FOOTNOTES

1/ Commercial facilities are not available. The meal and incidental expense rate covers charges for meals in available facilities plus an additional allowance for incidental expenses and will be increased by the amount paid for Government quarters by the traveler.

2/ Commercial facilities are not available. Only Government-owned and contractor operated quarters and mess are available at this locality. This per diem rate is the amount necessary to defray the cost of lodging, meals and incidental expenses.

3/ On any day when US Government or contractor quarters are available and U.S. Government or contractor messing facilities are used, a meal and incidental expense rate of $19.65 is prescribed to cover meals and incidental expenses at Shemya AFB, Clear AFS, Galena APT and King Salmon APT. This rate will be increased by the amount paid for U.S. Government or contractor quarters and by $4 for each meal procured at a commercial facility. The rates of per diem prescribed herein apply from 0001 on the day after arrival through 2400 on the day prior to the day of departure.

4/ On any day when U.S. Government or contractor quarters are available and U.S. Government or contractor messing facilities are used, a meal and incidental expense rate of $34 is prescribed to cover meals and incidental expenses at Amchitka Island, Alaska. This rate will be increased by the amount paid for U.S. Government or contractor quarters and by $10 for each meal procured at a commercial facility. The rates of per diem prescribed herein apply from 0001 on the day after arrival through 2400 on the day prior to the day of departure.

5/ On any day when U.S. Government or contractor quarters are available and U.S. Government or contractor messing facilities are used, a meal and incidental expense rate of $25 is prescribed instead of the rate prescribed in the table. This rate will be increased by the amount paid for U.S. Government or contractor quarters.

6/ The meal rates listed below are prescribed for the following locations in Alaska: Cape Lisburne RRL, Cape Newenham RRL, Cape Romanzof APT, Fort Yukon RRL, Indian Mtn RRL, Sparrevohn RRL, Tatalina RRL, Tin City RRL, Barter Island AFS, Point Barrow AFS, Point Lay AFS and Oliktok AFS. The amount to be added to the cost of government quarters in determining the per diem will be $3.50 plus the following amount:

	Daily Rate
DOD Personnel	$13
Non-DOD Personnel	$30

7/ (Eff 9-1-94) A per diem rate of $200 (lodging $148; M&IE $52) will be in effect for Las Croabas, Puerto Rico, during the Annual Conference of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) being held at the El Conquistador Resort and Country Club. This rate will be in effect from 4-12 September 1994 only for travelers attending the conference and only for travelers staying at the El Conquistador Resort.

Dated: May 6, 1996.

L. M. Bynum,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Office, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 96–11816 Filed 5–10–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5000–04–C

Department of the Navy

Record of Decision for the Disposal and Reuse of the Charleston Naval Base, North Charleston, SC

The Department of the Navy (Navy), pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321, *et seq.*, and the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality that implement NEPA procedures, 40 CFR Parts 1500–1508, hereby announces its decision to dispose of the Charleston Naval Base in North Charleston, South Carolina.

Navy intends to dispose of the Charleston Naval Base in a manner that is consistent with Alternative Reuse Scenario 3, described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) as the preferred alternative. Alternative Reuse Scenario 3, composed of three Development Concepts approved by the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA), the Charleston Naval Complex Redevelopment Authority, is characterized by high density redevelopment of the entire 1,500-acre Naval Base.

In deciding to dispose of the Naval Base property in a manner consistent with Alternative Reuse Scenario 3, Navy has determined that high density redevelopment of this Base bears the greatest potential for achieving the goals of local economic redevelopment of the closed military facility and creation of new jobs. This Record of Decision does not mandate selection of any one Development Concept. Rather, it leaves selection of the particular means to achieve high density redevelopment to the acquiring entity and the local zoning authority.

In addition to the Naval Base property in North Charleston, the Commander of the Naval Base at Charleston also exercised jurisdiction over the Clouter Island Dredged Material Disposal Facility located across the Cooper River from the Naval Base and over the Charleston Naval Station Annex located five miles north of the Naval Base, adjacent to the Charleston Air Force Base and the Charleston International Airport. Neither of these properties is subject to this Record of Decision.

The Department of the Army requested an interservice transfer of the Clouter Island facility under the authority of 10 U.S.C. 2571. Navy will prepare appropriate NEPA documentation for this transfer.

