

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

### **Conservation Forum**

**Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base; Fort Worth, Texas**

**Tuesday, June 12, 2007**

**4:00 p.m.**

Lieutenant Keith Morris, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB), welcomed attendees to the installation to discuss conservation partnership opportunities.

Attendees introduced themselves. They included:

#### **Elected Officials Present**

Keith Bailey	Councilmember	City of Benbrook
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#### **Military Officers Present**

Capt. Ian McIntyre	Commanding Officer	NAS JRB
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Lt. Keith Morris	Air Traffic Control Facility Officer	NAS JRB
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#### **Others Present**

Susan Armstrong	Executive Director	Connemara Conservancy Foundation
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Fletcher Clark	Transportation Planner	NCTCOG
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Wes Cloud	Facilities Planning Manager	NAS JRB
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Don Ives	Assistant City Manager	City of White Settlement
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Randall Heye	Transportation Planner	NCTCOG
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Renee Lamb	Director of Transportation Services	Tarrant County
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Michael Mallonee	Transportation Planner	NCTCOG
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Robert Pope	Board of Directors	Connemara Conservancy Foundation
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Barbara Ragland	District Director	Congresswoman Granger's Office
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Norman Robbins	Manager of Community Relations	Lockheed Martin
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James Sharp	--	The Trust for Public Land
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Mike Sims	Senior Program Manager	NCTCOG
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Dennis Statler	Airfield Manager	NAS JRB
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Melonye Whitson	--	Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce
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Rachel Wiggins	Senior Transportation Planner	NCTCOG
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Rachel Wiggins, NCTCOG, provided an overview of the role that is played by the Texas Military Preparedness Commission (TMPC). She explained that TMPC is comprised of thirteen commissioners appointed by the Governor of Texas. Former base commander Captain Paul Paine serves as the Commissioner representing Fort Worth. The commissioners meet quarterly to review issues related to military preservation throughout Texas. TMPC publishes an Annual Master Plan which includes recommendations related to all military facilities in Texas. Summary information on each base includes history, current mission, changes anticipated due to Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005, and capacity utilization. TMPC also reviews the statewide impact of military operations in Texas. In 2005, Department of Defense military expenditures in Texas totaled \$31.8 billion with an associated economic impact of \$75 billion.

Mike Sims provided an overview of the on-going Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) surrounding NAS JRB. He explained that the study area is based on noise contours that have been established by the Navy to delineate areas where certain land uses are not compatible with military operations. Mike noted that economic impact of the base and Lockheed Martin is estimated at \$4.2 billion annually. A calendar of events was shown and Mike explained that the study recommendations would be brought to each participating city's council in September. These recommendations will relate to elements such as zoning, subdivision regulations, building code, et cetera. In addition, deed restrictions, conservation easements, and land acquisitions may be recommended.

James Sharp, The Trust for Public Land (TPL), provided an overview of TPL's role in green-printing to identify stakeholder priorities for conservation. He noted that TPL's focus is on providing quality of life in urban areas through land conservation efforts balanced with development needs. James noted that TPL works only with willing landowners and partners who agree to care for the land as a public amenity in the long-term. He went on to note that TPL has completed more than 3,300 conservation projects in the last ten years, totaling 2.2 million acres, with an associated conservation value of \$4.6 billion. TPL has also raised more than \$24 billion nationwide to conserve land.

James reviewed the conservation visioning process utilized by TPL, which includes constituency building, greenprinting, conservation finance, and action planning. He provided a detailed description of greenprinting as a process that utilizes geographic information systems (GIS) to collect weighted stakeholder priorities on a map and generate visual models of areas that should

be targeted for conservation efforts. Local goals, such as the protection of flood zones and riparian areas, can be visually depicted on maps using color values (i.e. red for critical conservation zones). James noted that the greenprinting process has been accomplished in the southeastern subregion of NCTCOG's 16-county region, through the leadership of Vision North Texas. Mike Sims noted that a western subregion workshop will be held on June 30, 2007 in Aledo and reported that location details would be emailed to attendees following the meeting.

