January 28, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

Mesilla Valley Audubon is one of the chapters represented by New Mexico Audubon Council, whose comments you have already received (and are attached here again for reference) with regard to the draft environmental impact statement for the proposed expansion of F-16 training airspace out of Holloman AFB to extend over southwestern New Mexico.

As our chapter and its members are located in the directly affected southwestern part of the state, we wish to reiterate our support for the comments submitted by New Mexico Audubon Council and encourage the Air Force to select Alternative 1.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Elaine Stachera Simon
President, Mesilla Valley Audubon Society
New Mexico Audubon Council
Representing Four Local Chapters of the National Audubon Society in New
Mexico, Conserving and restoring natural ecosystems, focusing on birds,
other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth’s
biological diversity

January 3, 2020

Holloman Airspace EIS
501 Butler Farm Rd, Suite H
Hampton, VA 23666

Submitted electronically through:
http://www.hollomanafbairspacecis.com/Comments.aspx

The New Mexico Audubon Council, represents over 6,000 members in New Mexico and is
very concerned about the future of natural habitats in New Mexico. Our members birdwatch
and recreate in many of the natural areas of New Mexico, including the Gila and Aldo Leopold
Wilderness Areas, the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument and adjacent
National Forest and BLM areas. We are particularly concerned about the habitat these areas
provide for birds and other wildlife.

We are writing to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the
Holloman Air Force Base proposal to expand F-16 training airspace over southern New
Mexico.

The role that Holloman Air Force base plays in our national security cannot be understated.
The men and women stationed at Holloman are some of the nation’s most courageous, and
they are deserving of our respect. However, Holloman’s proposed airspace expansion would
unnecessarily threaten some of New Mexico’s most cherished public lands and wild places.

We oppose Alternatives 2 and 3 because of their potential to damage our quality of life, health
and local economies. These alternatives threaten our quality of life, health and local economies
by putting our communities, public lands, watersheds and wildlife at risk from extreme noise,
wildfire and environmental contamination.

Extreme noise from training operations will disturb the peace and quiet of rural communities
and national forests, monuments, and wilderness areas, affecting our retiree, tourism and
outdoor recreation economies. Extreme noise has also been shown to disrupt breeding
behavior in many species of migratory birds, including a number of threatened and
endangered species that are found in the proposed expansion area. Noise from over-flights
will also startle non-avian wildlife disrupting breeding and feeding behaviors.

Dropping of flares will increase wildfire risk in an area that’s already vulnerable to
catastrophic wildfire and lacks adequate resources and access for firefighting. The use of chaff
will pollute our environment and potentially affect public health.

The future of Holloman Air Force Base is not at risk, since the DEIS itself states that the current
airspace is already adequate. We must not sacrifice the historically rich, culturally important
and exceptionally beautiful Gila Wilderness — the first wilderness area ever designated in the
United States — or any other tranquil places in southwestern New Mexico that are critical to state and local economies.

The Air Force acknowledges that Alternative 1 (expansion and reconfiguration of the Talon military operation area east of Alamogordo) meets its future training needs with the fewest risks and impacts. We urge you to select Alternative 1.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this proposal. Please keep us informed of future opportunities to review and comment of the process as it goes forward.

Sincerely,

Thomas Jervis, Ph.D., President
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