

**Electronic Mail
Received During
Draft Environmental Assessment
Public Comment Period**

From: Vickie Dye [vdye1@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 9:33 AM
To: robin.d.divine@SAIC.COM
Subject: Castner Range

To whom it may concern:

I object strongly to locating the Border Patrol facility on Castner Range...the mountains deserve our protection for future generations.

Vickie Dye...a Northeast resident

From: trudy mccrary [trudym@constant.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 3:17 PM
To: robin.d.divine@SAIC.COM
Subject: Castner Range

Having lived on the edge of Hondo Pass in El Paso for the past 33 years, which runs along Castner Range, I beg of you not to ruin that beautiful area with its majestic mountains behind it, by letting the Border Patrol build anything on it. Castner Range is unbelievable beautiful with its poppies each spring on which your eyes can feast forever. If anything it should be made into a Park or annexed to the Park area, but not build a buch of concrete buildings on it, or whatever the Border Patrol has in mind. Thank you for listening to me and my concern and please let your conscience guide you carefully in this delicate decision.

Sincerely, a taxpaying senior citizen

From: Tom Moore [tmoore@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 6:22 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: border patrol facility

Of course that gorgeous, still unspoiled section of the mountain that defines our city should remain just that... unspoiled. There is still ample land available to the Border Patrol elsewhere. It's really a no-brainer.

Tom Moore
2401 Mayfield Terrace
El Paso

From: WCJ749@aol.com
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 9:27 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range development

I am wholeheartedly opposed to using the Castner Range for the new Border Partrol facility. Research has already proven that it is a rare home for 10 species of plants not found anywhere else in Texas (according to Dr. Richard Worthington of UTEP). It eats up a piece of unique and pristine land, one of the few El Paso. As a native El Pasoan (and not a resident of Northeast), I have always breathed a sigh of relief and awe everytime I pass through the Northeast/Transmountain area because of the raw beauty of the land. We (as a society) have a tendency to consider our land as a throw-away resource...and here in El Paso I think we have a mentality to build on anything that is affordable. It's revealing that Border Patrol officials are leaning toward the site because it its priced at such a low cost...(low enough to include removing the unexploded remnants left there).

In a nutshell, I vote we leave Castner Range alone. It's unique. It's valuable because of the plantlife. It is a symbol of the beauty of our area. It's rare. Build somewhere else. We need its beauty in tact.

Tina Yetter Jones
422-0534

From: Timothy Fulmer [tfulmer@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 12:09 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: CASTNER RANGE

Hello,

Concern over the fate of Castner Range grows as the amount of land available for El Paso's growth diminishes. Instead of piece-mailing the issue with each planned project, the entire area should proactively be brought to discussion and decision now. Public comment should include incense at haphazard governmental development of virgin land without a master plan for the entire Castner Range. A master plan for the entire area should be developed and placed for public comment prior to moving on any portion of development. Without a master plan, as the Department of the Army disposes of individual parcels of surplus land, the area will become a textbook example of "poor planning" that will stand for generations as a testament to those who allowed it to occur. The Department of the Army certainly is not known for aesthetically pleasing development, and as such the master plan should be done by an unbiased professional with NO basis on local or regional political agenda. The Department of the Army has a fiduciary and ethical responsibility to see that this occurs.

I believe that the ultimate development of this land is inevitable. Local developers are anxious to get the land opened so run of the mill, high density angular block face development can occur. Currently all the land is good for is looking at as you drive by on the freeway... you can't go into the desert there, and if it was cleaned of ordinance and made into some sort of park, it would be full of people (kind of takes away from the whole concept of DESERT!). If one wants to experience the desert, we are surrounded by thousands of square miles of it. Certainly a portion of it, say the poppy field area, could be set aside as a park.

Any development on Caster Range west of 54 should include no institutional or commercial development. In my opinion it should be like no existing area of El Paso. It should be developed as low density, negative impact homes that alter the view of the mountains as little as possible. Consideration should be given to layout, form, and color, with the intent of negative impact. The architectural design guidelines for the area should be fashioned similar to those of well planned areas such as north Santa Fe, New Mexico, resulting in the public continuing to enjoy a relatively unimpeded view of the Franklin Mountains while the inevitable development occurs.

These plans and guidelines should be developed by the Army as the current land owner, agreed on by the public, and strictly adhered to as the surplus land is sold. The plans and guidelines will serve to control those with the political influence necessary to cause the Army to convey parcels of the land for projects that are contrived with no thought given to long range plans, and will ultimately result in an area that most effectively meets the needs and desires of those concerned.

Tim Fulmer, P.E., R.P.L.S.
ESSCO International, Inc
915-594-7343

From: dbeene@thc.state.tx.us
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2003 2:15 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Three Alt INS Facilities

The draft document includes a copy of the THC consultation letter recommending an archeological survey in Appendix B; another includes a portion of the archeological survey, but not in it's entirety and without critical data.

Recommend including:

THC correspondence from 4/10/02, draft report comments w/eligibility determination,
" " 6/13/02, final report accepted, and
Formal cover of Archeological Report with publ. data, authors, etc. & all crucial data including recommendations

debra l. beene, archaeologist, texas historical commission

From: TAYLOR MOORE [taylormoor8432@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 6:06 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Cc: Stan Stack
Subject: CASTNER RANGE - Border Patrol Facility

Ms. Divine,

The failure of your company to notice that building a huge Border Patrol facility at the location depicted below will create an adverse environmental impact says much about your company. Will splitting the Castner Range into bits and pieces present more business opportunities for your firm? Will the reputation that your organization can be counted on to ignore the obvious bring you more contracts?

The photo inserted below is a view from Transmountain Road toward the proposed Border Patrol site. Please note the view from the freeway which will disappear. Note the poppies. Tell me where else in the region they reside in such abundance. And explain, if you can do so with a straight face, how the precedent that will be set by breaking up the Castner Range is of no environmental consequence to our region.

There is also a cumulative effect. We have many more than our share of environmental disasters that have been heaped upon our community--not the least of which is represented by the miles and miles of chain link fence that have turned our valley into a war zone.

Please spare us any more of your "science". It's time for common sense to prevail.

Taylor Moore
7108 Portugal
El Paso, TX 79912
915/581-3813

From: Varscheer10@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 4:40 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol Facility

Hi Robin,

My name is Tara Dusenbury and I am a senior at Chapin High School in El Paso, Texas. I am an Advanced Placement Environmental Systems student and our teacher, Mr. Dillon, made it aware to us that the first site for the Border Patrol Facility would be at Castner Range. I don't agree with having this facility in our beautiful Franklin

Mountains. I know that not only my family, but other families as well can't wait to see the beautiful poppies and other wildlife plants that the Franklin Mountains bring to El Paso. If we build this facility that is going to take up so much space, we are endangering wildlife plants and animals. We are endangering poppies, silver puffs, canyon morning glory that can only be found in El Paso out of all of Texas. What about the animals that live in these mountains? We are invading their habitat. I also think that at location one the traffic would be too hectic and there would be noise pollution to the animals in the Franklin Mountains. Please consider using site 2 or site 3 for the Border Patrol Facility. We need to save what beauty we have in El Paso. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,
Tara Dusenbury

Subject: Proposed location for Border Patrol site
Author: "Maxx" <SMTP:tallen@elp.rr.com>
Date: 10/22/2003 4:27 PM

Dear Sir,

As a long time resident of Northeast El Paso, I would like to thank you for considering the site near the Texas Department of Transportation, on Hondo pass as a location for your facilities. I think you moving your operations to this part of the city would be a win win situation. The businesses in this part of town would benefit from the economic impact that your employees would contribute to the area and you would benefit from being in the most spacious and beautiful parts of the city. I realize the last statement was bias, I love the northeast and I'm sure if you move your facilities here you would fall in love with it also. Thanks for your time.

sincerely
Tammie-Maria Allen

From: Tina Johnson [starLoner@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 8:45 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Site 2 as preferred site

To: Robin Divine, SAIC 10/14/03
From: Sylvia Varnedoe (H.S. Senior)
SJane1804@aol.com

I believe that Castner Range would not be a desired site for the new facility to most residents of El Paso in that area. I have noticed that Castner Range has more residential area than Sites 2 and 3. The species population, as far as plants and wildlife in Castner Range are higher in numbers than in Sites 2 and 3. Because of the freeway and

residential area, how will you know the impact on the area won't actually affect nearby residents? I have read the recent article, Poppies vs. progress, on this issue and I agree with Stan Stack about the development of other agencies, government entities, and corporations who might be influenced to also build facilities in that site. I understand that this site does provide for a lot of space and was once used to test military ordnance, but it seems to me that people prefer Site 2 because it is out of residential area and not many plants and wildlife will later be forced to adapt to the new habitat and facility. Site 2 has remained vacant and unused and traffic flow is light to moderate.

It is stated that because Castner Range is located on a formerly artillery firing range, that it has the potential to possess unexploded ordnance hazards as well as contamination in the soil compared to Site 2 being undeveloped and unlikely to contain hazardous or regulated wastes or materials. The vegetation on Castner Range consists of 100 to 150 species of plant while Sites 2 and 3 support 20 to 25 species of plants. It is also stated that overall species diversity will likely be less than Site 1 because of the plant species diversity and complexity of habitat structure. These comparisons show that Castner Range is home to many plants and animals.

Building a facility and removing everything like habitats of animals and plants that are found nowhere else in Texas would only make things worse. As Dr. Richard Worthington stated, what was once there would now be gone, if those plants and animals were to be removed. I see Castner Range as being very valuable and would not be benefitted but only benefit those who occupy the site or the facility itself. One question I ask is if there are any in-depth studies available to show the effects of the animals in the future if the facility was developed on Castner Range?

The cost for clean-up in Castner Range cost millions of dollars. I'm assuming that it takes more money to clean up that site more than the other two because it was formerly a firing range. If the money is not available and if millions are still needed, I think another site should be the Plan B. Although Castner Range may be a desired site for a new facility to some officials, the concerns about the site are mainly the effects of wildlife, animals, residential area, or future impact on the environment in general.

I think I may have the same viewpoints as some people who have already spoken out. I am concerned about the environmental impact and effects of the site being occupied. I am not totally opposed to the building of the facility in Castner Range if it is entirely true that it won't affect a great deal of wildlife, plants, and nearby residents. I think officials should reconsider what could come of this situation and hopefully hear what the community has to say. I have brought to you my concerns and viewpoints on this issue. I appreciate your time and I hope you can consider this e-mail as well as others from people in this community. Thank You.

High School Senior Student,
Sylvia Varnedoe

From: Mark W Jensen [jenmess@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 6:11 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol Site on Caster Range

Dear Reader:

I am writing to vehemently oppose the building of Border Patrol Facilities on Castner Range. This area should be annexed into the park, not allowed to be destroyed by the Border Patrol. There are two other sights more suited for this facility and both are easily accessed by major thoroughfares, which is the only argument I have heard for using the Castner site. The area is not stable and has proven very dangerous in the past due to unexploded ordinance from the large amount of munitions testing in the past.

I'm still trying to wrap my mind around the idea that I have to use my valuable time to defend this pristine area and cannot believe this sight was ever even considered in the for place, for it is like no other. It is on the very outskirts of the Franklin Mountains State Park, which is the largest urban state park in the country. This area has unique beauty and interests for all people: hiking, photography, wildness uncharted and unheard of so near a large city.

I urge you, please do the right thing and protect the wide open space near the Wilderness Park Museum! There are other, better, options available without spoiling this rare jewel we are blessed with in El Paso.

Sincerely,
Susie Jensen
Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue, Inc.

From: Sue Brannon [sue_brannon@YAHOO.COM]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 9:28 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

Castner Range should NOT be developed further. Find another location for the Border Patrol facility. The area should be added to Franklin State Park because once it is developed, it is destroyed forever.

Sue Brannon

From: Steve Crye [steve@crye.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 9:55 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com; mmcrye@elp.rr.com
Subject: Public Comment from El Paso re: BP Facility on Castner Range

To: Robin Divine
SAIC
4242 Woodcock Avenue
Suite 150
San Antonio, TX 78228
Robin.d.divine@saic.com <mailto:Robin.d.divine@saic.com>

From: Stephen T. Crye
8516 Mountain Ash
El Paso, TX 79904
steve@crye.com <mailto:steve@crye.com>

Re: Border Patrol on Castner Range

I write this letter knowing full well that the decision to locate the Border Patrol facility on Caster Range was made behind closed doors over a year ago. Although most of the sheep-like citizenry of the USA have been fooled into believing their input is heard and considered when bureaucrats call for “public comments”, I have no such illusions.

I am, however, somewhat amazed by the consistency with which the government will choose the worst possible option when given the opportunity. Locating the BP facility in the pristine desert of Castner Range is breathtakingly stupid. Numerous other sites on already spoiled land abound within a 5-mile radius. The cost of those sites is trivial compared to the budget of the DHS.

In addition to all the well-documented problems with rare wildlife and plant life, jumping the gun on the TPW’s efforts to acquire the land for the Franklin Mountains State Park and the noise and congestion foisted on a part of the city previously known for its tranquility and quiet, amateur astronomers like me dread the blinding glare that the facility’s lights will bring to the relatively dark skies of my neighborhood – one of the primary reasons I choose to live here.

But, I won’t waste any more of your time or mine – as I said, my sources confirm that the decision was taken long ago.

Want to prove me wrong? Want to be able to call me a cynic and show me that I am needlessly bitter and negative? All you have to do is not put the BP facility on Caster Range.

Fat chance ...
With extreme disgust,
Stephen T. Crye

From: JASPEA@aol.com
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2003 12:56 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: From Stephanie :El Paso comment on Castner Range Land and the Border Patrol

El Paso is a desert city that is losing much of it's natural gifts to progress in the form of concrete and devastation. One constant that we have had are the mountains and a beauty that has been growing over time have been the poppies in that bloom on Castner Range around the Border patrol buildings there. Those buildings seem so very out of place and destructive to the naturally beautiful landscape. The flowers that bloom may be the only real experience El Paso children have with blooming wild flowers unlike other places where they are prevalent. Our city embraces them and we find joy in them and a oneness with nature, our creator and no matter what hardship each person may be under the poppies make us feel rich and make us feel loved and valued because they are there. Please do not take them from us to build more Border Patrol facilities. Part of the peace that on the border we seek can be given to us through this beautiful natural gift which may be hard for someone in a green place to understand but this beautiful gift of the poppies will help to raise El Paso up and others who see them. Please protect us in El Paso by not harming our poppies on Castner Range land.

As a little girl I sat in the poppies one yer when my father was in Vietnam and I felt that was my first experience of communing with God which I never forgot as we traveled with the military even when we lived in Hawaii. I remembered feeling God as I sat with the poppies. Please protect them.

Thank you.
Stephanie Mielke Limon

From: Stellamc102@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 4:13 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range
Let's not be building ANYTHING on Castner Range. Let's keep it natural.
In a letter to the EP Times Editor dated Aug 20, 1999, Maj Gen Gavin, then Fort Bliss Commander, stated that it is military property and that "in its present condition with

unexploded ordnance, cleanup for any use is prohibitive because of the hundreds of millions of dollars it would cost to be able to release it..."
Go build someplace else.

From: SStack5114@aol.com
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 11:25 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range EA

Stanley R. Stack
3421 Montridge Ct.
El Paso, Tx 79904

Robin Divine,

I am writing to you in response to the Draft EA issued concerning the Border Patrol request for land on Castner Range.

I believe the conclusion drawn in that document to be incorrect. 40CFR 1508.27 defines as significant use of land for a major Federal action in proximity to parklands or ecologically critical areas. 40CFR 1508.8 says indirect effects include induced changes in the pattern of land use. Both these points argue for an EIS on their merits.

The Council on Environmental Quality says an EA should take no more than three months. The length of time to accomplish this one is far longer, pointing to the difficulties involved in assessing significance. An EIS is required to assess this.

El Paso has ongoing stakeholder involvement meetings held by the PSB to determine proper land use planning in relation to large properties. Surely the Federal government must have guidelines concerning proper land use planning. It would be appropriate to consider the use of such a large tract of land such as Castner Range in its entirety before breaking it up into tiny independent uses.

The INS, though undergoing change recently, has its own guidelines for performing an EA or an EIS. It appears in violation of its own restrictions by not performing an EIS for this proposed action. In section 3.5.1.2 of the INS NEPA Guidebook it asks the questions if the action is compatible with land use plans for this specific site. The answer is no, this action is not compatible. Does the action affect an area that has been considered for protection by state, regional or local government? Yes, it does. Then an EIS should be performed. In the INS NEPA Guidebook, it suggests that if a public meeting has become necessary is a strong indicator that the action is controversial and would merit an EIS (6.6.2). Section 7.4 of that same Guidebook says that actions that normally require an EIS are major Federal actions such as construction or leasing of a new INS facility.

It seems clear to me that at a minimum, an EIS is required.

