the area's needs.

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## **Group Discussion**

An open discussion included questions from attendees and answers from staff.

## **Mountain Home Air Force Base and the Mountain Home Range Complex**

There were no members of the public at the Mountain Home public workshop.

## **Idaho National Guard at Gowen Field and the Orchard Training Area**

### **Future or potential compatibility issues included:**

- Tank easement that runs through Pleasant Valley Road.
- How will tanks and cars work together within a future development?
- Planned subdivision on Pleasant Valley Road will create more traffic.
- Noise made by training range that can be heard by residents on Pleasant Valley Road.
- Noise carries differently in an open desert than it does in a subdivision. Will homes in a subdivision create a sound wall?
- How do noise contours influence restrictions?
- Can activities that create high noise levels be relocated away from potential subdivisions?
- How can noise levels influence restrictions?
- Property owners who weren't aware of training range at Gowen Field.

**Other questions and issues included:**

- How specific is an acoustical study?
- How can noise be defined. What kinds of decibels define noise, and when does it start (before development, during or after)?
- What is the Joint Land Use Study?
- How will the JLUS change things?
- Who runs JLUS?
- How do all these interests mesh together? How do these different groups work together to find common ground and reach a compromise?
- What does the military do and where?
- Who gets the ultimate say on whether anything will change?

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**Next Steps**

The first four sections of the draft JLUS are now ready for review. The committee will read the draft JLUS later this summer and meet to discuss the recommendations.

The next public workshop will be held in August, and at that time the public will have an opportunity to review the draft JLUS.

The Web site [www.landusecompatibility.com](http://www.landusecompatibility.com) will serve as a major communication tool as the study progresses. PowerPoint presentations and workshop handouts will be posted to the Web site.

Attendees are encouraged to spread information about the JLUS and invite more people to the next set of workshops. Questions can be directed to Gloria Mabbutt (208-334-2650 x 2139 or [gloria.mabbutt@commerce.idaho.gov](mailto:gloria.mabbutt@commerce.idaho.gov)) at the Idaho Department of Commerce.