

1 **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

2 The principal conclusions of this programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) are:

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- 4 (1) Execution of an integrated Chemical and Biological Defense Program (CBDP) designed
5 to protect our soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen from evolving chemical and
6 biological threats they may encounter on the battlefield (Alternative 1, the Preferred
7 Alternative) will not result in significant unmitigable adverse environmental impacts. As
8 the program grows to meet evolving threats, this PEIS will be beneficial for the CBDP as
9 a single reference source for up-to-date National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
10 documentation, providing information on and analyses of both the biological and the
11 chemical defense programs. It will provide a basis for tiering of future environmental
12 analyses under the CBDP, which will facilitate future government decision making. It
13 will have further benefits for the public, sharing information on features of the CBDP that
14 demonstrate the Department of Defense (DoD) commitment to protect the environment
15 and to ensure public safety during the execution of this operationally mandated program.
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- 17 (2) Continuation of current CBDP operations as described in and covered by existing
18 environmental analyses (Alternative 2, the No Action Alternative) cannot reasonably be
19 expected to improve the efficiency of analyzing future CBDP activity environmental
20 impacts and would not inform the public about government decision making as well as
21 the Preferred Alternative.
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- 23 (3) Neither the proposed action nor the No Action Alternative is likely to cause significant
24 adverse environmental impacts. However, the proposed action is preferred to achieve the
25 benefits cited above for the integrated program, designed to protect against evolving
26 threats.
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- 28 (4) The impacts of existing CBDP activities at the example sites on environmental attributes
29 all were found to be negligible to minor, and mitigable. This suggests that the scale of
30 the enumerated activities can be increased without causing significant, unmitigable
31 environmental and health impacts. However, NEPA considerations will continue to be
32 addressed as necessary for site-specific proposed actions, including both construction and
33 operations that are part of the CBDP. Also, future activities not identified in this PEIS
34 may require both site-specific and programmatic NEPA documentation.
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36 Current and proposed CBDP research, development, and acquisition (RDA) activities have been
37 and will likely continue to be performed without significant environmental impacts. The most
38 severe potential effects associated with CBDP RDA activities are predicted to be minor; to date,
39 any observed effects have been insignificant. Potential risks to CBDP laboratory workers, public
40 health, and the environment are and will be mitigated by adherence to the benchmark guidelines
41 and regulations listed in Section 2.3 of this PEIS and by following appropriate standard operating
42 procedures similar to those presented in Section 2.4.
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