There are, however, other possibilities. The selection of site #2 as the preferred site would be one that that would seem not to be as controversial, nor significant, and therefore would be the best choice. Please choose site #2. It seems that the chance of finding available land of the size needed for this BP Station available is slim, unless land

on Biggs Army Airfield, Ft. Bliss, or other Federal land is considered in depth. Please consider beginning anew in your search for possible sites for this Station.

Inform me of your decision and provide me with all reports relevant to this matter.

Sincerely,
Stanley R. Stack
915-564-0515

From: Sonya Vargo [crazybatgirl_22@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 12:30 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: ES

Dear Robin Divine,

It has come to my attention that you plan to build a Border Patrol facility near Gateway 54. I feel very strongly that this is a bad idea, and that you should consider the consequences. I attend Chapin High School and many of my fellow students feel that this is a bad idea. I am currently taking an Environmental Systems class, and have discovered that the consequences of this facility will have a bad impact on our home. A few of the reasons that I feel it is a bad idea is, because it will cause more traffic in that area, is a threat to the surrounding habitat, and will cause a chain reaction of other businesses to build in that area.

Traffic is already hectic enough in El Paso; we don't need more traffic in that area. It is a busy Gateway and very dangerous. With cars coming in and out all the time it is susceptible to accidents. We have had many accidents in that area and by keeping it safe as possible would be very appreciated. Traffic is something that is not a big thing but can have a big impact. Keeping the Border Patrol center somewhere away from traffic would be better than the Gateway 54. El Paso does not have very many animals in the area and by building the facility in that area you keep those away from their natural Habitat. Becoming a limiting factor to the animals food and lifestyles. There are deer, rabbits, coyotes, and other organisms that live in the area; building this facility will scare them away and prevent them from being happy in their natural home. Not only are we running out of water, but to run out of our natural species that are only found here is really pushing the limit. Many businesses have tried to find an area to build their stores and etc. By building this facility you are encouraging them to go ahead and build there too. This creating more traffic, and preventing more organisms to leave. This is a major problem that you have obviously over-looked. More businesses mean more space and less animals.

I feel very strongly about my opinion and I think that you should consider this. Do it for El Paso and the Poppies.

Sincerely,
Sonya Vargo
Chapin High School, Environmental Systems class, Mr. T. Dillion

From: Shaya Seward [butterfingers667@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 11:01 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Regarding Border Patrol Station- Against Site 1

Dear Mrs. Divine,

I am strongly against the Castner Range Site for the new Border Patrol Facility. Building on this proposed site would hurt the natural environment in that area and the people living in the residential community to the southwest along Hondo Pass Road.

This particular site is home to more than ten species of plants that cannot be found anywhere else in Texas. Building of the facility in this area could lead to the extinction of these species. The facility would also cause loss of habitat for many creatures, including the Texas lyre snake and the Texas horned lizard.

The people living near the proposed site would have to deal with increases in sound and air pollution. They would also lose their beautiful natural scenery.

Although the new Border Patrol Facility is essential, it would be detrimental to the environment and the people if built on the Castner Range Site.

Respectfully,

Shaya Seward
224 Sheridan Rd.
El Paso, TX 79906
[Butterfingers667@yahoo.com](mailto:butterfingers667@yahoo.com)

From: Daydreamer0804@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2003 7:25 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Concern with "Poppies vs. Progress"

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am an Environmental Systems Student at Chapin High School in Northeast El Paso. Your article came to my attention when my teacher handed out copies of the article "Poppies vs. Progress." I most definitely wanted to give my opinion on the matter. I am all for progress but not when it comes to the expense of the environment or the people living in it.

I agree that the Border Patrol could benefit from a central site, but I don't agree that Castner Range is the appropriate place for that. I do not personally live there but I have friends that live in the neighborhood and it's absolutely beautiful. I am concerned with the

aesthetics of the area. I have read the argument for that but I believe it should really be up to the people who own houses and land in that area because it will be their property that is affected. Noise is another factor that arises when building such a large facility, noise pollution might frighten away whatever wildlife we have left in the after Interstate 54. Other concerns come to mind like the existing plant life that will have to be replanted over time, but those are my two main concerns.

I wouldn't want to impose such a large construction project on anyone's neighborhood but I am particularly concerned with Castner Range, because it has managed to maintain a shred of the natural environment that much of El Paso has lost, and now it may be lost too. Thank you for your time.

Shade' Brown
Chapin High School Magnet Student

From: Sandy Scheu [sscheu@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 6:24 PM
To: robin.d.divine@SAIC.COM
Subject: environmental issue

PLEASE, PLEASE don't put the Border Patrol project at Castner Range. I have only been a resident of El Paso for four years and can see the devastation of the mountains.....
Enough is enough. I have been to the Wilderness State Park and to see the Poppies in bloom.

Please don't ruin this! Thank you for reading,
S. Scheu
East El Paso

From: Brunk, Samuel [sbrunk@utep.edu]
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2003 9:30 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

To Whom it May Concern:

I am deeply disturbed by the prospect of having the Border Patrol, or anyone else, develop Castner Range. One of El Paso's true strong points--one of the things that makes us unique--is having the Franklin Mountains in our midst. We should use that creatively instead of destroying it. What about having, say, an extensive Chihuahuan desert botanical park there, instead of Border Patrol offices, which can be nearly anywhere in the city? We need to have a little bit of foresight.

Sam Brunk

From: Ragu59@aol.com
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2003 3:46 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol on Castner Range
To whom it may concern:

I oppose the Border Patrol building on Castner Range. This piece of desert is one of the most unique pieces of desert left in El Paso and I would prefer that it end up with the Franklin State Park even though I realize that would be a long time coming. The wildlife that lives in that area has been severely encroached from the west side of the mountain and they need a place to call their own, not to mention that desert flora is the most fragile and easily damaged of all eco systems.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ruth Aguilar
9004 Galena Dr., El Paso, TX 79904, ragu59@aol.com

From: russ parker [rparker2@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 1:30 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol at El Paso

I strongly disagree with the idea of using part of Castner Range for the new Border Patrol facilities. The area West of the Gateway should be retained as part of the Franklin Mountain Park. If I understand it correctly, it would be the only such park with all parts of the mountain included (specifically the alluvial plain on the East side, between the mountain and the Gateway). To make it a park with trails, etc, would not require a prohibitively expensive "deep cleaning"(as would be required if commercial or residential building were accomplished) of the unexploded ordnance since limited building, if any, would have to be accomplished(perhaps restrooms, picnic shelters, etc). In addition, the entire East side alluvial plain up to the Gateway has glorious poppies when the conditions are right (as well as other flora which is somewhat rare) .

I am convinced that once some building is initiated, the developers will circle in like vultures and, if let in, will destroy the entire area with development. Keep development on the East side of the Gateway where it is now and leave the West side as pristine as it is for the enjoyment not only of local citizens but also of visitors. Such an all_inclusive "Mountain Park" should be a significant draw for visitors. This side of the Gateway already has the Wilderness museum and the Border Patrol museum. That is more than enough.

Let the new facilities be placed somewhere in the middle (edge) of Northeast El Paso where there are plenty of streets, etc; but not on the mountainside!

Good luck with your efforts. Sincerely,
Russ Parker, Col, US Army(Ret)

From: hr5117@whc.net
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 8:37 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range land

I want to go on the record as opposing any further development of the "Castner Range land", or, for that matter, any of the old Fort Bliss range land between the Patriot freeway and the top of the Franklin Mountains. If the Border Patrol needs to build a facility do it out in the flatlands east of the Franklins there are thousands of acres out there where they wont bother anyone. The existing Border Patrol museum is an insult to the natural beauty of the mountain and they should be made to tear it down and take it with them out into the desert.

Ron Robeson, El Paso, hr5117@whc.net

From: Rocio Luna [scoreboard00@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 5:40 PM
To: LisaEMcNiel@aol.com
Cc: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range new 45-acre site

I disagree with the new Border Patrol site, because of the 10 species of plants that cannot be found anywhere else in Texas. I believe that building this facility will encourage more development, as it is 45 acres is quite a bit of land and destroying this site would not benefit El Paso, as it is in todays society there is already too much technology surrounding us that I believe this site should be preserved. Why don't the just build this facility in another area in the Northeast, I think this would benefit El Pasoans just as much.

From: roberto salcido [salcido_r@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2003 3:25 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: border patrol

Leave the mountain alone, stop the destruction of mother natures beautiful work. Once touched its gone. Border mean just that at the border. Vehicles going back & forth is a lot of wear and tear. Plus all the fuel used. . Thank You, roberto

From: Robert W. Osborne [robert.w.osborne@worldnet.att.net]
Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2003 6:34 PM
To: Robin Divine
Subject: Border Patrol Site, El Paso, Texas

Dear Ms. Divine,

It was with dismay that I read the El Paso Times article outlining the U.S. Border Patrol's intent to build their new training facility on the eastern flank of the Franklin Mountains. If you have been here you know, while not pristine due to the military use of the land, that section of the mountain has thus far avoided development. While a park exists on the west side of the mountain opposite and north of your proposed site, the east side of the mountain has little to offer the population of El Paso. This area, adjacent to what is the most unique spring time phenomenon in the city (the annual bloom of the wild Mexican Poppies which rivals the spring wild flower blooms in San Antonio), has great potential for satisfying the great dearth of wilderness space available for our citizens. There are literally hundreds of sites that could accommodate your facility and not have any negative impact on future recreational resources. We have miles of desert that have no real "natural value". This area, undeveloped, frames the entry to the mountain. You can drive up Trans-Mountain and not have your view disturbed by buildings, chain link fences and parking lots. With your assistance, this area, west of the North/South Freeway could be kept free of development, restricting development to the east side of the freeway.

You will probably receive very few objections to this facility, for we live in a city that doesn't appreciate its assets until they are defiled beyond repair. Please do not join Stanley Jobe and his gravel pit in the destruction of our mountain, a space which is unique to all other urban areas in the state. Thank you for the consideration of my point of view.

Cordially yours,
Robert W. Osborne

MessageFrom: Suarez, Rebecca [rsuarez@utep.edu]
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 2:59 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: proposed Border Patrol on Castner Range

Please count me in against this proposal. The impact on wildlife and plants would be tremendous. Is there anything else I can do to help prevent this?

From: rmont99@netzero.net
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 12:10 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

To whom it may concern,

As a Northeast resident I implore that the Border Patrol build their new facility at a different location. I believe that the other proposed site at McCombs and Sean Haggerty would be more appropriate. I just cannot believe that anyone would even think of placing a building on that picturesque piece of land. As it is, the Border Patrol Museum is already an eye soar and takes away from the scenery. Granted the Wilderness Museum is also there but at least it serves the purpose of helping to identify some of the native plants that grow on Castner Range. Please do not destroy one of the most beautiful areas of El Paso!!!

R. Montorello

From: PANSONBAK@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2003 1:23 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: border patrol

Please do not allow the border patrol to blight the side of the franklin mountains in el paso.

thank you
Phil Baker

From: Peggy McNiel [peggymcniel@earthlink.net]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 7:09 PM
To: Robin Divine
Subject: castner range

Dear Robin Divine, SAIC,

I am writing to respond to the proposed use of the Castner Range site for the new Border Patrol facility. As a native El Pasoan and resident of the Northeast I am very, very, very opposed to this proposal as is the rest of my family. I teach at EPCC, and when I brought this matter to the attention of my students, I found that many of them oppose using this site as well. If it's poppies or so-called progress, then I choose the poppies. I believe that the choice of this site is premature for three main reasons.

First, an Environmental Assessment is only a preliminary step. This particular assessment regarding Castner Range took two years, while according to Stan Stack, most assessments take two to three months. The length of time required for this assessment suggests that using this site is a complex matter that necessitates further in-depth study of the impact to animal life in the area. Red tail hawks, mule deer, and turkey vultures are among the wild life easily spotted on this site. What is needed is an Environmental Impact Study as well. Dr. Richard Worthington's comments in the El Paso Times article suggest as much. I very much encourage such a study before any further action is taken.

Second, the detrimental aesthetic impact to this foothills area cannot be overemphasized. The Northeast side of the mountain has been kept relatively pristine because of the uncleared ordnances. 45 acres is approximately 25% of the land between Hondo Pass and Transmountain. As such, the Border Patrol facility will dominate the now gorgeous foothills area and ruin the splendor of the poppies. It continues to astound me how we continue to build and devastate what little beautiful scenery El Paso has, namely the Franklin Mountains, when there is so much flat desert to build on. There are few mountains but lots of desert. Putting the Border Patrol facility here at the foothills will also set a dangerous precedent for other developers who may then piece-meal up the range with no planning so that the Northeast, too, ends up with an eye-sore fiasco such as Crazy Cat mountain on the West side. With planning and strict regulation Crazy Cat could have resembled a miniature Santa Fe, but instead is hideous to behold especially from Stanton street and from Robinson. We do not want this to happen in the Northeast. I agree with Silvia Silva. Instead of devastating this beautiful foothills area where the poppies are most predominant, why not choose the intersection of Highway 54 and McCombs? The Border Patrol will still have quick access to 54 without ruining more of El Paso's unique and precious resources which the mountain range covered with poppies certainly is. The McCombs site would still bring more businesses to the area and so still benefit the Northeast.

Finally, as a resident on Magnetic street, I do not look forward to the increased traffic and congestion that this facility will certainly bring to the area. While I support Fort Bliss, the Border Patrol, and Homeland Security, I also believe that to build this facility at the proposed location will be nothing short of tragic, and yet another example of this city's apathy, neglect, and short-sightedness when it comes to aesthetic, environmental, and land development concerns. We need to annex this range to the Franklin Mountain State Park even if its use has to be restricted for a time. I will not vote for John Cook and will encourage others not to do so until I see him put his money where the mountains and the poppies need to stay. At this time I believe that he supports the developers who continue to demonstrate poor planning and blindness when a profit can be made, rather than the good of El Paso and its residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lisa McNiel
Lawrence Welsh
Peggy McNiel

Bernadine Ledwig
McNiel
Dr. Guy B. McNiel

From: Urbisoler@AOL.COM
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 11:54 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

Sir/Madam

The article in today's (10/13/03) El Paso Times did not go far enough so I accessed the web site at www.spa.usace.army.mil. Many of the links at this web site are inaccessible. I was hoping for map locations for the proposed Border Patrol sites but saw none. I live just south of Hondo Pass in the 3800 block across from the dam that your web site refers to as the Northgate Dam but which is more correctly known as the Castner Range Dam. (The Northgate Dam is located just north of the Business54 and Diana Drive intersection).

I object to the use of Site #1 at the northwest corner of Interstate54 and Hondo Pass (southeast corner of Range) for the following reasons:

1. I expected that this land, already invaded by the Texas State Transportation people and others, was designed to be incorporated into the Franklin Mts.State Wilderness Park. The annual poppy explosion is truly a sight to behold.
2. I believe that there is continuous encroachment of these properties for various government (perhaps even private) projects ultimately blocking views of the desert and mountain areas from the viewing public especially along Interstate 54.
3. In line with objection #2, there is cyclone fencing being installed for mysterious reasons along the north side of Hondo Pass at its westernmost point near the Franklin Mountains. I have written to the newspapers, contacted a TV station, talked with the Texas State Transportation people on Hondo Pass, talked to people at the Wildeness Park Museum and e-mailed people on Fort Bliss. I have received no explanation for this eyesore. Can you?
4. I cannot understand why the Border Patrol is so anxious to get away from the BORDER. Surely there is property for expansion along the river either in the lower or upper valleys.

As an aside, can you tell me how much of the Castner Range Dam area was cleared of unexploded ordanance? Folks in this area would like to hike thru those military properties that have been cleared of potential harm.

Thanks for listening! Regards,

Paul Daniggelis

3817 Skyline Ave, El Paso, TX 79904

915-755-0860, urbisoler@aol.com

7000 Dyer Rd
From: Stan Green [sgreen@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2003 8:02 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: poppies letter

Patrick Green
7000 Dyer Rd.
El Paso, TX. 79904

October 15, 2003

Robin Divine, SAIC
4242 Woodcock Avenue, Suite 150
San Antonio, TX. 78228

Dear Robin Divine, SAIC:

Subject: The Building of the Border Patrol Station in the Northeast area of El Paso, TX.