The Department of the Air Force requested transfer of the Naval Station Annex but later withdrew its request. In light of Air Force's request, the initial 1993–1994 LRA for the Naval Base, known as Trident's BEST (Building Economic Solutions Together) Committee, established in 1993 by Executive Order of the Governor of South Carolina and composed of representatives from the three concerned counties of Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester, did not consider the Annex available for reuse and did not plan for its redevelopment. The Charleston Naval Complex Redevelopment Authority will develop a reuse plan for the Naval Station Annex, and Navy will prepare a separate environmental analysis under NEPA to address disposal and reuse of this property.

Background

The 1993 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission recommended closure of Naval Station Charleston and the Charleston Naval Shipyard. This recommendation was then approved by President Clinton and accepted by the One Hundred Third Congress in 1994. Operations at the Naval station and the Shipyard ceased on April 1, 1996, and the property has been in caretaker status since that date.

The Charleston Naval Base is located within the City of North Charleston and covers 1,575 acres of fee-owned land. The Naval Base is composed of the Naval Station which covers 842 acres, the Naval Shipyard which covers 505 acres, the Fleet and Industrial Supply Center which covers 194 acres, the Fleet and Mine Warfare Training Center which covers 10 acres, and the Chicora Tank Farm which covers 24 acres. Collectively, these properties are designated in the FEIS as the Naval Base.

Two other Federally owned parcels of land lie within the boundaries of the Charleston Naval Base but are not part of the Base property: an 8.7 acre parcel owned by the Department of State and a four acre parcel owned by the Department of Commerce for the use of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The FEIS prepared by Navy did not address the property held by State and Commerce, because the actions of the 1993 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission did not affect these parcels.

A Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register on April 26, 1994, stating that Navy would prepare an Environmental Impact Statement that analyzed the impacts of disposal and reuse of the land, buildings, and infrastructure at the Base. A 90-day public scoping period was established, and Navy held four scoping meetings. Two meetings were held in the City of North Charleston on May 11, 1994, and meetings were also held in the towns of Goose Creek and Summerville on May 12, 1994.

On October 21, 1994, Navy distributed a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to Federal, State, and local agencies, elected officials, special interest groups, and interested persons. Navy held two public hearings on November 28 and 29, 1994, at the Chicora Community Center and at City Hall in North Charleston. Federal agencies, South Carolina state agencies, local governments, and the general public commented on the DEIS. These comments and Navy's responses were incorporated in the FEIS, which was distributed to the public on June 23, 1995, for a review period that concluded on July 24, 1995. Public comments on the FEIS were considered before preparation of the Record of Decision.

Alternatives

NEPA requires Navy to evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives for disposal and reuse of this Federal property. In the NEPA process, Navy analyzed the environmental impacts of various proposed reuses that could result from disposal of the Naval Base property. As the basis for this analysis, Navy initially relied upon the reuse and redevelopment alternatives identified by the BEST Committee, the first LRA that prepared the Charleston Naval Complex Reuse Plan presented to the Department of the Navy on June 9, 1994.

On June 30, 1994, the State of South Carolina authorized creation of a redevelopment authority to oversee disposal of the Base property and on September 30, 1994, the Governor of South Carolina established the Charleston Naval Complex Redevelopment Authority, known a the RDA, that succeeded the BEST Committee as the LRA. The LRA, as the Local Redevelopment Authority, adopted the BEST Committee's reuse plan for the Naval Base, characterized by high density redevelopment of the entire Base. In April 1995, the State of South Carolina reorganized the Charleston Naval Complex Redevelopment Authority and appointed new members to succeed the RDA established in September 1994. In June 1995, the new RDA, as the Local Redevelopment Authority for the Charleston Naval Base, endorsed high density redevelopment of the Naval Base, with two variations from the BEST Committee's reuse plan.

The BEST Committee considered three levels of reuse and redevelopment. The first level proposed reuse and redevelopment of 500 acres of Naval Base property; the second level

proposed reuse and redevelopment of 1000 acres of Naval property; and the third level proposed reuse and redevelopment of the entire 1500 acre Naval Base property. The BEST Committee adopted the third level, reuse and redevelopment of the entire Naval Base, as its proposed reuse plan for the property. This plan was treated in the FEIS as an element of Alternative Reuse Scenario 3.

In the first two levels of redevelopment, the LRA did not propose to develop the entire Naval Base property. Thus, in order to evaluate the environmental impacts caused by disposing of the entire Naval Base in light of these proposals, Navy projected and analyzed likely categories of reuse for these areas of the Naval Base property that the LRA did not propose to develop in its 500 and 1000 acre scenarios.

