



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Air Force

Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Sentinel Deployment and Minuteman III Decommissioning and Disposal

AGENCY: Department of the Air Force, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Air Force (DAF) is issuing this notice to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to the Environmental Impact Statement for *Sentinel (Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) Program Deployment and Minuteman III Decommissioning and Disposal* (2023 EIS) and the May 2023 Record of Decision (ROD) which documented DAF's decision regarding sequential replacement of all land-based Minuteman III (MMIII) intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) in the United States with a technologically advanced Sentinel ICBM system on base at Francis Emroy Warren Air Force Base (AFB) (FE Warren) in Wyoming, Malmstrom AFB (Malmstrom) in Montana, and Minot AFB (Minot) in North Dakota and in the missile fields across five states. The SEIS will analyze potential environmental impacts associated with changes to the Proposed Action analyzed in the 2023 EIS. The "Sentinel Weapon System Program" ("Sentinel Program" from this point forward) addressed in the 2023 EIS and the May 2023 ROD was formerly known as the "GBSD." This SEIS is being prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 United States Code § 4321 *et seq.*), as amended by the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, the 2026 Department of War and the 2026 DAF NEPA Implementing Procedures. DAF is the lead agency for the Proposed Action. The Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency will be invited to participate as Cooperating Agencies. DAF will consult with, and obtain the comments

of, federally recognized Native American Tribes and federal agencies that have jurisdiction by law or special expertise related to the environmental analysis.

DATES: A public scoping period of 30 days will take place starting from the date of publication of this Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register*. DAF requests comments on alternatives, impacts, relevant information, studies, or analyses with respect to the Proposed Action. Comments should be submitted in writing to the website or address listed in the ADDRESSES section and will be accepted at any time during the SEIS process; however, to ensure DAF has sufficient time to consider public input, please submit within the 30-day scoping period. The Draft SEIS is anticipated to be provided for public comment in fall 2027. The Final SEIS is anticipated for publication in Spring 2028.

ADDRESSES: The project website at <http://www.sentinelseis.com> provides information on the SEIS and the scoping process and can be used to submit scoping comments electronically.

Scoping comments may also be submitted by email to SentinelSEIS@tetrattech.com, including “Sentinel SEIS” in the subject line, or by U.S. mail to Sentinel SEIS, c/o Tetra Tech, 711 Navarro Street, Suite 560, San Antonio, Texas 78215. SEIS inquiries and requests for digital or print copies of scoping materials are available upon request at the email or mailing address provided. For printed material requests, the standard U.S. Postal Service shipping timeline will apply. Members of the public who are interested in additional information about the project are encouraged to visit the project website.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For inquiries regarding accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or questions regarding the Proposed Action, scoping, and SEIS development, please contact: Air Force Global Strike Command Public Affairs, Lt. Col. Rodney E. Ellison Jr., at (318) 456-1305, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central Time, or by email to afgsc.paworkflow@us.af.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The overarching Purpose and Need for the SEIS remain the same as the 2023 EIS. The Purpose of the Proposed Action is to replace all land-

based MMIII missiles deployed in the continental United States with the Sentinel Program and to ensure the nation continues to maintain safe, secure, and effective ICBMs and associated infrastructure for the land-based leg of its nuclear weapons program in support of national security objectives. The Need for the Proposed Action is compliance with Public Law 115-232 and to ensure the United States continues to have effective, responsive, and resilient ICBMs and associated infrastructure for the land-based leg of its nuclear weapons program and the capacity and adaptability to manage and respond to shifting global requirements. The specific Need for the Proposed Action in this SEIS is that the original approach to recapitalizing all existing MMIII infrastructure could not be carried forward because key Sentinel Program milestones were no longer achievable due to cost and schedule risks associated with converting existing Launch Facility (LF) sites to Launch Silo (LS) sites. Pursuant to the July 2024 Acquisition Decision Memorandum directing the restructure of the Sentinel Program, DAF evaluated optimized deployment strategies to reduce execution risk, stabilize costs, and address the complexities of legacy infrastructure. DAF restructured its basing approach from legacy facility reutilization to the construction of modernized, new-built LS sites that are adaptable to future technological advancements.

The Proposed Action of this SEIS would include, at each missile field, plausible redesign, function, and relocation of workforce hubs to support construction efficiency; closure in place of a selected number of the current 150 MMIII LF sites; disposal of existing Missile Alert Facility (MAF) and LF sites; conversion of qualifying LF sites to LS sites; reutilization of MAF sites for Launch Center (LC) development, procurement of easements for new utility corridors, including fiber-optic cables not evaluated in the 2023 EIS; in-field MH-139 (Grey Wolf) helicopter refueling and rearming capability at selected LC sites; and construction of additional on-base facilities or infrastructure. Missile field-specific aspects of the Proposed Action include land acquisition through real estate transactions for new LS and LC sites at FE Warren and Minot; possible replacement of an existing LF site with an LC site at FE Warren; expansion northwest of the existing missile field at FE

Warren; expansion west and east of the existing missile field at Minot; reutilization of former 564th Missile Squadron geographic sites as swing space and establishment of temporary laydown areas at Malmstrom. The Proposed Action also includes up to 30 new LS sites at FE Warren, and up to 60 new LS sites at Malmstrom and Minot.

The SEIS will also analyze the No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, the DAF would continue to implement the May 2023 ROD. It would sequentially replace all land-based MMIII ICBMs and reutilize 80 percent of existing utility corridors while constructing only 20 percent of new utility corridors in newly established easements with a technologically advanced Sentinel ICBM system on base and in the missile fields at FE Warren, Malmstrom, and Minot. Although the No Action Alternative presumes the present course of action identified in the May 2023 ROD, the DAF will compare the impacts of the Proposed Action to the baseline conditions identified in the 2023 EIS for purposes of assessing the environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives in the SEIS. The No Action Alternative is not a reasonable alternative because it has been deemed unachievable due to cost, schedule, siting, and engineering constraints.

DAF has determined that the Proposed Action has the potential to be located within a floodplain. Thus, the Proposed Action is subject to the requirements and objectives of Executive Order (E.O.) 11988, "Floodplain Management." This NOI serves as the public notice directed by EO 11988 to encourage early and meaningful public participation.

(Authority: 42 United States Code 4321, *et seq.*, and Department of War and Department of Air Force National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures.)

Crystle C. Poge,

Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.