I have read the article in the newspaper entitled Poppies vs. progress that was printed in the El Paso Times and I am very concerned. I am concerned about the placement of the new centralized Border Patrol station that is to be built in the northeast area of the city. I have researched the possible sites of the future building and would like to give some input about these three sites. The worst site possible for this Border Patrol station to be built in on Castner Range next to Hondo Pass Rd. I feel that this is a bad area to have the border patrol station built because it will be destroying a lot of beautiful scenery. The vegetation is immaculate and the animals that live in this area are amazing. And to have this building erected in that area would be a great disservice to those critters and plants as well as the residents that occupy the housing areas around Castner Range. I myself live right across the highway from this proposed site and think that it would be a very large eyesore and not appealing aesthetically at all. I think that the other two proposed sites would be better areas to build the station. I think this because that area is already developed and is not a part of our beautiful foothills. Hopefully the proposed site near Hondo Pass Rd. will be de-duded in the near future and will become a part of the Franklin Mountain State Park instead of a vast parking lot for seized vehicles and for Border Patrol agent's vehicles as well. Hopefully those foothills will be left in the pristine order that they should be left in and then can be enjoyed by everyone as these el pasoans are entitled by living here. Also if the other sites are used, there will be no de-duding needed and it would be more cost effective. Also traffic will not be increased in the already high-traffic area that is the Hondo Pass Rd. area. So please do not make such a large injustice by building the Border Patrol station for the northeast area of El Paso, Texas on Castner Range. Please save our wonderful ecosystem that has adapted so well and that is thriving on Castner Range. Please build your Border Patrol Station out in

either site two or site three further out toward the north hills area and save the plants and animals that we so need to live and will need greatly later on in the future.

Sincerely,

Patrick Green

12th Grade student, Captain John L. Chapin High School

From: Patricia Palafox [ppalafox@elp.rr.com]

Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 11:52 AM

To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Subject: Building new Border Patrol on Castner Range

To: Robin Divine, SAIC

Dear Ms. Divine:

I read in the El Paso Times about the plans to build the new Border Patrol facility on a 45 acre site on the mountains, known as Castner Range. I am against building on this site because of the impact on the environment. Our mountains are already being destroyed by other activities and there is so little left. I understand there are other sites under consideration and I urge you to build on the other sites (intersection of Highway 54 and McCombs). The newspaper said you were inviting public comment. I have lived here all my life. Please protect our environment.

Sincerely,

Patricia L. Palafox

8001 E North Mesa PMB 345, El Paso, Texas 79932

Tel: 915 833-6198

To: Robin Devine
Science Applications International Corp.
4242 Woodcock Ave, Suite 150
San Antonio, TX 78228

From: Patricia White
10525 Texwood
El Paso, TX 79925

Subject: Castner Range Preservation

I sent a letter when you first requested comments on the environmental impact of the US Border Patrol's request to acquire Caster Range land from the military to build a 45 acre Border Patrol Sector Headquarters Station at Hondo Pass and Gateway South. I recently received a packet containing all of the comments that you had received. I understand that you are now requesting further comments.

I still believe that one of the other sites under consideration would be far preferable. The Castner Range site has not been cleared of ordinance from former artillery use as a target range. This would have to be done at large effort and financial cost. The other two sites are currently held by the Public Service Board of El Paso and apparently available. I understand that the environmental impact with respect to transportation, hazardous Material Waste management, biological resources, geology and soils is quite similar which would not rule out the alternate sites. They are available now and would allow the Border Patrol to proceed with their plans much sooner since there is no ordinance to clear.

I feel that a far better use of the Castner Range Land west of Highway 54 (Patriot Freeway) would be to include it in the Franklin Mountain State Park. The ordinance would have to be cleared before people are allowed on that area but they could still enjoy the beauty of the mountains and of the poppies in the spring from the highway. In the long run, keeping buildings off the west side of the highway would be more beneficial to the community and environment and would save the natural beauty of the area for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration

From: MrDoug3280@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 10:14 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol project

I am asking your help in preserving the Castner Range in northeast El Paso. The Border Patrol project is a worthy one but I feel there are more appropriate areas for it to be built, perhaps the McCombs site would be an alternative. The Castner range is unique in its beauty and species of flowers and fauna in this area of Texas. Please help us preserve this area for our children and grandchildren to enjoy. Thank you for your help. Pat Berta

From: Parothd0320@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2003 9:45 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Ranger

I would like to voice my opinion that the Border Patrol should look somewhere other than Castner Range for their new facility. I have lived in El Paso for over 9 years and one of the most beautiful things that I have seen is the desert in bloom in this area. It's almost disappointing during the years that the flowers do not bloom. I'd hate to see this beauty taken away from our future residents. I hope this letter helps in your cause - Thanks for the opportunity to let you know my opinion.

From: Norma S Glass [norma30@earthlink.net]
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2003 8:41 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range for use by US Border Patrol

Dear Ms. Divine,

I am writing to you because I would like for you to see what this area means to me and my family. It is inconceivable to hear about the possibility of utilizing Castner Range for development. Who did the environmental impact study? How or why would anyone choose to develop an area that consists of unique granitic soil which allows 10 species of plant life to thrive here and not anywhere else in Texas? We are all perplexed as to why this area must be considered first choice.

We have lived in this area for fifty years and my family strongly opposes the use of this land for this purpose. The beauty of this area is unsurpassed. Sad to say, but El Paso is not a beautiful city although it is unique because of these lands.

We have a lot of dust, very little water to keep it down and great wind which create unbelievable amounts of liter. As I understand it, there are other sites available which prove to be superior in their access to established businesses and thoroughfares.

Must we have to destroy what little beauty there is? When these fields are in bloom, they take your breath away. It is not uncommon to see hordes of vehicles with people pausing to photograph the blooms. Many of our out of town guests visit at this time of the year with specific intent to gaze endlessly at this amazing site.

This is nature at its best. It is not progress to destroy something that so many can enjoy freely. The statement issued by the Border Patrol stating that they would have a natural security buffer is inadequate. This city caters to large entities and I am positive that they could amend whatever issues there are to suit the Border Patrol requisites. There is no need to destroy this unique area. The other sites are perfect.

If you wish to contact me about my concerns, please do not hesitate to email me or call me @ (915) 541-8825.

Sincerely,

Norma S. Glass
Deborah Seelig, MD
Catalina Seelig
Sarah Seelig Smith
Richard I Glass
Ferlin Smith
Dana P. Smith

Christopher W. Howard
Brandon J. Howard
Tom Howard
Micaela L. Glass
Arleen Sanchez
David Bramer
Kimberly Bramer

Joseph L. Bramer
Amelia I. Bramer
Kristen Bramer
Olga Seelig Hawks
Kelly B. Hawks
Natalie D. Hawks

From: nicole tajiri [nicoletajiri@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 1:42 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: save our poppies

Please let me know what I can do to keep the poppy fields on our mountains secure. It is one of the most picturesque spots in the spring time in El Paso, and a beautiful spot all year around, especially in the snow.
nicole tajiri

From: NANETTE CONTRERAS [nanette.c@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2003 4:01 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol Site.

Dear Robin:

This message is in reply to the new site at the Franklin Mountains in El Paso, TX for the new Border Patrol facilities. I am sure that in El Paso northeast area there are plenty of empty shopping centers and locations that could be used instead. The natural view of the Mountains as well as the poppies that cover that area in the spring are priceless. Please consider a new location.
Best regards, Nanette Contreras., El Paso, TX.

From: LADY4DOGS@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 9:11 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Cc: LADY4DOGS@aol.com
Subject: Border Patrol/Castner Range
Robin Divine, SAIC

It would seem more realistic for the Border Patrol to build their new facilities on the level sandy ground at Hwy 54 and McCombs rather than on the the rocky terrain at Hondo Pass. Also, there is a proposal for a new highway to be built linking Transmountain (Hwy 375) through Anthony Gap and this would intersect Hwy 54 just north of McCombs giving the Border Patrol easy access to Transmountain. In the mean time the Border Patrol would have access to Transmountain by going down Hwy 54 only a short distance further than going up Hwy 54 from Hondo Pass to connect to Transmountain.

It isn't just the poppies being plowed under that I object to, but that if the Border Patrol builds at Hondo Pass and Gateway North (Hwy 54), it won't be long before another group will want to build and so on and so on, nibbling away at the foot hills of our Great Mountains. The poppies are a glimpse of heaven in the spring, but the mountains are also a very unique ecosystem containing many varieties of plants not found elsewhere. The mountains are also the home to wild life, birds, ground creeping creatures, coyotes, bobcats, deer, mountain lions and an occasional bear. The more we encroach on their territory the more likely they will be killed. A case in point is that of the mountain lion snoozing on a west side patio this past summer and having to be killed by a Wildlife official.

The stark beauty of the Franklin Mountains are a drawing card for El Paso. Where else are there magnificent mountains right in the middle of town. There should be a moratorium on building any more structures on the west side of Highway 54. One can drive from the Northeast to the West side or from West side to the Northeast and be cleansed by the beauty and grandeur of these rocky crags.

Please don't build on Castner Range. The McCombs and Hwy 54 site is much more suitable. Thank you for your understanding and consideration.

Nancy Bain (Lady4dogs@aol.com)

From: Monty [msquier@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2003 1:49 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

I AM A VOTER AND TAXPAYER IN EL PASO. MY HOME IS IN NORTHEAST EL PASO. I EMPHATICALLY REQUEST THAT NO DEVELOPMENT OF ANY KIND BE DONE IN THIS BEAUTIFUL FRONT RANGE {Castner Range}. LEAVE IT ALONE. LET IT BE. GO MAKE YOUR MONEY SOMEWHERE ELSE!
Sincerely, Monty Squier, msquier@elp.rr.com

Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2003 2:00 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Cc: milliefoster@earthlink.net
Subject: Poppies vs Progress
--- millie foster
--- milliefoster@earthlink.net
--- EarthLink: It's your Internet.

Mr. Divine:

I have been a Northeast resident of the City of El Paso for many years and I am distressed to think that the lovely view we have of the Franklin mountains and the beautiful poppies and other wild plants are endangered. I realize that El Paso is growing

and many people are moving into all areas of the City which means more industrial buildings and government projects will be necessary to support the growing population. There are places within and without our City that construction can be implemented without destroying what little is left of our beautiful City. Look at the West side, what has happened to the mountains and the topography of the land. Take a look at the "ugliness" that Jobe has created and would go further, if not stopped by the people. Is there nothing to be left for future generations to enjoy??? Let us not become another megalopolis like Los Angeles, where only steel and mortar has replaced everything and the people are breathing "heavy" pollutants, etc. and you can't see the sky all day long. I hope that you will use your influence to save our lovely mountains, topography, vegetation, wild poppies, and animals for our grandchildren and future generations to come. If we could make it apart of the State Park, then we could be assured that this area would be secured and kept for the future all of us to enjoy and generations after us. **SAVE OUR LOVELY MOUNTAINS AND POPPIES!!!!**

Thank you for your time and support.

Mildred Foster

Northeast Resident

From: Mike Terrian [mike@psisoftware.com]

Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 9:15 AM

To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Subject: Castner Range

Dear Robin, et al:

I am writing to express my hope that the Border Patrol can be convinced that building a facility on Castner Range is not in the best interests of El Paso. I would like to see the Castner area remain exactly as it is, without any further development. Surely, another site can be found for their facility, one that won't detract from the beauty of our mountains.

I think the city has made great strides in recent years in terms of making the area more attractive. In my opinion, erecting this facility on Castner Range would be one giant step backwards. Mike Terrian

From: michelle townsend [basketballbusta@yahoo.com]

Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2003 3:09 PM

To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Subject: Don't destroy a piece of our history

To whom it may concern,

In response to the article I read in the El Paso Times, I disagree with the plans of the building of the Border Patrol Facility. First I feel that building this facility in the northeast will cause a chain reaction (Monkey see monkey do) this meaning that other

companies will see the building of this which will intice them to consider building one of there facilities in the area also.

This site may seem as if it is a great location but in reality it is not. Many animals (Deers,coyotes) use this area as a consuption site so to them castner Range serves as there foothill. This sites history with the Fort Bliss and Dr. Worthington's Obervance of more than ten native El Paso plants, which are not found anywhere but at the Castner Range. So in closing Destroying Castner will cause the loss of our native vegetation, a loss of our habitat, and in all a lost of El Paso history.

From: Melanie Clarkston [mclarkston@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 12:59 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

I am opposed to development in the Castner Range area of the Franklin Mountains.It is a ridiculous idea to disrupt nature for the sake of building a structure that could go just about anywhere else. How about putting the new Border patrol Building on the far east or west side where all of the other ugly new buildings are?

Mel Clarkston

From: Mary Lou Ayala [mlayala@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 12:14 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Please Save Our Poppies!

Dear Ms. Divine,

I'm writing to comment about the article which appeared in the El Paso Times regarding the proposed site for the new Border Patrol facility. Please save our poppies! The poppies are as much a trademark in El Paso as the star on the mountain. And like the star, the poppies can be seen for miles away. I have lived in northeast El Paso since 1958, and know that every spring when the poppies are in bloom, people come from all over to enjoy them. Every spring, the poppies seem to unite the city. The poppies are a big deal for El Pasoans. And not just El Pasoans, I believe I read one time where our poppies have been photographed and published in numerous national publications.

I believe a lot of El Pasoans think the area where the poppies bloom (West of Hwy 54 from Hondo Pass going North, all the way to the where the houses start in North Hills) every year is already part of the state park, and therefore protected. I hope that the Army will donate this land so it can be incorporated into the state park. I know there are other species of plants living in this area also worthy of saving. I have seen huge barrel cactus that I believe are on the threatened list. The prickly pear cactus that grow in this area

have a much darker fruit than anywhere else I can find. I know because I often harvest them to make jelly.

Clark Champie, deceased, but long time resident, naturalist, author, photographer and expert of the Franklin Mountains, believed there are several species of cacti, a fern and a spider endemic to this area, and which have yet to be classified. Mr Champie devoted his life to the study of the flora of the Franklin Mountains. For the past couple years I have procrastinated about looking into the possibility of having this land incorporated into the state park in Mr Champie's name.

Please select the alternate site for the new Border Patrol facility and preserve the poppies. Please incorporate this land into the state park so this area can continue to be enjoyed by all El Pasoans. Thank you,
Mary Lou Ayala, 4304 Loma Del Norte, El Paso, TX 79934, 915-822-2734

From: MARY BUSH [mary-bush@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2003 10:08 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol in El Paso

El Paso has so little to enjoy. The poppies on the eastern slopes of Mt Franklin are really a source of pleasure to us desert-bound denizens. And we get to see them only when conditions are right. I'm attaching two pictures I took this last Spring. Please, please take them into consideration when planning for the new construction. Why don't you build closer to the border? There's plenty of room out by the new County Jail Annex. Or close to the Canine training center.
Mary Bush
4710 Turf, El Paso, TX, 915*855-0466



From: Mary Russell [grussell@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2003 8:34 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol Museum

Hi Robin,

My family and I would like to express our opinion about the Border Patrol Complex. We think the mountains should be left in their pristine condition for our descendants to enjoy. It's one of the sights that our family enjoys the most about El Paso. A better place for the complex would be on McCombs near the Electric Company road or whatever that road is according to some family members. I think it should be closer to the border, along the Border Highway. Anyway, when the poppies bloom it seems as if all of El Paso enjoys seeing them. Let them build all they want on the west side of the mountains but let's leave the East side of the Franklin Mountains just the way they are. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Mary and George Russell and George Russell, Jr.

From: Marshall Carter-Tripp [marshall@thetripps.net]
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2003 1:06 PM
To: Robin.D.Divine@SAIC.COM
Subject: Comment on Castner Range Proposal

To SAIC:

I recently returned to live in El Paso after some years absence while posted overseas. I was startled and dismayed to read a news report on the proposed use of Castner Range for a Border Patrol Facility. Let me express my strong opposition to this - not that the Border PATrol might not need a new facility, but it should not be there! The mountain park has already been affected adversely by the Border Patrol Museum. Your draft Environmental Impact Assessment itself reveals that there are other sites within the Ft. Bliss area that are preferable. And the idea of leasing the land is very bad. We don't want to encourage further leasing of this property, which should be part of the Franklin Mountains State Park!

Have you ever seen this property in the spring? It would be folly to begin the development of a beautiful tract of wilderness with many native plants unique to this area. I can't believe the amount of development that has already occurred in El Paso - it's impossible to look at the mountains without seeing houses all over the slopes. Let's please leave this little parcel alone!

Marshall Carter-Tripp
79 Kingery Drive
El Paso TX 79902

From: Mpepv@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 10:25 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Site for Border Patrol Facility

Sirs: Please do not turn the North side of the Franklin Mountain into that horrible mess like the west side. Once the building starts over here it'll just keep going. Please leave our side of the mountain as is. Thank You.

Marie Rodgers

From: Nena [dreamygirl32@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2003 11:01 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Public Review- Border Patrol Site

Dear Robin Divine,

It has to my attention that there is planning to construct a Border Patrol facility in the acres of Castner Range. I believe this is a bad decision since there are other sites to choose from that would be less dangerous and that are not surrounded by so many businesses. I am currently attending Captain John L. Chapin High School, enrolled in an Environmental Systems class. My fellow students and I have discovered the consequences this decision would bring to this area. By constructing this facility it would become a threat to the surrounding habitat, it would create a chain reaction, and traffic would increase in the area causing more accidents.

The habitat in that area has been there for so many years and it would be a shame to destroy it. The plants and wildlife are part of El Paso and they belong there. For example, the poppies, a species of plants that cannot be found anywhere else in Texas are at a great risk they are one of the very few view sites we have and to see them gone doesn't make sense.