In the FEIS, Navy evaluated a ''no action'' alternative and three ''action'' alternatives for the entire Naval Base property. The first alternative was the ''No Action'' alternative which would leave the property in caretaker status with Navy maintaining the physical condition of the property, providing a security force, and making repairs essential to safety. The first ''action'' alternative, Alternative Reuse Scenario 1, proposed mixed use of the property with minimal infrastructure improvements and reflected the 500 acre redevelopment scenario examined by the LRA. This alternative utilized existing Naval Base administrative areas for office space, Naval Shipyard property for an industrial park, and open space areas for passive recreation. Alternative Reuse Scenario 2 proposed a more intensive mixed use and reflected the 1000 acre redevelopment scenario evaluated by the LRA. This alternative provided an industrial district near the piers but also sought to attract tourism with a ''destination'' mixed use waterfront district, a commercial marina, civic and office buildings, and large active recreation areas. Alternative Reuse Scenario 3 proposed the most intensive redevelopment and reflected the high density redevelopment scenario adopted by the LRA as its proposed reuse plan. This alternative proposed a high level of industrial and commercial redevelopment of the 1500 acre property that could be achieved through several different approaches and is described in the FEIS as the preferred alternative.

Alternative Reuse Scenario 3 is composed of three high density redevelopment Concepts that Navy analyzed and designated as Development Concepts 3, 3A, and 3B. Concept 3 reflected the BEST Committee's reuse plan; Concept 3A reflected Navy's modification of Concept 3, to take account of the environmental remediation planned for two sites on the Base; and Concept 3B, added by the RDA in February 1995, reflected the City of North Charleston's opposition to an intermodal cargo terminal and its preference for maritime industrial development. Alternative Reuse Scenario 3 with its variations is the proposed reuse plan endorsed by the RDA in June 1995.

Development Concept 3, the plan advanced by the BEST Committee, provided areas for civic and community use and proposed five major employment centers: an office district, a shipyard district, a marine industrial district, an intermodal cargo facility, and an industrial park related to and located behind the intermodal facility. Part of the proposed intermodal cargo terminal would be built on a pile-supported platform over the Cooper River. An adjacent railroad yard would also be constructed behind the terminal. Concept 3 emphasized government and port-related activities.

Development Concept 3A is similar to Concept 3. It proposed the same major employment centers but changed the locations of the intermodal cargo terminal, the related railroad yard, and the marine (or maritime) industrial district to avoid incompatibility with the environmental remediation planned for two sites on the Naval Station, *i.e.,* Solid Waste Management Units (SWMU) 9 and 14. These changes decreased the potential impact on wetlands by affecting only 9.3 acres as compared with 20.5 acres under Concept 3 and also reduced the impact on a vegetated buffer area along Shipyard Creek. Concept 3A would move the intermodal cargo facility farther out into the Cooper River and change its shape to retain the same area; it would not build any facilities over the two SWMS's; it would move the related railroad yard farther away from wetlands and the vegetated area along Shipyard Creek; and it would change the shape of the maritime industrial district.

Development Concept 3B proposed the use and expansion of existing Naval Shipyard and Naval Station facilities to develop an extensive maritime industrial district. Under Concept 3B, the intermodal cargo facility would not be built. Instead, the shipyard area would be enlarged and the maritime industrial facilities would be expanded to include the property where the cargo facility would be constructed under Concepts 3 and 3A.

The maritime industrial district covers much of the Naval Station property south of the Naval Shipyard that would be occupied by the intermodal cargo facility proposed in Development Concepts 3 and 3A. The proposal embodied in Concept 3B would avoid the impacts on waterways caused by building the intermodal cargo terminal over the Cooper River and the railway and elevated highway across Shipyard Creek. Concept 3B would further reduce the potential impact on wetlands by affecting only 4 acres as compared with 9.3 acres under Concept 3A and 20.5 acres under Concept 3. Concept 3B would not develop the sites at SWMU 9 and SWMU 14, instead leaving them as open space. Additionally, the vegetated buffer area along Shipyard Creek would not be developed. Concept 3B would also provide an office district, a cultural park district, a community support district, and areas for open space and recreation.