Mike Sims provided a review of lessons learned from other regions throughout the nation where similar encroachment partnering projects have been undertaken. He thanked the National Park Service for sharing their PowerPoint slides although they were unavailable to attend the event. Mike provided a land use map of western Tarrant County and illustrated that much land around Lake Worth and the Trinity River is open and being preserved today. He also noted that additional land is vacant today and may be appropriate for conservation partnering. Mike noted that the process is just beginning in Fort Worth as partners are identified from local governments, non-governmental organizations, and the Department of Defense.

Mike reviewed examples of buffering programs being conducted under the Army's Compatible Use Buffering (ACUB) program, including Colorado Springs, New Jersey, Fort Bliss in Texas, and Fort Sill in Oklahoma. Mike noted that Fort Sill had completed a very robust analysis, including buffer areas, anticipated costs, and approximate acreage involved.

Mike reviewed two potential project types to be considered surrounding NAS JRB. In the first example, he noted that the following conditions would exist: an area with a high concentration of single family housing is identified in non-compliant noise and safety zones; it is determined that the housing includes a high concentration of rental property, code violations, and tax delinquency; and it is determined that the area has good or potentially good frontage road access. If this area is found in a zone where DOD has a goal of decreasing incompatible buffer land uses and the local government has the goal of transitioning to an employment-related land use, then the encroachment partnering program could be used to acquire parcels from willing landowners, assemble and re-plat those parcels, and move forward with a compatible employment-related land use.

In the second example, he noted that the following conditions would exist: an area with a high concentration of single family housing is identified in non-compliant noise and safety zones; it is

determined that the housing includes a high concentration of rental property, code violations, and tax delinquency; and it is determined that the area is adjacent to or nearby natural or park resources. If this area is found in a zone where DOD has a goal of decreasing incompatible buffer land uses and the local government has the goal of transitioning to park and natural resource land uses, then the encroachment partnering program could be used to acquire parcels from willing landowners, assemble and re-plot those parcels, and move forward with a compatible park or natural resource related land use.

Mike then opened the floor for discussion about locations where these projects might be feasible. Robert Pope, Connemara Conservancy, noted that a conservation value would need to be calculated for the parcels in question based on IRS tax code. Wes Cloud, NAS JRB, noted that protection of wetlands under flight paths would be an excellent starting place for encroachment partnering. Lieutenant Morris noted that there are also many impacts on the airfield based on flood plain impacts west of the base. In response to these issues, Mike Sims noted that this may be relevant information for the JLUS Policy Committee to review at their June and July meetings. Councilman Keith Bailey, City of Benbrook, agreed that this information should be taken to the JLUS Policy Committee. Barbara Ragland noted that land conservation related to the Barnett Shale should also be included in the analysis, and that Streams and Valleys should be contacted to determine how their master plan for the Trinity River could be used to identify additional partnership opportunities. Don Ives, City of White Settlement, noted that the Corps of Engineers did a report on drainage in Farmers Branch Creek. He indicated that this is a potential partnership that the City of White Settlement would be interested in pursuing. Lieutenant Morris noted that this would be an excellent partnership to pursue and Don agreed to send background data on impacted parcels to Rachel Wiggins at NCTCOG. Wes Cloud noted that employment-related partnerships might be appropriate north of the runway in Accident Potential Zone 1.

Mike Sims wrapped up the meeting by noting that the following four actions would be taken: (1) NCTCOG staff will work with NAS JRB and the City of White Settlement to fast-track a potential partnership related to Farmers Branch Creek; (2) NCTCOG staff will bring a brief update to the June meeting of the JLUS Policy Committee and a full report with enhanced maps to the July meeting; (3) NCTCOG staff will follow up with The Trust for Public Land between the June and July JLUS Policy Committee meetings to work on potential partnership details; and (4) NCTCOG staff will work with NAS JRB to determine next steps related to potential partnerships.