By building the facility in this area it would create a chain reaction around all the businesses there. Many companies and organizations are going to come into this area and put locations here. Everything that is under our beautiful Franklin Mountains is precious since it is something that has been around for so many years. There is so many other places where the facility can be located at. This area is going to become very crowded and cause a lot of chaos.

Traffic in this area right now is very calm and by building the facility here is going to cause many accidents. This area of El Paso doesn't really have that much traffic like Central or East El Paso and by doing this its going to be more hectic in the mornings and throughout the whole day. Think about the lives you'll be saving or preventing.

Thank you for your time I appreciate it.

Sincerely,

Maria Reyes

Environmental Systems- Chapin High School

From: maria moreno [jedward5@msn.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2003 8:35 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: "Poppies vs. Progress"

Dear Robin Divine,

I recently read the article titled "Poppies vs. Progress" in the El Paso Times. My name is J. Eddie Moreno; I am 17 and attend Capt. John L. Chapin H. S. I first learned of this article in my AP Environmental Science class with Mr. Tim Dillon. After reading this article, it is to my understanding that there will be a Border Patrol site built in either three different locations, but the first choice is between Hondo Pass and Trans Mountain in Northeast EL Paso. While this site might seem most convenient due to its central location, it is extremely environmentally inconvenient.

As it is well known, the proposed site is that of Castner Range, a possible addition to our Franklin Mts. National Park. And, while Northeast Rep. John Cook stated that the call for the eventual addition may never happen, there is still a major possibility based on the site's history with Fort Bliss and Dr. Worthington's observance of more than ten native El Paso plants, which cannot be found anywhere but Castner Range. Castner Range is also homes and a source of food for thousands of organisms. Caster range serves as the foothills of the Franklin Mts. and is a consumption site for deer, coyotes, etc.

While the site between Hondo Pass and Trans Mountain may seem generally convenient for its central location, the locality of the other proposed sites is only up the road and just as central as Castner Range. The destruction of Castner range would cause the loss of much El Paso native vegetation, a loss of habitat, and a loss of food for many of the Franklin Mts. animals. The loss of Castner Range will begin the destruction of what is most beautiful in El Paso because once destruction on our natural environment starts, it will only become worse.

From: Margaret Jackson [mmsjackson@YAHOO.COM]
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2003 9:31 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol and Castner Range

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to register my objections to a proposed Border Patrol facility to be constructed on Castner Range land in El Paso, Texas. The proposal was described in an El Paso Times article, October 13, 2003. This plan is not a good one for several reasons.

Castner Range acts as a buffer to the Franklin Mountain Wilderness State Park. As such, the Range protects plants and animals in the State Park. Home to at least ten native plants not found elsewhere in Texas, it is a valuable depository of biological diversity and treasure. Once destroyed by development, these unique plants will be gone forever. Their beauty and value to the ecosystem forever squelched for a building. Many of us El Pasoans remember last spring when the glory of thousands of poppies bloomed over the Castner Range. If the proposal proceeds, nature's lovely display will be in jeopardy.

Furthermore, once this area is opened for development, it will be like a leak in a dam, which widens, cracks, and eventually causes flooding. Despite official promises, once a crack, opening for development, occurs, the way for greater encroachment will inevitably follow. Shall we trade the golden poppies for golden arches? Surely this is not progress. The most progressive thing that could be done to the Castner Range is to leave it alone.

There are other more appropriate sites for the Border Patrol facility where the development would enhance rather than degrade the environment. I strongly urge the Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Border Patrol to seriously consider placing their facility in a less environmentally sensitive location.

Thank you,

Margaret Jackson

1305 Madeline

El Paso, TX 79902

mmsjackson@yahoo.com

From: Marcia Carle [desertrv@elp.rr.com]

Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 9:41 AM

To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Subject: Propsoed Border Patrol Facility

To Whom It May Concern:

I strongly believe that the Franklin Mountains should be protected for the enjoyment of not only ourselves but future generations. Therefore, I am opposed to the proposed building of a Border Patrol Facility on the Castner Range and feel that other proposed sites would serve their purpose.

Sincerely,

Marcia L. Carle, a Northeast Resident

From: Manuelhjr2004@aol.com
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 10:55 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Cc: manuelhjr2004@aol.com
Subject: Attn: Response to Environmental Assesment with Border Patrol Site

OCTOBER 13,2003

To Robin Divine and the United States Army Corps of Engineers:

My name is Manuel Hernandez, an AP-Environmental Systems student at Chapin High School. In regards to the Border Patrol issue site in Northeast El Paso, Tx. I believe the best solution to this problem is to place the new Border Patrol Facility on Second Site(on the intersection of Highway 54 and McCombs). In my opinion, this is to prevent more air pollution in the Northeast of the city. Why not place it somewhere where there is less human activity? Thus, if you do so you are going to be providing better air quality, and also going to be conserving the rare species in the wilderness in this wonderful city. Thank you for your attention, time, and cooperation on this important environmental issue.

Respectfully and Sincerely,
MANUEL HERNANDEZ
CHAPIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT
manuelhjr2004@aol.com
7000 DYER STREET EL PASO, TX 79904.

From: JASPEA@aol.com
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2003 12:42 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Comment on Castner Range from Manny Limon

El Paso is a city of diminshing treasures. Our Franklin Mountains serve as a beacon for travelers passing thorgh the area both on the ground and in the air. Those from the air can get a full view of their incredible beauty. But sadly, they also get a view of the permanent scars inflicted by years of excavation by El Paso Sands and now Jobe Concrete. The mountains I see now, is not the mountains enjoyed by past generations. One of the most incredible and intriguing sights offered by the mountains is the blooming of the desert poppies. Here in the desert where rainfall is short and sunshine is plentiful, these poppies have not only been able to survive but also able to thrive. The route I take to work has taken me directly by the place where the poppies grow. Sometimes there are not words to describe the awe inspiring scene of all the yellow spread out over the desert floor. A stark contrast to the hues of red offered by the mountains above. It is a sight that could never be reconstructed by any worldly being. It is a sight and an experience

that my wife and I have been able to share with my children. No matter how many times we go, the experience is just as powerful. My little girl calls them her flowers. And indeed they are hers. They are mine. They belong to each and everyone who is there to experience their beauty, their essence and their spirit.

El Paso cannot afford to lose another one of its treasures. My children and their children should be able to continue to enjoy the poppies in their natural state.

From Manny Limon

From: Maggie Crye [mmcrye@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 11:54 PM
To: Robin.d.divine@saic.com; hawkman; Gudrun Aguirre; Charles Hill ;
Darcy_L_T@YAHOO.COM; keglrlady1@aol.com; glacia8984@aol.com; Doreen;
Debora Culp; DeniseBeeman@aus.rr.com; Elpasotimes.com@elp.rr.com
Subject: Developmentof Castner = Destruction of El Paso

Ms. Devine:

Imagine you are in the forest. Now here come the giant logging machines that tear up the forest, leaving ugly scars on the land, creating runoff problems, and creating more pollution. This is what is going to happen if the Border Patrol is allowed to build in Castner Range. The stretch of mountain lands from Hondo Pass to Kenworthy and west of US54 is comparable to being in a forest: there is just so much vegetation and wildlife there. To allow the development of this land is to bring in more noise, trash, light pollution, and traffic congestion. There are times when it is wise to allow space for nature and this is one of them. It is ridiculous for a government agency to build in one of the desert's most diverse biospheres when there are more suitable sites available.

I also find it ludicrous that the Border Patrol is willing to "clean up" the "ordnance" from this land. The government has said for years that there is no money to do this. So it can not be done for the rightful owners of this land-the citizenry of the United States- but it can be done for a governmental agency which has no claim to the land. The McCombs site doesn't need to be cleared. It is also more level and not rocky.

The Castner site is ill-suited for increased traffic. Loop375Transmountain @ US54 is already badly congested and poorly routed. Hondo Pass @ US54 is small and would disrupt neighborhood traffic. Diana @ US54 is also too narrow and poorly routed. The more suitable site traffic-wise would be at US54 @ McCombs. Here, there are more accessible routes to US54 and Loop 375. The McCombs site is also well away from settled, quiet neighborhoods and schools.

Finally, there are the citizens whom these government agents are supposed to serve. Many of us don't want this place near our neighborhoods or schools. Please put it in an area that is not already primarily residential in nature, like the McCombs site.

Building in Castner Range would be like building a skyscraper in the middle of New York's Central Park. El Pasoans need natural vegetation to help clean the air, keep pollution down, and also to help keep the ambient temperature of the city down. To destroy our primary green space is to destroy the city. El Paso will be more like Phoenix: hotter, drier, and dirtier. Allowing the Border Patrol to build in Castner is tantamount to developing El Paso's only true green space into another ugly scar on the earth. And that is not development, it is Destruction.

Ms. Devine, you can be instrumental in making it plain to one and all that the Castner Range land needs to be left undisturbed. It is El Paso's last truly undeveloped mountain land. It is El Paso's greenest land in the middle of a vast sea of sand. It is an important piece of El Paso's ecology. "Development" of Castner will be El Paso's "Destruction."
Thank-you for your time,
Margaret M. Crye

From: Louis Lopez [loulopez@justice.com]
Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2003 11:20 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

The Border Patrol facility you are thinking of constructing in Northeast El Paso would be better placed at Highway 54 and McCombs. Putting it on Castner Range would displace several rare species and affect the aesthetic value of the open land at the foot of the Franklin Mountains. The appearance of any new building on Castner Range would only encourage further building.

Please don't build on Castner Range.
Thank you for your attention.
Louis Lopez
Northeast El Paso resident

From: Lorena Pease [lorenapease@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2003 11:04 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Mountains of El Paso

Robin, my name is Lorena Pease, I'm 33 years old and I have lived my life here in northeast El Paso. I read the article about the Border Patrol and I really feel that if this happens we might as well finish off the mountain because everyone will want a piece of it at the right price. Whenever I have relatives visit they are in awe by our mountains. We need to set boundaries of where these buildings and houses can be built before one of

the beauties of El Paso is destroyed. If there is an alternate place please put it there and not on our mountain. Thank you for your attention in this matter. Lorena Pease

From: ELPASOWILD@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 7:43 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: EA comments

Dear Robin,

Sorry my comments are so late but I was ill for weeks and then the plan was sent to the wrong address. I just got it yesterday. Please note my address below for future correspondence. Would you like me to send a hard copy as well? The document may take a while to download because I attached relevant pictures to it.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lois Balin

Nongame and Urban Biologist

Texas Parks and Wildlife

200 N. Clark Road

El Paso, Texas

(915) 774-9603



Robin Divine
Project Manager
Science applications International Corporation
4242 Woodcock Drive, Suite 150
San Antonio, TX 78228-1253

This letter is in response to the Draft Environmental Assessment for the U.S. Border Patrol Station and Sector Headquarters, El Paso, Texas. The preferred site (Site 1) is part of Castner Range, an area that contains the greatest biodiversity and largest genetic reserve of native plants and wildlife of any area in the El Paso region. These areas of high biological diversity are ecologically complex and significantly more stable than disturbed areas. Site 1 contains the greater biological diversity of all sites being considered and it is therefore prudent for this community to protect and manage this land with extreme sensitivity.

The finding of no significant impact on human health or natural environment that was determined in the environmental assessment is based on scientific methods; however, it does not consider the concerns of the community regarding the impact this will have on decisions regarding the future land use of Castner Range. Further development of Castner Range accelerates human encroachment into one of the few remaining continuous open space areas that include prime native wildlife habitat. It may inadvertently set a precedent for further development and degradation of the meager native open space habitat that remains in El Paso.

The biological and ecological integrity of Site 1 and its cultural and scenic values are significantly important, regardless of the scale of the Franklin Mountains and the vastness of Castner Range. Habitat fragmentation is

the number one threat facing all wildlife populations today. El Paso is an urban area that contains limited wildlife and native plant habitat. Castner Range is not only biologically rich but is also the most important and largest area of continuous open space in the El Paso region. Because it is connected to the Franklin Mountain State Park this remnant provides the best opportunity to retain our native plants and wildlife for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations.

The spectacular Mexican Poppy displays are only found on Castner Range within the state of Texas. Typical development methods grade and disturb extensive land areas in a manner that alters the soil and invites early succession non-native and invasive plants and animals. Even if care is taken to restore the area to its former condition, exotic (non-native plants) will arrive and alter the natural ecosystems. Although the Mexican poppy display occurs northeast of Site 1, it does not offset the facts that Castner Range including Site 1 is the only potential Mexican Poppy habitat left and that the poppies may spread to those areas over time or that the Station will disrupt the overall scenic beauty where the poppies occur.

In spite of the fact that there were no endangered species detected, when compared to the other sites Site 1 contains the best overall habitat for wildlife. Site 1 has a greater density and species richness of flora and fauna, more arroyos and other natural drainages and the least amount of runoff capacity. The preferred site also has the highest densities of the species of concern that are mentioned in the EA.

Although not detected on the biological surveys obtained, Golden Eagles, Red-tailed Hawks, Swainson's Hawks, and American Kestrels are regularly found in northeast El Paso at Sites 1 and 2. Members of the Trans-Pecos Chapter of the Audubon Society, including Bob Johnson and myself, often bird watch in the northeast section of El Paso where numerous raptors are easily found. Golden Eagles are generally found in the mornings roosting on power lines or hunting. Red-tailed hawks are found hunting, roosting and nesting. Swainson's hawk is a Neotropical migratory bird whose numbers are rapidly declining due to the continued use of pesticides in South America where they generally winter. Swainson's hawks breed every summer in parts of foothill and desert scrub habitats in northeast El Paso. Please review the enclosed pictures taken by Bob Johnson, former president of the Trans-Pecos Chapter of the Audubon Society and the nest location map.

Castner Range is a not only a biological and ecological jewel but is also a scenic treasure. Although most of the view will not be obstructed, 25% is significant to the residents of northeast El Paso and the community of El Paso at large. The pristine appearance of Castner Range is undoubtedly the most valuable resource in the northeast and possibly the entire El Paso county and region. Open space will dictate the future of El Paso and should be a considered a high priority. Open space planning with arroyo and desert protection ordinances exist in all other southwestern desert urban areas.

Ecotourism is the wave of the future and open space/buffer zones are essential for the scenic and ecological conditions that will attract wildlife and profitable nature-based industries. El Paso has historically failed to integrate an ecological perspective into the model of a world based on economics. Consider the non-price costs of this development, such as the loss of community, scenic and cultural values in addition to the ecological costs of lost watershed, open space and wildlife habitat.

Finally, urban wildlife problems will increase in direct proportion to the amount of native habitat fragmentation. There have been numerous mule deer road kills and mountain lion sightings in the Site 1 area. Opportunistic mule deer will continue to invade and forage on human-made landscapes, mountain lions will continue to follow mule deer into the urban fringe and occurrences of ringtails, gray fox and coyotes and road kills incidents will increase.

Based on the stated "quality of life" values of the Franklin Mountains and Castner Range we recommend eliminating Site 1 from consideration. We propose that the two alternative sites be given substantial evaluation when making the final decision for the Station location. Neither of these sites contain any cultural artifacts and both sites have less biodiversity.

We ask that Site 3 is given consideration over Site 2. Site 2 is located in the area known by local bird watchers as "Hawk Alley." Golden Eagles and Red-tailed Hawks are permanent residents there. Swainson's Hawks nest in honey mesquite trees and on the power poles and burrowing owls nest in desert scrub. There were 10 documented Swainson Hawk nests this year; 2 of the nests were located within a mile of Site 2 (see enclosed pictures and map). A burrowing owl nested this year within 2 miles of Site 2. Fifteen Swainson's hawk nests were documented in Hawk Alley in 2002. American kestrels and loggerhead shrikes are wintering and permanent residents here.

Nesting raptors on Site 1 were not documented due to the restrictions that exclude the public from Castner Range. Since the habitat is more diverse and secluded than the other sites, it is reasonable to presume that numerous birds of prey are roosting, hunting and nesting in Castner Range and at Site 1. Site 3 will have the least scenic, ecological, biological and cultural impacts. It contains the lowest probability of containing endangered plants or wildlife species of concern. Currently other urban development is occurring in Site 3. A new housing development and a highway overpass are currently being constructed that will buffer the school from the Site 3 Station. We think using the most developed area for the site is best for the community.

Long-term visionary planning is needed to conserve and preserve the treasure of Castner Range. We urge the Federal government to consider these values in their own planning process and consider creating a long-term

plan for the entire Castner Range to ensure its biological integrity remains intact. The priority should be to *preserve the largest continuous area of open space possible that contains the greatest amount of natural and cultural resources and other community values*. Site 1 is part of the largest natural open space area remaining in El Paso. We recommend that Site 1 and the remaining undisturbed areas of Castner Range be maintained as "hands off" management areas and that it be dedicated to an Urban Wilderness Park or the Franklin Mountain State Park.