Environmental Impacts

The potential impacts of all three ''action'' Alternative Reuse Scenarios were analyzed for their effects on adjacent land use, traffic and transportation, noise, air quality, water quality, hazardous materials, biological resources, historic and archaeological resources, economics, environmental justice, aesthetics, and public services. Each of these Alternative Reuse Scenarios has the potential for causing impacts on the environment. This Record of Decision will focus on the impacts associated with the preferred alternative, Alternative Reuse Scenario 3, and its three Development Concepts. All three Concepts are generally compatible with the use of adjacent lands.

Each of the three Development Concepts would cause adverse local impacts on traffic. As a consequence of activity associated with the intermodal cargo facility proposed in Concepts 3 and 3A, rail and truck traffic in the area would increase. The traffic levels (composed of trucks and automobiles) generated by Concepts 3 and 3A would likely exceed by about 13 per cent those experienced during operation of the Naval Base. To accommodate this increase in traffic, it would be necessary for State and local governments to modify the transportation infrastructure by realigning rail lines, building additional access to Interstate Highway I–26, widening local roads, and modernizing local intersections. These, or similar, actions should mitigate the effects of the increased traffic.

The traffic associated with Concept 3B, which did not propose an

intermodal facility, would exceed by about 3 per cent the level experienced during operation of the Naval Base. Concept 3B did not propose any changes to the existing railroad or roadway networks, but would upgrade certain roadways on the Base to accommodate commercial vehicles.

Re-use under any of the three Development Concepts would not significantly affect ambient noise levels. However, long term increases in noise would occur on those local roadways that would experience increases in traffic. Under Concepts 3 and 3A, vehicular noise would increase in neighborhoods adjacent to the proposed I–26 highway connection at the south end of the Base. The intermodal cargo facility and related railroad yard that would be developed under Concepts 3 and 3A would also increase ambient noise levels, although not significantly. Since Concept 3B did not propose an intermodal cargo facility, the associated increase in noise would be less than that associated with Concepts 3 and 3A. Under Concept 3B, traffic and resultant noise would increase on local roads.

Re-use under any of the three Development Concepts would not significantly affect air quality. The sources of air pollutants associated with the proposed redevelopment would be motor vehicles, demolition and construction, ships, trains, and industrial operations. However, with the exception of Nitrogen Oxides from diesel locomotives associated with the intermodal railroad yard in Concepts 3 and 3A, the emissions that would arise out of the proposed redevelopment are not likely to generate a net increase over those present when the Base was operating.

Under Concept 3B, the level of emissions would be determined by the nature and extent of industrial activity conducted on the property. It would be necessary, of course, for those conducting such activities to obtain appropriate permits from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

The Base is located in a region that is in attainment with National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Therefore, an analysis under the Clean Air Act Conformity Rule is not required.

All three Development Concepts would cause adverse impacts on wetlands, surface waters, and aquatic habitats. The construction of new facilities under Development Concepts 3, 3A and 3B would remove, respectively, 20.5, 9.3 and 4 acres of wetlands. The stringent requirements of Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), 33 U.S.C. 1252, *et seq.*, however, should provide adequate mitigation for the loss of wetlands. Under CWA, wetland replacement may be required when wetlands are filled as envisioned in Alternative Reuse Scenario 3.

Development of the intermodal cargo facility under Concepts 3 and 3A would require construction of a pile-supported platform over, respectively, 80 and 130 acres of the Cooper River and construction of a railway and an elevated highway across Shipyard Creek. The pile-supported cargo terminal would likely alter the flow characteristics of the Cooper River and cause a gradual buildup of sediments under the platform similar in effect to that of the existing Navy piers. Concept 3B would have no similar impact on hydrology because it did not propose to build the intermodal cargo terminal.

Before building the intermodal cargo facility, the acquiring entity would be required to obtain permits under Section 404 of CWA and the Rivers and Harbors Act, 33 U.S.C. 401, (which together control construction of facilities over navigable waters) for any construction that affects the Cooper River or Shipyard Creek. These permits are reviewed and approved by several Federal and State environmental agencies through public processes, and the agencies may require substantial environmental mitigation as a condition of approving the proposed construction.

Under all three Development Concepts, the impact on surface water quality caused by stormwater runoff would be regulated by the South Carolina Stormwater Management and Sediment Reduction Act, 48 S.C. Code Ann. § 48–14–10, *et seq*. This statute requires the acquiring entity to submit a sediment and erosion control plan to the State for approval, and the State may impose mitigation measures on the developer to minimize adverse effects from stormwater runoff. Future development will be subject to the prescriptions of CWA and the South Carolina statute, which require management of stormwater runoff into surface waters such as the Cooper River, Shipyard Creek, and Noisette Creek.

