

Multi-Purpose Machine Gun (MPMG) Range

Summary Sheet

Camp Edwards at Joint Base Cape Cod

September 4, 2020

In 2015, the Massachusetts Army National Guard (MAARNG) was awarded a MILCON (Military Construction) project to construct a Multi-Purpose Machine Gun Range (MPMG) on Camp Edwards at the current KD Range. The approximately \$11.5 million project consists of \$9.7 million for range construction and \$1.8 million for targetry.

The need for the MPMG is based on MAARNG's force structure and the required training for those Soldiers. Currently, MAARNG Soldiers must travel to either Camp Ethan Allen in Vermont (270 miles away) or Ft. Drum (385 miles away) to complete necessary training. Constructing an MPMG at Camp Edwards reduces soldier travel time while maximizing the time available for conducting required, mission-essential training activities at Camp Edwards.

An MPMG is a standard range where soldiers train and qualify with automatic weapons, primarily the M249 and M240 and .50 caliber. The project consists of eight firing lanes, which are 800 meters long with automated targets. All ammunition used on this range would be copper ammunition, no lead ammunition will be fired.

The MAARNG is proposing to construct the MPMG on KD range. This location can accommodate the surface danger zone (the area that any fired bullet could possibly travel, a one in a million probability) to fit entirely within the boundary of Joint Base Cape Cod. KD Range was in use for many years; currently it is used for Unmanned Aircraft System training.

KD Range encompasses approximately 40 acres. To accommodate the MPMG, the MAARNG would have to clear up to 170 acres for the range footprint, facilities, utility extensions, access, and firebreaks to maintain or improve the habitat while reducing wildfire hazard.

As part of the planning process, Camp Edwards conducted a test fire at KD Range in August 2015 to simulate noise from the proposed MPMG range. Bordering neighborhoods were notified and asked for input. As a result of this test, the MAARNG shifted the location of the MPMG range north to reduce potential noise in bordering neighborhoods.

Additional surveys were conducted to support project planning and environmental review including an archaeological survey with no "finds" reported. Numerous in-depth biological surveys were conducted for federal and state listed rare species (such as bats, moths, bees, and turtles) and general ecosystem health surveys such as for breeding birds.

All active ranges at Camp Edwards operate under an Operations, Maintenance, and Monitoring Plan to ensure oversight and monitoring of the environment to protect groundwater resources. This is also in compliance with the state's Environmental Performance Standards of Chapter 47 the Acts of 2002.

Over the past five years, the MAARNG has coordinated with multiple state and Federal agencies including MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) to ensure that adverse impacts to natural resources (including state-listed rare species) were avoided or mitigated, and the Environmental Management Commission, which has oversight of the approximately 15,000-acre Camp Edwards Training Site (also known as the Upper Cape Water Supply Reserve), where the MPMG would be built. The MAARNG developed a comprehensive mitigation strategy and a Conservation Management Plan/Permit in conjunction with NHESP. Mitigation for the project will be on a 4 to 1 ratio (four acres mitigated for every acre impacted) and a direct transfer of 260 acres of land to Crane Wildlife Management area, which abuts the base.

Formal environmental review of the project began in May 2018 and was conducted under both the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) and the *Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act* (MEPA). The MEPA process was completed in July 2020 when the MAARNG received a certificate signed by the Massachusetts Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs that determined the Single Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (Single Supplemental EIR) submitted for the project **adequately and properly complies** with MEPA and its implementing regulations. The NEPA process is ongoing; an Environmental Assessment was completed and submitted in August 2020 for a 30-day public comment period, which ends September 8, 2020.