The following suggestions are recommended for developing the Station at Sites 1 or 2:

1. Preserve all arroyos and natural drainages
2. Landscape with Franklin Mountain or northern Chihuahuan Desert natives.
3. Use semi-permeable hardscape in the parking lots.
4. Use natural southwestern desert architecture in the development area.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Lois Balin, Urban and Wildlife Biologist
Texas Parks and Wildlife
200 N. Clark Drive
El Paso, TX 79905
(915) 774-9603

Nesting Swainson's Hawks in Hawk Alley – site P 606



1 Adult and 2 Swainson Hawk fledglings in Hawk Alley – site P 611



Golden Eagles in Hawk Alley



Golden Eagle hunting in Hawk Alley



P - 607



P - 609 (zoom of 608)

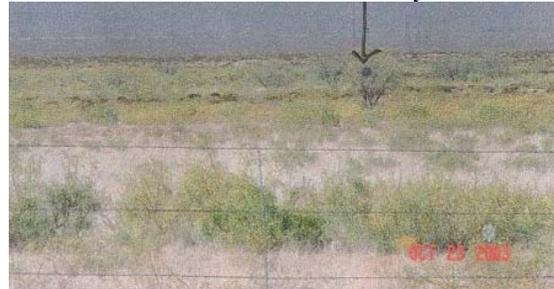


P - 608 (zoom of 607)

608



P - 610 Swainson's Hawk nest in Hawk Alley



P - 611 Swainson's Hawk nests in Hawk Alley

Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2003 9:26 AM
 To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
 Subject: Border Patrol Facilities, El Paso

Hi,

Not sure of your role, but I'm responding to a request in a letter to editor, El Paso Times, today.

I completely agree with letter writer DiCara that no additional facilities should be built at the Transmountain location. The mountain and the view are in my opinion the most beautiful and most valuable asset El Paso has to offer to both residents and to visitors.

I strongly recommend that the Border Patrol find facilities much closer to the border and I further recommend that these facilities include space for whatever it is that is currently housed at the Transmountain location! This building ought to then be leveled and the area returned to the scenic beauty.

Would like to know the views of John Cook, Northeast City Representative, on this matter.

If petitions available, would like to sign.

Thank you for your role in protecting El Paso's best tourist attraction.

Larry Wilder

Northeast El Paso

Castner Range
From: Kristie Navarette [kristien@nh-elpaso.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 5:29 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

I am totally opposed to the constant digging in the Northeast near Trans Mountain/Castner Range. A part of town where Northgate is a ghost town and eyesore, can't they find a better place to house the Border Patrol, like say, near the various borders? How about around Alameda or North Loop, or even out near Chaparral or Newman, TX?

From: Kenneth Thompson [kennetht@constant.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 9:55 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol Location

Hi! I'll make my request short. Please do not recommend the mountain-side location where all the beautiful poppies grow every so many years in northeast El Paso.

This Site is actually very rare and soil conditions are just right there for the growth of these flowers. And they grow only every so many years as rainfall at the right time and in the right amount must take place.

In San Antonio where you are, rain, flowers, bushes, trees are probably not much consideration. You get plenty of rain, whereas here in El Paso, we do not. This year to date we have just over three inches, for the entire year. You probably get that on a weekend.

Please, consider that we must protect these rare spots in this area. There are tons of level desert locations where you could put a huge complex. Putting the building in that area will only anger hundreds of people and will be a disservice to the local Border Patrol employees.

Thank you for seeking another location. Ken Thompson
kennetht@constant.com

From: Txstol@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 9:16 PM
To: Robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range
Dear Sir's:

This is in regard to the Castner Range, where the Border Patrol wants to put there new facilities. I believe there is land that is just as good for their purposes in an area not far from the one planed. They say it will give them better access to surrounding roads, There are other places on the East side of the North-South Freeway that are just as easy and would not disturb the wonderful desert plants in the area proposed now. Please save the Castner Range for the people of El Paso to enjoy.

Sincerely,
Keith E. Rihn

From: kc5rhk@att.net
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 4:37 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

With all the open land around here, surely they can find another spot to build the border patrol building. The poppies are so beautiful and seem to be localized to that spot. Enough beauty is being distroyed in the name of progress. I'd rather look at the poppies than another building!!!
Marlyn Kowalzick

From: Harold E Mason [diplomat6@juno.com]
Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2003 2:24 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Dear Robin,
Writing to you about the proposal for a new Border Patrol facility on the mountain in the Northeast of El Paso. I oppose it because it would be destroying one of natures beautiful creations. We have vast areas of vacant flat land in the Northeast that the Border patrol facility could be built upon. We would welcome them to build there but let's not destroy this magnificent mountain.
We ask your support in this matter.

Your Truly,
Kay B. Mason

From: Julian Vellucci [silver_diver07@YAHOO.COM]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 10:30 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Concern for Border Patrol Facility being built on Castner Range

Julian A. Vellucci
7000 Dyer Rd.
El Paso, TX 79904
October 23, 2003

Robin Divine, SAIC
4242 Woodcock Avenue, Suite 150
San Antonio, TX 78228

Dear Robin Divine, SAIC:

Subject: Where the new Border Patrol Station will be built in the Northeast El Paso, Texas.

It has come to my attention that there is going to be built a new Border Patrol station in the Northeast of El Paso and out of the three proposed sites, I am strongly against any construction on site one, which is on Castner Range right near the TXDOT station on Hondo Pass and Gateway South. I would not mind which of the other two sites are used, but I would not be happy if forty-five acres of Castner Range is destroyed for the placement of a new facility that could be, otherwise, better located.

Castner Range sits on the foothills of the Franklin Mountains and adding a forty-five acre stretch of industrialized property would only place an eye sore on our already diminishing lands. A big part of visualizing El Paso distinctly is the beautiful array of poppies that come out during the spring, which create an ocean of yellow across our hilltops. Now slap forty-five acres of a Border Patrol Station in it and take the picture again. It will not look the same. The other sites are in lands that do not have the worry of the aesthetics about them.

The habitats and lands of site two and three will not be as devastated as that of the lands at Castner Range. Castner Range is at the foothills of the mountains and the further you take from it the less space animals have in their habitat. You begin to push animals further and further away (because the loss of their buffer zone), to the point that we will start to see a decline in our area of certain species eventually. In addition, I have found out that there are ten species of plant life that only exist in Castner Range due to the soil, that are not found anywhere else in Texas. Clearing a chunk of that land will not help those plants in any way.

As an informed student and responsible citizen I am concerned of the building on site one. I hope that the public, that you have allowed to voice their opinions, can sway you to choose either site two or three. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Julian A. Vellucci
12th Grade Student

From: SIWIKOLI2@AOL.COM
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 8:55 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Cc: ZOOSTUD@AOL.COM; cbunch@zianet.com; maryjaenke@juno.com;
Picwhiz@AOL.COM; Bjames531@AOL.COM; fullcircle@zianet.com
Subject: Poppies

The Poppy Fields on the Eastern slopes of the Franklin Mountains in the Spring are a major attraction not only for the people who live in El Paso, but for those of us who live in Las Cruces, N.M.

When I have company from out of town/state during that period I always pick them up at the airport and take them over TransMountain to see the poppies and we stop at the park there and take photos. It is a lovely introduction to the El Paso/Las Cruces area.

"A Thing of Beauty Is A Joy Forever"

Please do not spoil this place of beauty!!!!!! Especially, since you have two other locations available.

Joyce Leverett
Las Cruces, NM

From: JOSIE LOPEZ [jalop48@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 11:44 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: BPS Complex

Having examined the environmental impact study for the proposed BPS facility, I am writing to recommend the selection of site 2 or 3. Castner is viewed by many El Paso citizens as an ideal addition to our State Wilderness Park. The last thing we want there is a sprawling complex that politicians will then use as an excuse to rule out Castner for annexation into the State Park. The other two sites are every bit as usable for this facility and their selection is likely to be seen as a welcome addition. The selection of site 1 will be extremely controversial and generate alot of ill will. Why choose that route when a

location can be selected that meets the needs of the BPS without stirring up needless controversy. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Josie Lopez El Paso, Texas

From: Jorgechile@aol.com
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 12:33 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Dear Robin Divine,

I am a student at Captain John L. Chapin High School, and my Enviormantal Systems class is analyzing the situation about the first site you have picked for your 45 acre site. We feel that the choice you have made is not a very good one and you have failed to take all factors of your choice into consideration.

By building on the site that you have chosen will have a very big impact on all the animals in that area. At night certain species come down to the lowland to get their food. by doing what you are going to do, you will be invading their habitat. If this is taken into place they will be forced to move their source of food back into the upper part of the Castner range.

Another reason why this is not good is because this site holds a certain type of soil that has plants that can be found no where else in Texas. I feel that having these plant taken out of their envirmant for a building is very wrong and will be taking out a very important part of el paso out.

Thank you for your consideration
Jorge Martinez Jr.
AP Enviormantal Systems class

From: Sproul, John [jsproul@utep.edu]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 12:51 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Draft EA for Border Patrol Station and Sector HQ, El Paso, TX

Robin,

Attached, in MS Word format, are my comments on the draft EA for the proposed new Border Patrol station and sector headquarters in El Paso. I'll also snail-mail a signed hard copy.

Thank you for extending the comment period on this document. I would not have been able to submit comments otherwise.

-- John Sproul

<<Divine 03-10-24.doc>>

October 24, 2003

Robin Divine, Project Manager
SAIC
4242 Woodcock, Suite 150
San Antonio, TX 78228

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment
for the U.S. Border Patrol Station and Sector Headquarters
El Paso, Texas

Dear Ms. Divine:

I wish to offer the following comments on the draft environmental assessment (EA) for the Border Patrol's proposal to build a new station and sector headquarters in El Paso, Texas:

The Range of Alternatives Evaluated is Inadequate

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) implementing regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality state that federal agencies shall to the fullest extent possible "use the NEPA process to identify and assess the reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that will avoid or minimize adverse effects of these actions upon the quality of the human environment." The draft EA falls short on this score.

The draft EA states (p. 1-3) that the three alternative sites being evaluated were selected through a market-analysis study performed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and that "The market analysis is included in Appendix E of this document." However, Appendix E includes only an abbreviated tabular summary of the analysis and selected Border Patrol correspondence and memos. The material in Appendix E is not adequate for a critical evaluation of the Site Market Survey. The public needs to see the complete Survey to determine whether all viable site alternatives were given adequate consideration.

As an example, Biggs Field, which would appear to be a very suitable site, is described in the summary table as being rejected because "Ft. Bliss uses this area for egress, air operations and training." That may be, but it is not clear why this disqualifies Biggs Field as a suitable site. The public needs to see the full Site Market Survey to understand the reasoning behind this statement and to determine whether it is valid.

Although the three alternatives discussed in the draft EA are all described as viable, one of the documents in Appendix E indicates the Border Patrol concluded well over a year ago it would not consider Site 3. In an April 17, 2002 letter from Luis E. Barker of the Border Patrol to Daniel Lenz of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chief Patrol Agent Barker states that the Border Patrol "has recently removed Site 3 (McCombs between Sean Haggerty and Sarah Anne Ave.) from consideration due to the on-going construction of an elementary school in the Ysleta Independent School District." Still, this site was retained for analysis and public review in the EA. Some of the others with alleged shortcomings should have been also. The EA should give full analysis to a broader array of possible site alternatives.

In its scoping comments, the Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition asked you to evaluate the alternative of deferring any action on the Border Patrol's proposal until a comprehensive study of Castner Range and appropriate future use of the range lands can be completed. The draft EA includes no discussion of why this alternative was not carried forward for further analysis. Section 2.4 discusses only siting alternatives. The FMWC's suggested alternative, which is not the same as a "no action" alternative, continues to deserve full analysis.

Another alternative that deserves investigation is to keep the Sector Headquarters at the present location and move only the El Paso Station to a new location. The El Paso Station is just one of 12 Border Patrol stations in the El Paso Sector. It would seem there is no compelling operational requirement for having the El Paso Station and the Sector Headquarters at the same location.

Under this alternative, the Sector Headquarters would gain adequate room for expansion, and the acreage required for the El Paso Station would be reduced relative to that required for a station and sector headquarters, thus increasing the universe of potential sites. As an example, the table in Appendix E summarizing the Site Market Survey notes a 20+ acre brownfield site at Railroad and Transmountain that was rejected because "size

of property inadequate.” If the site is needed only for a new station and not a new sector headquarters, the acreage might well be adequate.

The Discussion of Impacts Due to Placing the Facilities at Site 1 is Inadequate

The draft EA does not acknowledge that construction at Site 1 would set a highly damaging precedent that would encourage future attempts to develop land on Castner Range. While there may be no other formal development proposals at this time, it is reasonable to foresee there will be in the future if Site 1 is selected for the Border Patrol facilities. No doubt proponents of these future proposals will seek to justify them on grounds they are compatible with the Border Patrol facilities and are small relative to “the vastness of Castner Range.”

The fact that there are no other formal development plans for Castner Range at this moment is not a good reason for ignoring the potential for such plans arising in the future. As the draft EA notes, “the December 2000 *Fort Bliss, Texas and New Mexico, Mission and Master Plan Environmental Impact Statement* did not identify any potential federal, state or local uses of Castner Range.” Yet, less than a year later, just such a potential use did surface: a Border Patrol Station and Sector Headquarters.

By its presence, this project can be expected to increase the likelihood of future requests to lease lower-elevation lands on Castner Range for public or private facilities. Given the ecological and scenic value of Castner Range, this is a highly significant impact.

The discussion of land-use impacts at Site 1 needs to address how construction at this site and the resulting increased potential for additional development on Castner Range will affect plans to incorporate Castner Range lands into Franklin Mountains State Park.

I appreciate the inclusion of a separate subsection on cumulative impacts (Sec. 4.2.2.5) in the discussion of impacts to biological resources. Other sections of Chapter 4 should include a like subsection. However, the conclusion that “the potential for cumulative impacts to biological resources from possible future projects is considered low on Castner Range” is erroneous.

As the draft EA recognizes, the lower-elevation lands on Castner Range are biologically important because almost all other alluvial fans associated with the Franklin Mountains have either been developed or are slated for future development. These lower-elevation lands are precisely the areas that will be subject to increased development pressure if the Border Patrol facilities are placed on Castner Range. The importance of the lower-elevation lands on Castner Range and the contribution they make to regional biodiversity need to be evaluated in greater detail, and, here as elsewhere, the EA needs to recognize that leasing Site 1 for the Border Patrol facilities has larger implications for the future of Castner Range.

In the discussion of impacts to geology and soils (Sec. 4.3), the draft EA states that “...the proposed construction activities primarily involve surface alterations and do not involve any major subsurface excavation, drilling or blasting...” On the contrary, the subsurface excavation required at Site 1 for finding and removing possible unexploded ordnance in areas planned for structures promises to be substantial and needs to be evaluated.

If the Castner Range Site Remains the Preferred Site, an EIS is Needed

The draft EA contemplates a finding of no significant impact for the proposed project. If the Castner Range site remains the preferred site, such a finding is highly inappropriate and legally indefensible. An environmental impact statement (EIS) will be necessary because:

- Due to its location on Castner Range the project is in an environmentally sensitive and ecologically critical area.
- The project will establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects.
- By increasing the likelihood of future requests to lease lands on Castner Range for public or private facilities, the project will likely result in highly significant cumulative adverse impacts.
- Those cumulative impacts would affect other land-use plans, most importantly the potential future addition of Castner Range to Franklin Mountains State Park.
- The environmental impacts of the project are highly controversial, as evidenced by the opposition to Site 1 expressed in the great majority of the scoping comment letters.
- The project is of a type for which the NEPA guidelines of the former Immigration and Naturalization Service normally require an EIS.

If the Castner Range Site Remains the Preferred Site, Fort Bliss Needs to be a Full Participant in the NEPA Process

If Site 1 remains the preferred site, then Fort Bliss’s decision on whether to lease the land will also require environmental analysis under NEPA. Moreover, as the owner and steward of Castner Range, Fort Bliss will need to address the broader issue of whether any leasing of Castner Range is appropriate and, if so, where. That

will require a comprehensive study of the range and appropriate future use of its lands, all subject to analysis in an EIS.

It makes sense for the two NEPA analyses – the Border Patrol's and Fort Bliss's – to be coordinated. The logical approach would be for Fort Bliss to conduct the necessary studies and prepare an EIS on future use of Castner Range. If those studies conclude that leasing land in the southeast corner of the range is appropriate, then the Border Patrol could complete its environmental analysis by tiering off of the Fort Bliss EIS.

Alternatively, the Border Patrol could select a site not on Castner Range. An EIS probably would not be necessary, and there would be no need for the Border Patrol to coordinate with a comprehensive evaluation of the range by Fort Bliss.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and thank you for extending the comment period. I would not have been able to review the document before the original deadline. Please keep me informed as the environmental analysis for this project proceeds. If the Castner Range site remains the preferred site, please send me a copy of the draft EIS.