Because of the construction required for the intermodal cargo terminal, implementation of Development Concepts 3 and 3A would also have an impact on several State-designated species of concern that currently or historically have existed at the Base. Sea purslane, a plant species classified as a State species of concern, would likely be eliminated from the site of the marine industrial park if Concept 3 were implemented. Least terns, a threatened species under South Carolina law, nest on the roofs of buildings that would be demolished if the intermodal facility proposed in Concepts 3 and 3A were built. Thus, demolition should be coordinated with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. Two bat species that have been listed as candidates for the Federal endangered species list are present in the Charleston Harbor area, may roost in some buildings on the Base, and could also be affected by the demolition of buildings. Thus, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may request that the acquiring entity conduct surveys of Base buildings before demolition in order to avoid causing harm to the least terns and bats.

Development Concept 3B would not have an impact on the least terns and would have less impact on the bats, because the proposed shipyard and maritime industrial complex would not require the extent of building demolition that would be necessary if the intermodal cargo facility were built. Redevelopment under all three Development Concepts would affect, by removal or alteration, more than half of the wooded areas on the Base.

Navy is evaluating the extent of existing contamination on the Base. Navy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) will review and approve the risk assessments developed to ascertain the potential impacts of existing contamination on human health and the environment before Navy remediates the contaminated sites and conveys the property.

There are three historic districts (Naval Shipyard, Naval Hospital and Officer Housing), one archeological site (a prehistoric site near Quarters L), and three individually eligible structures (Navy Chapel, Marine Barracks, and Coast Guard Air Station Bachelor Officers Quarters) on the Base. Navy, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the State Historic Preservation Officer entered into a Programmatic Agreement on July 10, 1995. Under this Agreement, Navy will encourage adaptive reuse of the historic structures and maintain and preserve the buildings and the archeological site until a decision is made concerning their ultimate disposal. Additionally, Navy will include protective covenants in the deeds for parcels that contain historic structures and the archeological site.

Navy also analyzed the impacts on low income and minority populations pursuant to Executive Order 12898, ''Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority

Populations and Low-Income Populations'' and found that there will be no disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low income populations. Any impacts related to reuse of the Base will be experienced equally by all groups within the regional population.

Mitigation

No mitigation measures are required to implement Navy's decision to dispose of the Naval Base property. Navy's FEIS identified and discussed the actions that would be necessary to mitigate the impacts associated with reuse and redevelopment. The acquiring entity, under the direction of Federal, State and local agencies with regulatory authority over protected resources, will be responsible for implementing these mitigation measures.

Absent statutory authority, Navy cannot impose restrictions on the future use of this surplus Federal property. Navy will, however, include appropriate notifications in the deeds for any parcels that contain wetlands, lie within floodplains or are inhabited by threatened or endangered species protected under Federal and State laws.

Comments Received on the FEIS

Navy received nine comment letters from regulatory agencies, a citizens group, and individual citizens. These comments did not raise new issues concerning potential problems with implementation of the reuse plan or propose mitigation measures other than those addressed in the FEIS. While some expressed concern that there was insufficient detail describing implementation of the reuse plan, these concerns may be addressed by the entity that acquires the Naval Base as it develops its implementation plan.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) requested that Navy either develop a Basewide stormwater management plan or require the acquiring entity to develop such a plan as a condition of conveyance. Navy will instead rely upon the applicability of the South Carolina Stormwater Management and Sediment Reduction Act, 48 S.C. Code Ann. § 48–14–10, *et seq.*, and local ordinances that require the acquiring entity to submit a stormwater management plan to OCRM for approval.

Regulations Governing the Disposal Decision

Since the proposed action contemplates a disposal action under the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (DBCRA), Public Law 101–510, 10 U.S.C. 2687 note, selection of Alternative Reuse Scenario 3 as the preferred alternative was based upon the environmental analysis in the FEIS and application of the standards set forth in DBCRA, the Federal Property Management Regulations (FPMR), 41 CFR Part 101–47, and the Department of Defense Rule on Revitalizing Base Closure Communities and Community Assistance (DOD Rule), 32 CFR Parts 90 and 91.

