

FACT SHEET

Holloman F-16 Training Airspace Expansion Draft Environmental Impact Statement



The US Air Force has released its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) evaluating alternatives to expand airspace across southern New Mexico for Holloman Air Force Base F-16 pilot training. Although the Air Force acknowledges that current airspace is adequate for F-16 combat training, it would like to add more—enough to support an additional 10,000 training sorties annually and discharge of 15,000 flares and 15,000 bundles of chaff annually.

Alternatives 2 and 3 would add 4.5 million acres of Special Use Airspace, including the new Lobos Military Operations Area (MOA), for a total of 7 million acres of training area over the Gila Region, largely in places the Air Force has not used before. Areas affected would include: Silver City and the Mining District communities, Las Cruces, Truth or Consequences and Socorro; the Gila and Cibola National Forests; wilderness areas such as the Gila, Aldo Leopold, Robledo Mountains and Sierra de las Uvas; and local economic engines, such as the Gila Cliff Dwellings and Bosque del Apache Wildlife Refuge. These are places that are quiet and distinguished by a wealth of unique natural assets. People living in these areas will not receive economic benefits from intense training by F-16s coming from Holloman AFB but will experience extreme noise, pollution, the threat of catastrophic wild fire and severe impacts to outdoor-based economies.

Alternative 1 would expand the existing Talon MOA that Holloman currently uses over southeastern New Mexico—east of Alamogordo. Military aircraft have trained there intensively for a long time, benefitting the economies of Alamogordo and Otero County. The Air Force acknowledges that Alternative 1 meets its training needs with the fewest risks and impacts. We recognize the role of Holloman's F-16 pilot training mission to national defense. Alternative 1 best meets those needs.

The DEIS is available at <http://www.hollomanafbairspaceeis.com/>.

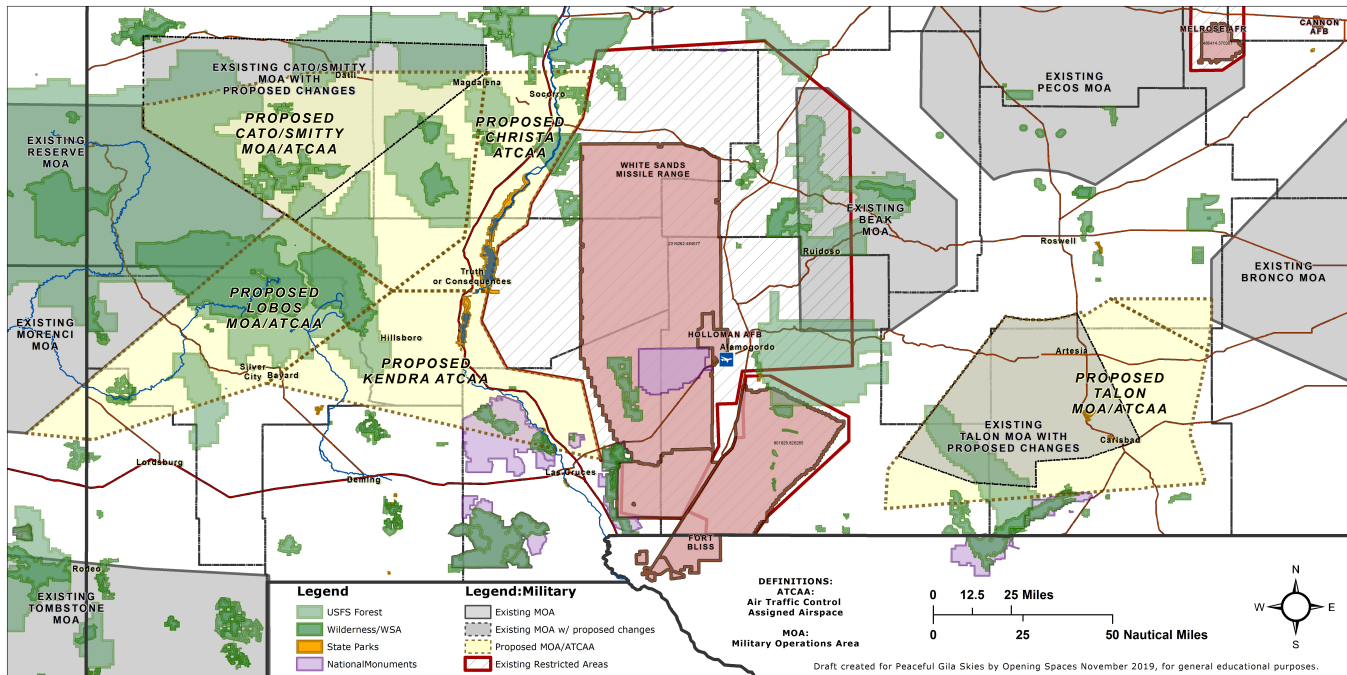
SPEAK UP TO OPPOSE F-16 TRAINING AIRSPACE OVER SOUTHWEST NEW MEXICO!
We need your help providing substantive comments on the DEIS

Submit your public comments by January 31, 2020
via Peaceful Gila Skies at <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/f-16>

Peaceful Gila Skies

A coalition of business and community leaders, sportsmen, veterans, conservation groups and concerned citizens, united in our goal of protecting the Gila Region from military aircraft training.

www.peacefulgilaskies.com | 575.538.8078 | peacefulgilaskies@gmail.com



NATURAL AREAS WITH PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES 1, 2 & 3 MOAS AND ATCAAS

Alternative 2 - SW New Mexico

- Creates large new Lobos MOA
- Reconfigures and expands Cato/Smitty MOA
- Adds other additional airspaces
- New airspace – 4.5 million acres
- Total airspace—7 million acres
- 10,000+ annual training sorties
- 15,000 flares/15,000 chaff released annually
- Low elevation and supersonic flights allowed in specified areas
- Wilderness affected—approximately 700,000 acres
- Substantial history of large-scale catastrophic forest fires
- Severe impact to local economies

Alternative 3 -SW & SE New Mexico

- Combines Alts 1 and 2
- Creates new Lobos MOA, reconfigures & expands Cato/Smitty MOA, expands Talon MOA, & creates new additional airspaces.
- Adds 5.5 million ac of new airspace
- Total airspace—9.4 million acres
- 10,000+ annual training sorties
- 15,000 flares/15,000 chaff released annually
- Low elevation & supersonic flights allowed in specified areas
- Wilderness areas affected—approx. 700,000 acres in NM
- Substantial history of large-scale catastrophic forest fires in SWNM
- Severe impact to local economies

Alternative 1 - SE New Mexico

- Expansion of existing military airspace
- New airspace - 1 million acres
- Total Talon expanded airspace - 2 million acres
- Long history of air combat training
- No Wilderness areas affected
- No history of catastrophic forest fires
- Positive impact to local economy
- Meets all F-16 training needs

Major Conclusions

- The Air Force states that its current airspace is adequate for its F-16 pilot training mission.
- Alternative 1 meets the needs of Holloman's F-16 pilot training mission without the severe economic and environmental impacts to southwest New Mexico and its unique natural and cultural resources.
- Alternatives 2 and 3 will cause significant negative impacts to southwest NM, putting the region at increased risk of wildfire from flares, increased noise, environmental effects from chaff, and negative impacts to tourism, retiree and local outdoor-based economies.
- Alternatives 2 and 3 are overkill for Holloman's F-16 training airspace needs.
- Alts 2 & 3 create massive military training airspace from Phoenix to eastern NM, attracting more training use in the future from other bases, including F-35s from Davis-Monthan that are four times louder than the F-16.