Very truly yours,

John Sproul
601 West Yandell Dr. #25
El Paso, TX 79902

From: Kiseda, John J. [KisedaJJ@ci.el-paso.tx.us]
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 5:43 PM
To: 'robin.d.divine@saic.com'
Subject: Objections to the Border Patrol's Use of Castner Range for a New Station in El Paso, TX

Robin Divine, SAIC
4242 Woodcock Ave Suite 150
San Antonio, TX 78228

Dear sir;

Objections to the Border Patrol's Use of Castner Range for a New Station I want to express my disapproval of this proposed project's use of Castner Range, that will have negative impacts on the Chihuahuan Desert fauna and flora.

If approved, this action will not only have direct environmental impacts, but will also set a damaging precedent encouraging additional development in one of El Paso's last remaining natural treasures. Placement of the Border Patrol facilities on Castner Range would be a stimulus for further development efforts in the area and would encourage others to pursue piecemeal development of Castner Range lands; this concern has become even more troubling, due to the most recent proposal that the land be acquired via a lease. Castner Range extends from the Patriot Freeway almost to the mountain ridgeline and includes some of the most scenic and ecologically significant parts of the mountains. Hidden springs, complex geological features, unique plant associations, diverse landforms and noteworthy archaeological sites are among the important natural resources of the area. The proposed facilities would certainly have direct affects on the plant and animal resources on the 40 acres in question and would degrade scenic qualities of the area.

I once again state, that due to the aforementioned concerns, that the two other northeast El Paso sites that are not on Castner Range, be considered the primary and secondary sites for the proposed Border Patrol station. I continue to favor Alternative 2 because it meets the Border Patrol's requirement for ready access to a major highway (U.S. 54), is linked directly to the international border, does not conflict with existing developed neighborhoods, can serve as a stimulus for future economic development in that portion of northeast El Paso, and lastly, it avoids the costs, environmental impacts and likely time delays associated with construction on Castner Range. I appreciate the opportunity, to once again provide with my input as a citizen of El Paso, that the proposed Border Patrol Station be sited outside of Castner Range.

Sincerely,

John J Kiseda, Animal Curator, El Paso Zoo

4001 E. Paisano El Paso, TX 79905, Ph: 915-521-1850, Fax: 915-521-1857

From: Linda Cataldi [lcataldi@elp.rr.com]

Sent: Monday, October 20, 2003 12:58 PM

To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Cc: Linda Cataldi

Subject: Comment on Proposed Construction of a New Border Patrol Station in El Paso, TX

I wish to comment on the above proposal to build a new Border Patrol station in El Paso. Let me first state that I live and work in El Paso where I am a law enforcement officer. I am a supporter of the work that the U.S. Border Patrol does and believe that they need a new station. I have also read the environmental assessment that you and your staff have prepared.

That being said, I must now state that I believe that the Castner Range site (your preferred site) is NOT the best site for the Border Patrol station. I believe that the site at the intersection of U.S. 54 and McCombs would be a better site. I understand that the two sites are nearly equal in many respects and that the Castner Range site offers the Federal Government the advantages of nearby utilities and Federal ownership of the property, however, I believe that further construction within Castner Range WILL HARM the scenic beauty of the area. Castner Range is one of the last remaining areas within the city limits where one can appreciate the beauty of the desert floor curving up into the eastern side of the Franklin Mountains. In the springtime, this area is carpeted in brilliant yellow poppies. To my knowledge, this is the only area of El Paso in which this occurs. I should note that I didn't see any mention of these poppies in your environmental assessment.

I further noted that in your environmental assessment, you claim that construction of a Border Patrol station on Castner Range would be consistent with the Texas Department of Transportation (TexDOT) facility that was recently constructed nearby. I'm sorry, but, I consider the TexDOT facility to be an eye-sore on what was once a pristine parcel of

land. I feel that by building another facility in that area, it will encourage further encroachment on the range by other government agencies that want to build new facilities.

Finally, while I know that Castner Range may never be turned over to the Franklin Mountains State Park due to the cost of dud ordnance removal, the range, in its current state, seamlessly blends in with the state park. If one were to stand on U.S. 54 and look west to the Franklin Mountains, one could not tell where Castner Range ends and where the state park begins. I prefer to keep it that way!

Thank you for your consideration,
John Cataldi
10108 De Anza Circle
El Paso, TX 79925

Subject: Location of new Border Patrol facility
Author: "Jhargrave" <SMTP:jhargrave@earthlink.net>
Date: 10/23/2003 12:05 PM

I strongly favor the site on Hondo Pass for construction of the Border Patrol facility. This area is conveniently located for the Border Patrol. It is in an area that is already developed. It simply makes good sense to use this location.

I believe that those who oppose this location are less than candid in their opposition. I know this is not the pristine site that they claim it to be because I live in the area.

The opposition group claims that the poppies which bloom in the area will be "in jeopardy" if this site is used. I have never seen poppies in this area, but I have seen poppies blooming profusely in the median on Transmountain Road between Rushing and the Freeway-the area that is soon to be paved as Loop 375. Perhaps the group will also oppose the continuation of Loop 375!

Joan Hargrave
5101 Wally Dr. El Paso, TX 79924

From: JGibson932@aol.com
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 8:32 AM
To: Robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: casner range...let it be

Dear Robin, we need to leave the Casner Range alone. We are finding excuses to slowly whittle away our lovely mountains to development using one excuse or another. How

many cities are as lucky as we are to have such a pretty place right next door. There are species of plants that are unique to this area and we should hold the entire area in trust so that our grand kids will be able to appreciate the beauty of our local mountains. There are other better places for the Border Patrol to place its facilities, and getting them into this wilderness area is simply an excuse to start the irrevocable process of development! Every time we promote needless development we invade the myriad homes of other species. The health of any place is found in its biodiversity. Let it be! Jim Gibson, M.D.

From: James Fashing [JFashing@co.el-paso.tx.us]
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 11:38 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Cc: district#1@ci.el-paso.tx.us; district#2@ci.el-paso.tx.us;
district#3@ci.el-paso.tx.us; district#4@ci.el-paso.tx.us;
district#5@ci.el-paso.tx.us; district#6@co.el-paso.tx.us;
district#7@ci.el-paso.tx.us; district#7@ci.el-paso.tx.us;
mayor@elpasotexas.gov
Subject: Regarding proposed action of Castner Range (aka Site 1) for the
U.S. Border Patrol Station and Sector Headquarters

To Whom It May Concern:

Undoubtedly, the Franklin Mountains are precious to El Pasoans. They provide scenic beauty no matter how close or far away you happen to be. Just as the Franklins are precious - they are also a scarce resource. There will never be anything to replace it once it's gone.

So, how do we delve out this resource? On the west side of the Franklins we've seen unprecedented development. This is an obvious boom for developers and contractors and the fortunate few families who take residence there. On the other hand, there is a magnificent trail system there that has been around for decades. Slowly it is loosing out to the bulldozers. City Council eases our fears with assurances that the trail system will be saved on the North side of Transmountain at the state park, but the trail system I mentioned will inevitably be filled with neighborhoods.

On the other side of the Franklins lies Castner Range. My father started taking me hiking up there when I was a young boy. Since then I've been hiking, biking and Jeeping all throughout this area. It is, without doubt, the most beautiful, pristine area in El Paso or this part of Texas. I had enjoyed this part of the mountain for over 20 years until I was scolded by the Range Patrol one day where I was informed that my risk of demise was immanent from unexploded ordinance. Two weeks later I received a thoughtful note from some Captain in the JAG office at Ft. Bliss informing me that if I was ever caught on that property again I would be prosecuted by the Federal Government. I certainly didn't want any problem with Uncle Sam, so I quit hiking there.

I have always hoped that the Castner Range area would be turned into a park for all to use. I have always feared that once developers got a hold of that side of the mountain that they would rip it to pieces - all for a profit. These mountains are there for all time if we are willing to save them. Otherwise, it will be divvied out a few acres at a time until all you can see will be houses, apartments and law enforcement academies and sub-stations. As evidence I offer the development of Crazy Cat Mountain - while it is a hideous eyesore, we can rest assured that the developer and contractors made a ton of money.

The desert surrounding the city is an unlimited resource. It is anything but scarce. It is there for the taking. If we must build, then it should be there - out in the sand. The study conducted by Mr. Rufus Johnson from SAIC in San Antonio was a tantalizing piece of investigation. He found no significant impact for the proposed U.S. Border Patrol Station at Site 1 (aka Castner Range). He noted that (chap 3.1) hazardous material/waste would not be affected. He noted that (chap 3.2) the Lyre snake, Horned lizard and the loggerhead shrike might be temporarily displaced, but would re-inhabit the area after construction. Finally, he noted that the quality of the soil would benefit. He failed to mention the citizens of El Paso. I understand that it would be nifty to have your headquarters in such a beautiful and unique place and it would only tax El Pasoans just a little piece of their soul - until the next time a big special project comes along - then we loose a little more of our soul.

The wonderful things we could do with Castner Range! Activities like scouting, hiking, biking, camping and off-roading - any outdoor enthusiast would benefit from the preservation of this area. Otherwise, I fear that little by little we will see our mountains turned into private vistas for the privileged.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my views.

Sincerely,

Jim Fashing - El Paso, Texas

Below is a link where the SAIC study can be viewed:

<http://www.spa.usace.army.mil/>

From: Jessica Watkins [headoncollision10@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 9:54 PM

To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Subject: Border Patrol vs. Castner Range

Dear Robin,

The issue of the Castner Range is not just one of whether the Border Patrol should be allowed to use a 45-acre tract of land in Castner Range. The real issue is whether Castner Range in its current state is more valuable to the human race. Currently there are unique plants and animals within its bounds, but they are inaccessible to humans because of the unexploded ordinances. These ordinances have already killed several humans.

What is needed is a plan to retain enough land for the survival of the plants and animals within its boundary, but eliminates the unexploded ordinance hazard so that

humans can enjoy these resources. For example, developers such as the Border Patrol could develop 45-acres of land if they remove the unexploded ordinances from 90-acres of a defined Castner Range reserve. In this way, the developers will provide a usable natural reserve that the general population can really enjoy. It could then become a part of the Franklin Mountain State Park.

Sincerely,
Jessica Watkins
from Chapin High School

From: Jesse Brown [martyandjb@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 3:06 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Proposed Border Patrol Construction on Castner Range

Good afternoon,

I would like to announce my opposition to the plan to construct a facility on Castner Range. My family and friends enjoy the view and activities of the location just as it is now - especially when blooming season arrives. I understand the space and economic difficulties our city faces, and I am aware of the slight economic boost that a large construction project brings, but I am sure that another site is more suitable for the Border Patrol's needs. Mr. John Esquivel does note that, "...we don't expect anyone to build around there any time soon, so we have a security buffer and we have immediate access to US-54." I am not sure Mr. Esquivel has conducted an appropriate security assessment of the site. The site is indeed very close to two major highways - as he points out - and is well within busy commercial zones just across the highway. If Mr. Esquivel is implying a security risk as a factor in determining a prime location, then I submit that further research of similar facilities around the country be initiated by the Border Patrol. Note that one major, secure, location of a federal agency sits inside Ft. Bliss property some distance from vehicle traffic and other civilian areas. Of course I refer to JTF -6 in El Paso. While I do not suggest that such security may be needed by the Border Patrol, certainly there can be no argument that if security is an issue, then placing a facility in such a high-profile area like Castner Range would render security ineffective. One would be wise to realize that secure areas should be far from prying eyes and difficult to get to. His second point about not expecting further development is difficult to understand. I do realize that development on Federal land is not as simple or easy as on City/County land, but neither is it unexpected. Simply look at the facilities that have already been built to see the history of the development at that location. I admit that the development has been slow, but a facility of the size currently considered seems to make up for lack of speed in its sheer size alone.

This proposed facility would rival Wal-Mart in size and activity (along with its corresponding lack of design and beauty!) Again, I believe another site, besides our wonderful mountain range, should be considered for development. The article in the El Paso Times does note that a secondary site on US-54 and McCombs is being considered. Perhaps this second site would suffice for the Border Patrol's needs for access to a major

road and security - do not forget that there is sufficient, affordable, and great housing near the second site for staff to live- not a small consideration for a major employer.

I would like to thank you for your consideration of my message and hope this helps to change the decision to build on Castner Range. I also hope that any future discussion to build there, by any agency or business, will be not be tolerated by developers, officials, or elected representatives.

Sincerely,

Jesse Brown

10920 Walden Pond, El Paso, TX 79934

From: JLight34@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2003 12:12 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range Bad Idea

Ms. Divine

I am a homeowner that lives across the street from the Castner Range that the Border Patrol would like to put their new facility. I along with my neighborhood are totally against the building on this land. A number of people walk along this area everyday and find it to be beautiful with its abundant species of animals and plants. We do not wish there to be any building but believe that the area should be incorporated into the Franklin Mountains State Park. We believe that the facility would have better operations at the McCombs and US 54 site. Due to the fact that the area is a business area where as the Castner site is surrounded by residential.

Please let me know what else we can do to help prevent this building from happening.
Jeremiah Light

From: Crabtree, Jeffrey L [jcrabtree@utep.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 6:29 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol building on Castner Range

Dear Ms. Divine:

Please help us keep the Castner Range as open and free from urban sprawl as possible.

Once the Border Patrol builds at Hondo Pass and Gateway North (Hwy 54), other builders will follow. Eventually the beauty of those foothills leading to the Great Mountains will be only a vague memory, and the wild life habitat will be gone forever!

Please, do not let the Border Patrol build on Castner Range!

Jeffrey L. Crabtree

From: jeff brannon [eglin_afb@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 9:37 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

Castner Range should be added to Franklin Mt. State Park. Under no circumstances should further development be allowed in the area. Franklin Mt. State Park is a jewel that should be enlarged—not hemmed in and destroyed by development.
Jeff Brannon, eglin_afb@yahoo.com

From: jim field [jim_field@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 11:25 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: U.S. BPS and Sector HQ

Sites 2@3 are preferable locations for the BPS complex. We do not want Castner despoiled with more construction in an area appropriate for annexation to the State Wilderness Park. The other sites will provide a more than suitable locale for the proposed BPS facility without the resentment and bitterness that locating in Castner would generate.
Thank you for your consideration.
James T Field, 508 Candado El Paso, Tx.79912

From: Jackson Polk [jpolk@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 9:19 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

Hello;

I oppose any development on Castner Range in Northeast El Paso. The Border Patrol can find a lot of great real estate elsewhere along the major highways that they need for their operation. Castner is not the place for them, or any other group. Castner should become part of the Franklin Mountains State Park. We cannot undo this kind of development, so let's not do it in the first place!
Jackson Polk
915-584-6900

From: Israel Jacquez [ijacquez@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 10:29 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Cc: sstack5114@aol.com; ztorres@elpasotimes.com
Subject: Border Patrol Station at Castner Range

Dear Robin,

As residents of Northeast El Paso, my wife and I are very concerned about any further development East of the Franklin Mountains & West of Highway 54. Our concern is one that is commonly shared among our other Northeast El Paso neighbors.

Unfortunately, for the past couple of weeks since the El Paso Times article was printed on Oct 13, all our efforts to find out more information on this proposed site for another Border Patrol Station have been met with non-cooperative individuals from the Border Patrol, El Paso Archeological Museum, UTEP Library nor the recommended website. None of these individuals had any idea or claimed to have no idea of the proposed BP Station at Castner Range.

I can assure you with a bit more time and as word gets around, there will be alot more concerned Northeast residents that will not be appreciative of this type of development so close to the mountain. Northeast El Paso has historically been sought by people seeking a quieter life away from the everyday bustle of the city. And the undisturbed mountain views have definitely been the deciding factor of living in the Northeast for most of the folks already living here.

Therefore, maybe you can answer our questions:

1. What side of Transmountain Road (N or S) is the proposed site for the new BP Station?
2. What are the two other Northeast sites that were also evaluated in the environmental study?
3. What would be the purpose of the BP Station in the Northeast?
4. What are the costs of building on the mountain versus building another station East of Hwy 54?
5. What was the name of the company that conducted the Environmental Assessment?
6. Castner Range has already been targeted to eventually be part of the Franklin Mountains State Park and alot of people have already been working diligently to make that dream come true some day to preserve the beauty of one of the few scenic areas around El Paso, so why would the Border Patrol take this step backwards and try to nullify any progress that has already been made to preserve the beauty and nature of the Franklin Mountains?

We would appreciate a response to our questions.

Israel Jacquez
Patricia A. Jacquez

Ruben Jacquez
Luz Jacquez

Albert Jacquez
Isela Jacquez

Ericca Jacquez
Laura Blanco
Monee Blanco
Chantel Blanco

Ezekiel Blanco
Amalia Andrade
Lettie Rodriguez
Manny Rodriguez

Audrey Rodriguez
Max Rodriguez

From: JOSEPH GROFF [JOEANDINGA@peoplepc.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 6:53 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Fw: Proposed Border Patrol Facility on Castner Range

Sorry I mi.sspelled your name the first time. Please accept my comments on subject
----- Original Message -----

From: JOSEPH GROFF
To: robin.d.devine@saic.com
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 12:36 PM
Subject: Proposed Border Patrol Facility on Castner Range

Castner Range is a rare pristine area left in the Franklin Mountain area. With two other readily available sites, the Castner site should not be selected.