Section 101–47.303–1 of the FPMR requires that the disposal of Federal property benefit the Federal government and constitute the highest and best use of the property. The FPMR defines the ''highest and best use'' as that use to which a property can be put that produces the highest monetary return from the property, promotes its maximum value, or serves a public or institutional purpose. The ''highest and best use'' determination must be based upon the property's economic potential, qualitative values, and utilization factors such as zoning, physical characteristics, other private and public uses in the vicinity, former Government uses, access, roads, location and environmental considerations.

After Federal property has been conveyed to non-Federal entities, the property is subject to local land use regulations, including zoning and subdivision regulations and building codes. Unless expressly authorized by statute, the disposing Federal agency cannot restrict the future use of surplus Government property. As a result, the local community exercises substantial control over future use of the property. For this reason, local land use plans and zoning affect determination of the highest and best use of surplus Government property.

The DBCRA directed the Administrator of the General Services Administration (GSA) to delegate to the Secretary of Defense authority to transfer and dispose of base closure property. Section 2905(b) of DBCRA directs the Secretary of Defense to exercise this authority in accordance with GSA's property disposal regulations, set forth at Sections 101–47.1 through 101–47.8 of the FPMR. By letter dated December 20, 1991, the Secretary of Defense delegated the authority to transfer and dispose of base closure property closed under DBCRA to the Secretaries of the Military Departments. Under this delegation of authority, the Secretary of the Navy must follow FPMR procedures for screening and disposing of real property when implementing base closures. Only where Congress has expressly provided additional authority for disposing of base closure property, *e.g.*, the economic development conveyance authority established in 1993 by Section 2905(b)(4) of DBCRA, may Navy apply disposal procedures other than the FPMR's prescriptions.

In Section 2901 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994, Public Law 103–160, Congress recognized the economic hardship occasioned by base closures, the Federal interest in facilitating economic recovery of base closure communities, and the need to identify and implement reuse and redevelopment of property at closing installations. In Section 2903(c) of Public Law 103–160, Congress directed the Military Departments to consider each base closure community's economic needs and priorities in the property disposal process. Under Section 2905(b)(2)(E) of DBCRA, Navy must consult with local communities before it disposes of base closure property and must consider local plans developed for reuse and redevelopment of the surplus Federal property.

The Department of Defense's goal, as set forth in Section 90.4 of the DOD Rule, is to help base closure communities achieve rapid economic recovery through expeditious reuse and redevelopment of the assets at closing bases, taking into consideration local market conditions and locally developed reuse plans. Thus, the Department has adopted a consultative approach with each community to ensure that property disposal decisions consider the Local Redevelopment Authority's reuse plan and encourage job creation. As a part of this cooperative approach, the base closure community's interests, *e.g.*, reflected in its zoning for the area, play a significant role in determining the range of alternatives considered in the environmental analysis for property disposal. Furthermore, Section 91.7(d)(3) of the DOD Rule provides that the Local Redevelopment Authority's plan generally will be used as the basis for the proposed disposal action.

The Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, 40 U.S.C. 484, as implemented by the FPMR and DBCRA, identifies several mechanisms for disposing of surplus base closure property: By public benefit conveyance (FPMR Sec. 101–47.303–2); by economic development conveyance (DBCRA Sec. 2905(b)(4)); by negotiated sale (FPMR Sec. 101–47.304–8); and by competitive sale (FPMR Sec. 101–47.304–7). The selection of any

particular method of conveyance merely implements the Federal agency's decision to dispose of the property. Decisions concerning whether to undertake a public benefit conveyance or an economic development conveyance, or to sell property by negotiation or by competitive bid are committed by law to agency discretion. Selecting a method of disposal implicates a broad range of factors and rests solely within the Secretary of the Navy's discretion.

Conclusion

Alternative Reuse Scenario 3 with its three Development Concepts presents the highest and best use of the Charleston Naval Base. The local community, represented by the Charleston Naval Complex Redevelopment Authority, has determined in its reuse plan that the property should be used for a high density mix of commercial, industrial and recreational activities. The property's physical characteristics and past use and the current use of adjacent lands make it appropriate for this high density mix of redevelopment. Additionally, utilizing the existing infrastructure on the Base to the maximum extent, this redevelopment would produce an environment most likely to create jobs.

