

300685-

Docket Management System
Department of Transportation
Room Plaza 401
400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001

October 5, 2004

Jeff Girard
4549 Sandra Lynn
Mesquite, TX 75150

FAA-2004-19051-2

Dear Sir or Ma'am:

I have read the proposed rule of the establishment of the restricted area 2507E in Chocolate Mountains, CA., [The proposed Docket No. FAA-2004-19051; Airspace Docket No. 04-AWP-6] and am writing to express my support for such a proposal. I have completed research on this rule and have found many instances in which this expansion of the Yuma Training Range Complex would benefit the surrounding area, as well as the nation as a whole.

With regards to the economic impact that such an expansion would create, I have found that this extension would only help the surrounding area. According to the City of Yuma's website, they have claimed that a military presence has attributed to a \$257 million dollar economic impact. With the expansion of the base, more military personnel will be active in the surrounding towns. This will only increase the economic growth. With base closures eminent by 2005 in the area, an expansion of the Chocolate Mountain Impact Area would help alleviate some of the burden of the closures.

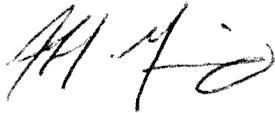
However, I do have one concern. Within the training area is the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, which houses the endangered Sonoran Pronghorn and Lesser Long-nosed Bat. The Navy has expressed its concern about low-level flights over this refuge, but I wonder how the Marine Corp will face these challenges. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have control over the refuge, but it seems the military has the final say in this matter. Perhaps some of the refuge area could be eliminated from flight patterns with the expansion into the Chocolate Mountain area.

The new rule proposal also has put restrictions on the time of flights over the new restricted air space. High explosive ordnance deliveries are restricted between 0700-2100 Pacific Standard Time, but this leaves no area for night training exercises. In this time of intense focus on national security, I find it vital to train our troops to the fullest. With the training in the mountainous regions of California and Arizona, our troops will learn the terrain of places like Afghanistan and other areas in which they will be deployed. I feel it is very important for the pilots to be able to train in nighttime conditions, granted that environmental concerns are addressed.

I once again express my support for such an expansion into Chocolate Mountain, but am wary about what environmental repercussions this may cause. I consider military training an utmost importance to our nation, but feel more can be done with regards to the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge and the surrounding areas of Chocolate Mountain.

I thank you for your time and look forward to the passing of this proposed rule.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Girard". The signature is stylized and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" and last name "Girard" clearly visible.

Jeff Girard