The annual display of the poppies and the spectacular view of the mountains are important to many El Pasoans. However, there is the more important aspect: the destruction of the pristine area, which is home to the threatened Texas Horny Toad, rare plant species and other fauna and flora.

The bright lights required, the noise, the gas tanks, maintenance work, in addition to human and vehicle activities will disturb the ecosystem, the birds and mammals far beyond the actual acreage.

The Castner site should remain as is until hopefully the whole Castner Range can become part of the Franklin Mountains State Park.

Inga Groff
9151 Mt Etna, El Paso TX 79924
915-755-2957

From: Harold E Mason [diplomat6@juno.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 11:25 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Dear M.S. Divine,

Reference The El Paso Times dated Oct 13th, subject: Castner Range Border Patrol relocation. I and many of my colleagues strongly oppose the proposal to build a 45 acre facility for illegal immigrants on the Caster Range (in the heart of the Franklin mountains of El Paso) for the following reasons.

1. It would require demolishing a large area of the mountain itself of numerous cacti species.
2. 10 species of plants found nowhere else in Texas would be destroyed.
3. Wildlife would suffer immeasurably with this proposal. Wild Deer, a number of reptile species would be deprived of a living area with this proposal.
4. The wild Poppies which grow in the early spring in the mountains here is extremely beautiful and has become a tourist attraction for this side of the Franklin mountains.
5. There is much acreage available on flat lands here close to the proposed area that could easily be used. To destroy the mountainous area would be an environmental crime in my and many of my friends opinion. Once this beautiful portion of the mountain has been ravaged by bulldozers it's gone forever.

In closing, I am retired and have time to respond to the proposed Border Patrol location. Most of my friends work and really don't have time to respond as proposed in the newspaper article. Not everyone subscribes to the El Paso times and have not seen the article. So I'm asking you to consider this if the response as recommended in the newspaper to you is light. If you could see the area they propose to level with bulldozers (I'm not sure you have seen it) I feel you would agree it's one of Gods beautiful creations. Thank you for your attention,

Sincerely

Harold Mason U.S. Department of State, (foreign Service) Retired

From: halngale@webtv.net
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 10:50 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Preserve Castner

I was shocked to learn that the Border Patrol officials plan to build on Castner Range. This is one of the few remaining natural beauties in El Paso. Please do not let this happen. Remember 9/11....Forget political correctness!!

From: Gregg Henry [fullcircle@zianet.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2003 1:23 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol facility

Ms. Devine -

Please register my complete objection to the location of the proposed Border patrol facility on the Trans Mountain / Castner Range site. This site is truly one of the few joys in the springtime in El Paso, when the poppies are in bloom - people come from afar just

to see the beauty. To destroy that when there are viable alternatives would be wrong. I am opposed to this site location and request that another be chosen. Thank you.
Gregg Henry, fullcircle@zianet.com

From: Gloria Jimenez [JIMENGL@kellyservices.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2003 5:01 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Environmental Assessment Re: proposed Border Patrol Facility

As a concerned citizen and a resident of El Paso in the Northeast area, I oppose the building of any type of facility, mall, or expansion of any sort that would involve the Castner Range. Having not lived in El Paso for over 20 years and living in many different areas of the United States my appreciation to the arid climate and gorgeous view of the Franklins has made me appreciate what this range has to offer. Many citizens in El Paso who rarely take the time to take a 15 minute drive to enjoy a spectacular view have no idea what they are missing. In the Spring we have the gorgeous plush carpet of poppies that can be seen for over 15 miles, in the Winter we have the snow cap peak when we occasionally get a snow storm and in the Summer/Fall we have the pleasure of seeing the Yucca's in bloom. And if you take a close look you may even get a glimpse of a waterfall (trickle) non-the less still some type of water running down the side of the mountain.

Why we would we want to have a building smack in the middle of this artists landscape? Only to obstruct the view and home to not only wildlife but to plants that are indigenous to this area. It is my deepest concern that once we allow development of this range that all wildlife will be lost forever. There are plenty of empty buildings and less attractive land that the Corp of Engineers could certainly look at. Contractors in El Paso don't try to keep as must of the natural landscape in mind when developing communities. Unlike other cities, like Las Cruces, they keep in mind that the natural landscape of the area can be worked into the development of the land and make it look like it belongs. I doubt this will happen here.

Worried Northeast Resident that my canvas painting will be destroyed. Priceless!!
Gloria Jimenez

From: Mary Lou Ayala [mlayala@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 3:09 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: From Gilbert Ayala re: Proposed Border Patrol Site

Dear Ms. Divine,

I'm also writing to comment about your article which appeared in the El Paso Times. I'm a native El Pasoan, I've enjoyed our Franklin Mountains forever. Friends and family that visit El Paso for the first time always comment on how beautiful our mountains are.

El Paso is a growing metropolitan which is starting to run out of land to expand too, with New Mexico only a few miles away. If we allow the Border Patrol to build their training facility in the proposed area they will destroy land that is enjoyed and loved by many El Pasoans.

This area grows the Mexican Poppies every year, a colophon that brings El Paso notarized publicity and makes El Paso unique. El Pasoans enjoy this area as a weekend outing, a place where one can learn about our natural environment. The Franklin State Park in situated next to the proposed area. If we annex the proposed construction area with the park, it will give future El Pasoans a larger park that can be enjoyed. Also it will protect the annual growth of the Mexican Poppies.

Please select an alternate area for the Border Patrol Facility and preserve our Franklin Mountains by annexing the lands in question as part of the Franklin Mountain State Park. Ft. Bliss has proprietorship to other lands, let the Border Patrol select another site that is not conflicting with the environment and the present and future needs of all El Pasoans.

Thank You.

Gilbert Ayala
4304 Loma Del Norte, El Paso, Texas 79934
@ 915.822.2734

From: Gertrud Konings [gertrud@cichlidpress.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 08, 2003 9:04 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: EA for the Border Patrol in El Paso

To: Robin Divine
SAIC, 4242 Woodcock Suite150
San Antonio, Texas 78228

Dear Robin Divine. Living in El Paso has been a pleasure for us, especially because of the beautiful desert in and around the city. We relax on the weekends by hiking through it and after seven years in El Paso, we are still discovering new faces of the desert - so last year's long and extensive bloom of the California Gold Poppies at the Castner Range. The area was crowded with people to enjoy this breathtaking sudden change of the desert. I am including in the attachment a photo that we took there, so you will appreciate the beauty of this sight. Please, I want to urge you to not allow construction going on at this unique place in El Paso. Allow people to continue enjoying nature in the city. Hoping for your understanding and help in preventing the destruction of a place that makes El Paso unique I remain Respectfully yours,

Gertrud D. Konings--

gertrud@cichlidpress.com



From: Gigi5312@aol.com
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 9:25 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range

Please leave Castner Range alone. There are other sites in Northeast El Paso that would be suitable for the Border Patrol expansion.

The Castner Range site is at the foot of the beautiful mountain and is home to the poppies that bloom each year. The poppies are viewed and admired by folks from all over Texas and other states.

As a Director of the Women's Department of the Chamber of Commerce (a working part of the Department) we are vitally interested in preserving the natural scenery in El Paso. At the same time, we are very much in favor of promoting the Border Patrol facilities (and send many folks to their museum) but we can also guide them to their expanded facilities in other parts of North East El Paso.

Please, please rethink your consideration of this beautiful site !!
We do not want additional facilities in this area.
Georgia Pettit

From: George Ferguson [georgef@email.arizona.edu]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 8:19 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Environmental Assessment for Border Patrol Station

Dear Robin Divine,
I am writing in regard to the Environmental Assessment for the U.S. border Patrol Station and Sector HQ in El Paso, TX.

Although I have not thoroughly read the entire document, I did check the biology portion, and it seems fairly inclusive. Some of the biological surveying (done over only 2 days) may not provide enough data to really make appropriate decisions, rather it is based on the more complete Ft. Bliss studies of a much larger region, McGregor Range.

The site #1 at the SE corner of Castner Range may hold more biological, archeological, geological and scenic value than revealed in the report. As a biologist, I will only comment on that aspect, and mention my opinion about the scenic aspect.

I grew up in El Paso, and learned a great deal about the area. When I return occasionally, I am shocked to see neat natural features disappear or become defaced by the expanding population there. So, I value more and more the remaining open space.

Bajadas (or mountain base slopes) are natural features created by eons of weathering and erosion. Alluvial fans are part of the bajada. Both are the product of hundreds of thousands of years of soil surface formation. This is something many people have no concept of and do not appreciate--it takes the perspective of geological time to see it. But the bajadas are a real and tangible work of art in nature--and it is extremely easy for us human species to change the process.

The bajada of the Franklin Mts. resulted from Holocene erosion of Pleistocene Ice Age surfaces (time periods, of course). Much of those ancient Ice Age surfaces are still intact (usually as deeper, now desert grassland soils), and the shallow desert soils that have formed since are only inches thick. Once scraped, the thousands and thousands of years of production instantly change and start over from the disturbance. Some disturbances may happen naturally (landslides). A scrape will recover, but never to its original state. In human time, a scrape is therefore irreplaceable, and a shame if intentionally human caused.

My point is that the bajadas of the Franklins are extremely special regions of the desert landscape, and most people living in El Paso do not realize how small an area they represent in the Chihuahuan Desert Region. It is very small compared the the immense square miles of sandy basin fill in between the ranges (as where it Border Patrol Station on the Columbus Road is located).

Also, the Hueco and Franklin bajadas, as the Environmental Assessment mentions, represent the northern extents of that ecotype, and thus the northern limit of some species like lechuguilla agaves. What it does not mention is that the Hueco Mts bajadas are different than the Franklin Mts. bajadas, each supporting many different species of plants and animals.

The sotol mentioned in the Assessment is the western one, *Dasyliirion wheeleri*. It is not the same as the common one found in the Hueco bajadas which occurs eastward into central Texas, for example. The barrel cactus on Castner Range is the one common in the Sonoran Desert in Arizona, and it only reaches as far east as the Franklins. Many other

examples, the poppies on Castner Range, the variety of Rock rattlesnake, the Desert Grasslands Whiptail lizard, and other examples of species that reach their eastern limits on that bajada, are therefore only found in the state of Texas right there! The igneous rock source of the alluvial fan there makes it even more unique.

The Franklin Mts. bajada, as limited in extent as it is, in comparison with the vast sandy mesquite-soaptree yucca plains and former grasslands surrounding it, is in deep danger of disappearing due to "development" on all sides except the State Park interior.

Please consider an alternative to Site #1 on Castner Range as the future building site of the Border Patrol Station. I think the scenic value of viewing the mountains from as low on the bajada as possible is of utmost and primary value to the citizens, past, present and future of El Paso. It is irreplaceable and needs protection now. This Army Corp. of Engineers project could help make a turning point in the area's developing history.

Thank you,

George Ferguson, biologist

P.S. Some wildlife will appreciate you saving their little patch of larger mesquites below the dam. And I bet you would be surprised by the amount of amphibian (toad) activity one could find in that corner of Castner Range in July. I remember finding many Great Plains toads and other species while driving along the old War Road near there.

From: Gary Walford [glwalford3@juno.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2003 11:09 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Proposed Border Patrol Facility on Castner Range In North East
El Paso

Dear Sir

I wish to go on record as being strongly opposed to any further development of Castner Range in North East El Paso. Castner Range is the home of many different animals, insects, reptiles and plant species that should be protected. These species are running out of room with no where to go or grow. We recently killed a Mountain Lion here because it was looking for food in areas that we built up and as a result it had to go. So be it but enough is enough. It is time to draw the line and just say no to those who plan to make money while they destroy what little natural beauty is left of this wonderful area. All what is left of this area should be one complete State Park for all of us to enjoy for Generations to come. See it with your own eyes. See what has already been destroyed in the name of progress. Look at the vacant high rises that were formerly hotels downtown or the empty office buildings. Look at the empty manufacturing plants that are still empty. Then take a real close look at the current Border Patrol Facility and convince us who will occupy it or is it too destined to be an empty structure that will be no more than an eye soar and a tribute to government waste. The Range itself located at the base of the Franklin Mountains is, for the most part, adjacent residential areas consisting of single

family dwellings. These families should not have to have a facility that houses criminals in its midst. The existing Border Patrol Facility that is located on Montana Street next to the Air Port is a better location to return illegals to their respective countries. Juarez is about the same distance from the existing Montana location as it would be from the proposed location on Castner Range. The old facility should be remodeled to meet current needs instead of a new facility being built. The old facility would stand empty for a long time and we have enough large vacant properties, that have remained vacant for years, in the El Paso community. I see this as another waist of tax dollars that ultimately will destroy the natural environment of what is left of the Franklin Mountains and Castner Range. I thank you for your time and I hope that you will give strong consideration to all the statements of those who oppose any more development of this area.

Gary Walford

From: MyrnaS@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 1:04 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol on Castner Range

I sincerely hope that the Border Patrol will be located on another suitable site, and not on the Castner Range, which is where it is scheduled to go. There is another site at Rt. 54 and McCombs which would be just as good, and it would not destroy the natural habitat of plant and animal life.

Castner Range is a wonderful wilderness area, with so many things growing there that do not grow anywhere else, not to mention the wildlife that would be disrupted should that area be developed.

Once the Border Patrol locates there, it is only a matter of a small amount of time before other buildings and parking lots will be erected, and the entire area will be developed. Once paved parking lots and buildings move into these wilderness areas, they are gone for good....and the plants and wildlife with them. Little by little we are destroying the beauty of our mountains and the landscape surrounding them. Is this going to be one more step in the wrong direction? I hope not.

Please, let's preserve the little we have left, and not jump on the bandwagon of those who want to pave over any open stretch of land just for the sake of convenience.....or "just because it's there". If this continues to happen, our children and grandchildren will never be able to enjoy, or know what it was like when El Paso still had true wilderness areas.

Frank & Myrna Schosser
El Paso, Texas

From: GOFORIT [goforit@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 8:16 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: saviing our mountain

I have lived in El Paso off and on my entire life always in the Northeast. What always draws me back to this area is our mountains. I can't believe anyone would want to build there. It's natural beauty will be gone forever and everyone knows once someone builds everyone will build. Our once beautiful Northeast mountains will be nothing more than streets, buildings and construction sites. The Border Patrol will be welcomed in the Northeast just not on our mountain. PLEASE SAVE OUR MOUNTAIN.

Sincerely,
Eva Urbanek, Northeast/El Paso

From: Edward R. Holland [bizman@cincopuntos.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2003 12:53 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: No to Border Patrol Headquarters at Castner Range!

Robin,
Thank you for the opportunity to write you and address the issue concerning the possible construction of the Border Patrol Headquarters on Castner Range.

I have been hiking on the Castner Range (illegally, I confess) since I arrived in El Paso from Connecticut in 1995.

We face a critical juncture in the future of the Franklin Mountains State Park. The people of El Paso have a gem in the form of the Franklin Mountains State Park. The Castner range would add immensely to this treasure, in that, much of the upper portions of the FMSP(State Park) are inaccessible to most people not accustomed to hiking in large mountains. The Castner range being lower and much flatter (comparatively speaking) than the upper FMSP, is a perfect addition to entice walkers, hikers, and mountain bikers from the large metropolitan area of El Paso. Nowhere in the United States does such a large, undeveloped wilderness area exist so close to a huge urban center. The Castner range also serves as a convenient, easily accessible point of entry to the entire Eastern half of the State Park.

Construction of the Border Patrol Headquarters will open the door for development of the entire frontage road area of Gateway South, then leading to further residential development in the near future. One only need look at the area North of the proposed site (North of the Wilderness museum) to see the residential development that has occurred after the range was opened for construction. Restaurants and retail spaces will follow to

satisfy the demand for these services. The area will change forever. I have seen deer and more species of birds that I can identify while walking on the range. Mountain lion roam the land in search of food. Development will inalterably affect these animals.

This site is also too close to existing residential areas to accommodate the increased traffic that the proposed construction would bring. Other sites (and there must be an overabundance of good sites in the Northeast alone) would be much more well suited to the needs of the Border Patrol than the Castner Range site.

Please act for the common good of the people of El Paso. Please use your influence and good judgement in deciding the fate of the Castner Range. The land could be a legacy for generations to come. A place of respite and peace, a place to visit and leave the rigors of the urban life. A place, over the long term, that could add much more financial prosperity as a tourist stop for bikers, hikers, birders and horseback riders. The largest park within an urban city limits in the world. You have the power to create a tremendous legacy for the people of El Paso and the world. The decision to build on this land now can never be undone and will lead to further development.

Keep Castner Range wild. Please do the right thing.