Alternative Reuse Scenario 3 responds to local economic conditions, promotes rapid economic recovery from the impact of base closure, and is consistent with President Clinton's Five-Part Plan for revitalizing base closure communities, which emphasizes local economic redevelopment of the closing military facility and creation of jobs as the means to revitalize these communities. 32 CFR Parts 90 and 91, 59 FR 16,123 (1994). The resultant environmental impacts can be mitigated by the acquiring entity under the direction of Federal, State and local regulatory authorities.

If only environmental considerations were determinative, the proposal with the least potential for causing adverse environmental impacts would be Alternative Reuse Scenario 1. This alternative, however, does not constitute the highest and best use of the Base property. While Alternative Reuse Scenario 1 presents a reasonable use which could benefit residents of the local community, this alternative does not take full advantage of the property's physical characteristics and past use, does not make maximum use of the existing infrastructure to support redevelopment, and does not have as high a potential for job creation.

Additionally, Alternative Reuse Scenario 1 does not provide the level of activity sought in the LRA's reuse plan and would not foster rapid economic recovery for this base closure community through redevelopment of the closed Base and job creation. Consequently, Alternative Reuse Scenario 1 does not constitute the highest and best use of the property. Similarly, Alternative Reuse Scenario 2 does not take full advantage of the potential for redevelopment of the Base property and is not as likely to achieve economic redevelopment of the Base as is Alternative Reuse Scenario 3.

Accordingly, Navy will dispose of the Charleston Naval Base in a manner that is consistent with the Charleston Naval Complex Redevelopment Authority's proposed reuse plan for the property.

Dated: May 7, 1996.

William J. Cassidy, Jr.,

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Conversion And Redevelopment).

[FR Doc. 96–11889 Filed 5–10–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3810–FF–M

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Storage and Disposition of Weapons-Usable Fissile Materials Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of extension of public comment period.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) announced the availability of the Storage and Disposition of Weapons-Usable Fissile Materials Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Storage and Disposition Draft PEIS) (DOE/EIS–0229–D) for public review and comment in the March 8, 1996, Federal Register (61 FR 9443). The Department is announcing that the public comment period which began on March 8, 1996 and was to close on May 7, 1996 has been extended to June 7, 1996, for the Storage and Disposition Draft PEIS.

DATES: The public is invited to submit written and oral comments on any or all portions of the Storage and Disposition Draft PEIS during the extension of the public comment period that began on March 8, 1996 and now continues until June 7, 1996. Comments postmarked after that date will be considered to the extent practicable. Comments submitted during the original public comment period do not have to be resubmitted. DOE's responses to comments received during the public comment period will be presented in the Storage and Disposition Final PEIS. The Department held eight public meetings to discuss and receive comments on the Storage and Disposition Draft PEIS during the period from March 26, 1996 through April 30, 1996.

ADDRESSES AND FURTHER INFORMATION: Written comments on the Storage and Disposition Draft PEIS should be mailed to the following address: DOE-Office of Fissile Materials Disposition, P.O. Box 23786, Washington, DC 20026–3786. Comments may also be submitted orally (to a recording machine) or by fax by calling 1–800–820–5156, or to the Office of Fissile Materials Disposition's INTERNET (World Wide Web) address at URL=http://web.fie.com/htdoc/fed/doe/fsl/pub/menu/any/index.htm.

Requests for further information concerning the Storage and Disposition Draft PEIS should be directed to: Office of Fissile Materials Disposition (MD–4), Attention: Storage and Disposition PEIS, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20585; by calling 1–800–820–5134; or by using the above INTERNET address.

Information regarding the DOE National Environmental Policy Act process should be directed to: Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance (EH–42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20585, by calling (202) 586–4600 or leaving a message at 1–800–472–2756.

DOE Public Reading Rooms

Copies of the draft Storage and Disposition PEIS, as well as technical data reports and other supporting documents, are available for public review at the following locations:

Albuquerque Operations Office

National Atomic Museum, 20358 Wyoming Boulevard, SE, Kirtland AFB, NM 87117, 505–284–3243

Amarillo Area Office

U.S. Department of Energy, Amarillo College, Lynn Library/Learning Center, 2201 South Washington, P.O. Box 447, Amarillo, TX 79178, 806–371–5400

U.S. DOE Reading Room, Carson County Library, 401 Main Street, P.O. Box 339, Panhandle, TX 79068, 806–537–3742

Chicago Operations Office

Office of Planning, Communications and EEO, U.S. Department of Energy, 9800 South Cass Avenue, Argonne, Il 60439, 708–252–2013