Yours,

Eddie Holland, Business Manager

Cinco Puntos Press, 701 Texas Ave. El Paso, TX. 79901, 915-838-1625

From: Dustin Zozaya [forty6andtwo2002@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 7:48 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol Station

Dear Robin Divine,

My name is Dustin Zozaya and I am an AP Environmental Science student at Chapin High School. I read in Monday's El Paso Times of the plans to build another Border Patrol Station. I firmly believe that of the 3 sites chosen, Site two would be the best choice, and Site 3 second best.

Site 1 is Castner Range, and as a resident of Northeast El Paso and an Environmental Science student, I believe that the Border Patrol Station is not worth the sacrifice of 45- acres it would take to build it. There are many impacts the new station would have on this region, i.e. the beautiful foothill- view, and the numerous species of wildlife and vegetation that would be suffering a loss of habitat.

Each spring, there is a beautiful outburst of wild poppies, a plant that is not found anywhere else in Texas. People flock to lay eyes on this magnificent view, and putting an unnatural building there would create somewhat of an eye-sore. We would lose 45-acres of the soil that gives life to these poppies, and, although only seasonal, they are very important to the residents of Northeast El Paso.

Other plants are dependent on this soil, such as the Canyon Morning Glory and the Silver Puffs. Developing this area would only rob us of these natural beauties, indigenous in Texas only to El Paso.

Coyotes and other wildlife that thrive on the foothills would lose much of their habitat as well.

It was mentioned that Site 1 is ideal because of its location, mainly its access to US-54. This holds untrue, being that Site 2 is located off of US-54, giving the BP direct access to it.

Site 3, on the intersection of Sean Haggerty and McCombs Street, is heavily developed already, and is in the middle of a Residential area, making location and the commute to it a hassle. The site is located next to a fire station, making it a nuisance.

Site 2 is ideal, it is located along US-54, and is undeveloped. Although the better of the best 2 choices (Sites 2 and 3), there is the problem of utilities.

The issue of buying the land from the PSB is not applicable, for it will take about a million dollars to remove unexploded shells from Castner Range, (shells that are not hurting the environment) and this million is a million that we do not have.

In conclusion, I hope that you consider these circumstances and make the right choice. Destruction by development to Castner Range is wrong and should not be done. Do not rob Northeast and ALL El Paso residents from this natural beauty.

Sincerely,

Dustin Zozaya, forty6andtvo2002@yahoo.com

From: Dorline O Woncjar [dowoncjar@juno.com]
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2003 12:28 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol site

I do not want the Border Patrol or any other group getting any part of castner Range. It will go to the Franklin Mountain State Park.
Dorline O. Woncjar, AARP member

From: diane Crabtree [occupy@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 8:40 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol on Castner Range

Robin Divine
SAIC
4242 Woodcock Ave Suite 150
San Antonio, TX 78228

Ms Divine:

I have been a member of the Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition for the last two years. I believe Stan Stack, members of the Coalition and Dr. Richard Worthington, a

professor at UTEP, have been very vocal in all the meetings about not placing the facility on Castner Range land.

If being near highway 54 is essential then the land located at Highway 54 and McCombs should be ideal. I have been told that no one is safe on the old range due to explosives from testing and training conducted by the Army in the past. There has been a drive to add the Castner Range to Franklin Mountains State Park, but has been delayed due to the cost of clearing explosives.

Just because there is some development on the Range doesn't justify more development. This will be the tip of an iceberg, once the Border Patrol is on the land rampant development will occur. Any building on the Range WILL, of course, impact plants and wildlife. A small print in any desert causes huge changes and Castner Range IS a desert.

Please reject the Castner Range site and choose the Highway 54 and McCombs site.

Diane Crabtree

7063 Crown Ridge Drive, El Paso, TX 79912, 915-584-7406

From: David S. Keller [steelers3rivers@earthlink.net]

Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 5:35 PM

To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Subject: BORDER PATROL FACILITY

I am totally against the proposed location of the new Border Patrol facility being built on Castner Range.

This are is the only area in Texas where certain species of cacti and other desert plants can be found, furthermore it will desert a pristine view of our beautiful mountain scenery. I believe the new facility should be built and the location of U.S. 54?McCombs location. To build on Castner Range would be a travesty.

--- David S. Keller

--- steelers3rivers@earthlink.net

From: David Carrillo [dcarrillo@elp.rr.com]

Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 10:26 PM

To: robin.d.divine@saic.com

Subject: BORDER PATROL DEVELOPMENT IN CASTNER RANGE, EL PASO TX

This E-mail is in responce to the article in the El Paso Times on Monday October 13, 2003 regarding development of a 45 acre site on Castner Range in Northeast El Paso TX. I am a resident in Northeast El Paso and I am strongly opposed to the development in Castner heights! This area is one of the few places left In El Paso where the natural

Beauty of the High Chihuahua desert vegetation can be admired. I am very disappointed this scenic area would be considered when there is plenty of land available across this city. My guess it is based on cost and convince and not made with any Environmental Conservation heart. Developing this land will be a blight on the Mountain!.
David L Carrillo, 915 834 1476

From: Dacah@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2003 3:32 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: (no subject)

Please build the Border Patrol station somewhere else. Castner Range should be left alone. There are many other areas where it would not be a detraction to our once beautiful mountain. Build it on the same side as Cohen Stadium please. Spring time or when we have had more rain than usual brings out the plant life on the slopes of the mountain please don't ruin it.

From: Skibowe@aol.com
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2003 11:36 AM
To: ROBIN.D.DIVINE@saic.com
Subject: CASTNER RANGE
DEAR ROBIN,
AS A LIFELONG RESIDENT OF THIS AREA I STRONGLY OPPOSE THE PROPOSED USE OF CASTNER RANGE FOR BORDER PATROL USAGE. THIS IS A PRISTINE AREA AND NEEDS TO BE PRESERVED FOR FUTURE ENJOYMENT.
I WOULD SUPPORT THE OTHER TWO LOCATIONS FOR THIS FACILITY.
THANK YOU,
CURTIS R. HAMMOCK, 3300 SANDS AVE. EL PASO, TX. 79904

From: CBuBu@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 5:29 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Poppies vs. Progress

To whom it may concern,

I am a senior at Chapin High School in AP Environmental Science. After reading the article in the newspaper titled "Poppies vs. Progress," I felt I needed to take a stand and make my voice heard. I am not against the building of the new Border Patrol facility, but I am against the building of it at the proposed site of Castner Range. Castner Range is one of the very few sites in El Paso that is not full of buildings and that is rather nice to look at in the spring while driving by. Assistant Chief John Esquivel says that "Castner

Range is a preferred site because we don't expect anyone to build around there any time soon," but this will reap totally opposite results. If one comes, they all will follow. Why not build it out by McCombs, closer to businesses and less of a controversy. Castner Range is home to native plants found nowhere else in Texas, so why not build it somewhere else where you don't have to worry about destroying these plants. By building this facility on Castner Range habitats will be defragmented and destroyed resulting in deaths of animals. Please think over your decision carefully and please don't take away one of the last beautiful sites that we have in El Paso.

A Concerned Student & El Pasoan, Crystal Deal

From: Cody Shannon [golferdude@elp.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2003 10:17 PM
To: robin.d.divine@SAIC.COM
Cc: 'Cody Shannon'
Subject: Border Patrol Facility

Cody Shannon
11112 Loma Seca
79934, El Paso, TX
(915)821-8732

Dear Robin Divine,

My name is Cody Shannon and I am a student at Chapin High School and I am enrolled in the AP Environmental Science class there. Recently, my teacher Mr. Dillon informed us about the proposal of the new Border Patrol Facility being built at Site 1(Castner Range). I believe that Castner Range is a very important part of the northeast's wildlife habitat. It is one of the only, if not the only area of desert shrub habitat that has not been developed on or totally destroyed in the northeast.

Every year when the poppies bloom I can't help, but stop and admire the sheer beauty of Castner Range; in my opinion it is the most beautiful piece of desert in this entire town. The poppies uplift the spirits of many people, like myself during there blooming season. This area is home to many wildlife species and I believe that it should be de-duded and become part of the Franklin Mountain State Park as well.

Site 2 is and area that is dominantly creosote bush and has been heavily grazed. In my opinion it is a much more suitable location for the Border Patrol Facility. Castner Range is the beauty that most people remember from the northeast and should be protected at all costs. Be an outdoorsmen, Castner Range is very close to my heart and should always remain protect. Please take my thoughts into consideration. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Cody Shannon

From: Bcduffy2@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2003 10:11 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Poppies vs progress

Go to Scenic Drive. Take a good look; nothing but land in all directions. The environmental resources section with the Army Corps of Engineers decides to select the most beautiful area in El Paso for the new Border Patrol. Please!

Officials in this city MUST take a special honors course somewhere on How to Run Down a City.
Carmen Duffy, East El Paso

From: Bryan Johndro [hellraiserxx1@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 10:02 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Border Patrol Maintenance Facility Location

Dear Mrs. Robin Divine,

I am an AP Environmental Systems student at Chapin High School located in El Paso Texas. I am against site one on Castner Range because this facility will greatly impact the habitat of most animals and plants living on Castner Range. This facility will also be a big eyesore in the spring when the beautiful yellow poppies grow. The pollution from this facility will also destroy the plants and also have a significant effect on the animals and human population living in the area. Also the noise will disturb the families living around the facility and animals in the area. Having said all this the site i would prefer is site two because it has no native vegetation and sensitive animals around it. I hope you reconsider the thought about building it on Castner Range and building it on sites 2 and 3 to save El Paso's beautiful poppies and wonderful animals.

Bryan Johndro
10997 Willie Mays 79934 El Paso Tx, hellraiserxx1@yahoo.com

From: BMacCH27@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2003 5:01 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range
Dear Robin Divine,

I am writing in concern of the construction of a border patrol facility going to be built on Castner Range. I myself am a resident of Castner Heights, and this would personally affect me. Although I am leaving for college at the end of the school year, my

family would most certainly be affected, along with my fellow neighbors. I understand that as we grow as a nation and community, further development and space is needed. Personally I would not be entirely concerned with the construction of the facility, but the fact that the unique organisms, such as the poppies, which inhabit the area would be exterminated, is truly a concern.

El Paso may not be renown for it's luscious vegetation, but or beauty resides in our scenery. This city seems to have just been dropped right around a mountain. Our desert environment can be seen driving past US 54, but only a small stretch of land can be seen. When the poppies bloom, they are unique to Texas, because of the soil which is present. This is quite an attraction and would be a shame to dismiss of. I do not disapprove of the facility, but would rather appreciate it being moved to an area such as Highway 54 and McCombs, as Silvia Silva has presented.

I hope my comments have some influence. I know my suggestions may not come into effect, but I hope they are considered. One day the land will be taken over by projects and businesses, but as for now let it be preserved. The most logical solution is to move it to the suggested area above. Please consider it.

Sincerely,
Brian McMahan

From: BarbaraDL7@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2003 12:17 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Cc: District#2@ci.el-paso.tx.us
Subject: Castner Range

I am writing in response to a letter to the editor in the El Paso Times. The issue of the Border Patrol wanting to put in a large facility from Hondo Pass to Trans Mountain Rd. is one I do not endorse. This area of the desert is beautiful, containing several plant species that are only found in this area. The local tradition of the poppies every spring would be wiped out to the distress of the whole city.

Since there are alternate locations to be used, I would encourage the Border Patrol to choose one of those and leave this expanse of desert to be included with the Franklin Mountains State Park.

Barbara Light, 3116 Federal Ave. El Paso, Tx 79930
Oct. 16, 2003

From: Haselen, Arthur [arthurv@utep.edu]
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 1:56 PM
To: robin.d.divine@SAIC.COM
Subject: Building is Castner Range.

I live in Castner Heights, and I do not want a facility built in my neighborhood. It will destroy species of plants that make our community unique and beautiful. The majestic

Franklin Mountains are a sight that all us northeast residents look forward to seeing every day. And it would make me really sad to have to look at an ugly building everyday instead of the spectacular landscape. There are many places for the Border Patrol to build there facility. They should build were they are not destroying the landscape. Somewhere like to valley where there intrusion is not as repulsive and they are not blocking the view of mountains. Just because they might get the Castner land at a lower price that does not constitute the destruction of nature. The area is so limited around the beautiful mountains that encompass our city that we will not allow it to be destroyed. Do not build here, the residents of this community do not want you here.

arthur van haselen III
915 755-3357

From: ZOOSTUD@aol.com
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2003 6:12 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Castner Range development

Dear Robin,

Every spring my family and I look forward to the glorious display of poppies out on the range. To destroy any of this would be a disgrace to El Paso and to all of the people, tourists included, who come to view this natural wonder. I have taken many out of town guests to see the poppies and they have all been amazed. Please consider another site for the Border Patrol facility.

Thank you for your time.

Amanda Leverett, West El Paso, 79912

From: yol5508@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2003 2:29 AM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: /re: New Border Patrol Station

PLEASE do not build the new Border Patrol Station on gov. land. Once the developers get in, they will take over the whole area and destroy the beauty of that area. The Border Patrol Station can be built east of the Patriot Freeway near EPCC.

Yolanda Loera

From: tievman@excite.com
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2003 1:19 PM
To: robin.d.divine@saic.com
Subject: Proposed Castner Range Development Plan

To whom it may concern:

This e-mail is in regards to the development of the Castner Range area as proposed by the US Border Patrol. My name is Vince P. Velez, I am a long time resident of Northeast El Paso and very proud of the unique and natural life style that the northeast has managed to maintain. Much of this unique and natural splendor is in no small part

due to the untouched and rugged Franklin Mountains that are the symbolic representation of not only Northeast El Paso but also the city as well. The east side of the Franklin Mountains offer to all who see it a glimpse into El Paso's past, that untouched and untamed mysterious side of El Paso. Given the recent lack of concern for this area by the Military, who in essence have poisoned any idea of this visually stunning area from ever being explored by any intrepid hiker without concern for losing an arm or leg to the arbitrary and capricious launching of rockets, mortars and artillery shells that may or may not have gone amiss and the escalating cost of remedies(nearly 50 years after the fact). I feel that this proposal is at best "wishful thinking" on the part of those who have offered it. Northeast residents have learned to live with these truths in earnest, giving them skeptical credibility. We must now "enjoy" cautious walks in the foothills and relish the sunsets and dark mountain silhouettes that loom, making us humble...development would forever alter these simple pleasures. For all this area of the Franklins have been through, and despite these haphazard endeavors by the military over the last half century, this area is ALIVE and vibrant. Castner Range is a metaphor for El Paso and a reminder to all that deserts are hardly deserted. To further develop this area is to rob this city of yet another rare and gleaming jewel, and further extend the mediocre rather than the natural and basic beauty that so embodies the spirit of Northeast El Paso.

On a logistical note, this area has already encountered several challenges and many costly clean-up overruns. Despite these "clean-ups" that do little more than reinforce the propaganda of blown up children so readily displayed on road signs and at rest stops, I fail to see how the city, the state or the Federal government(who have been at it for some time now) are going to adequately and completely "clean" Castner Range. Yes, it is a dangerous area, but the risk in losing such an area when suitable and derelict buildings abound in this city is what worries me the most.

Drive down Dyer street or Railroad Drive and count the number of remiss and vacant structures that remain unchecked and unoccupied. There is a building boom right now in the Northeast, thus far that boom has respected the Franklin foothills. To cross that border of I-54 would forever mar the beauty and character of this fair city. I find it ironic that in a month when El Pasoans celebrate the rugged rapture of the Franklin Mountains the USBP decides to make this plan known. Their agenda is unclear and their timing is unusual.

In conclusion, I lend my voice to those opposed for one simple reason, I LOVE THE FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS and I shudder at the thought of another offensive gesture being made at their expense. Given the history of Castner Range, I think we, as a collective, responsible and compassionate species, owe it to the mountains to let them recover. This city is awash in empty structures and vacant business lots awaiting purpose.

Sincerely,

Vince Patrick Velez, Northeast El Paso Resident

From: Lisa.Rule@TTUHSC.EDU [mailto:Lisa.Rule@TTUHSC.EDU]
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2003 10:38 AM
To: robin.d.divine@SAIC.COM
Subject: FW: Border patrol site.

Dr. Ms. Divine,

I am vehemently opposed to building in, around, or near the site where the Border Patrol wants to put facilities in the Northeast of El Paso. The mountains do not need this eyesore. Just because their museum is located there does not mean they should be there as well.

There are many other locations, in many cases where they would not need to build, perhaps just to renovate, for them to put their facilities. There have been many garment washing and manufacturing businesses that have gone out of business and have left huge acres of unused land and space. The east side, the lower valley seem better suited for Border Patrol location. As a matter of fact, shouldn't their facilities (Border Patrol) be located someplace where those they are trying to deter from entering can see them? Perhaps closer to the La Hacienda restaurant in central El Paso. Thank you very much for the opportunity to have my say.

Lisa M. Ruley, 13-year Northeast resident.