proposed project will be constructed in accordance with local fire, building, and zoning code requirements and will not adversely impact local police, fire, or emergency services.

The site is located in a rural/suburban setting with substantial open space extending in all directions. To the north, across West Main Street, in Ayer, Massachusetts is a substantial wetland. To the east is a wooded hill and to the west are large, grassy fields. Towards the south are playgrounds that surround an elementary school that is part of Ft. Devens.

The new facilities associated with the Job Corps would make use of an existing roadway network and infrastructure such as water and sewer lines, telephone poles, and stormwater drainage systems. The razing operation will include removal of all asbestos materials, lead-based paints, underground storage tanks, and contaminated soils resulting from earlier fuel oil spills as required by local, state and federal laws. Conversion of this part of Ft. Devens to a Job Corps Center would be a positive asset to the area in terms of environmental and socioeconomic improvements and longterm productivity. The Job Corps program, which will provide basic education, and vocational skills training, work experience, counseling, health care and related support services, is expected to graduate students who are ready to participate in the local economy that, with the loss of Ft. Devens as a significant employer, is expected to realize an increase in demand for employment.

The proposed project would have no significant adverse impact on any natural system or resource. The existing buildings that will be removed are not designated "historically significant" and the site includes no areas of archaeological significance. Construction of new Job Corps Center buildings will not adversely impact the existing environment including surface water, groundwater, woodlands, wetlands, threatened and endangered species in the Ft. Devens area because operational activities associated with the proposed project do not represent a significant change from the historical use of the Verbeck site as a residential area. A short-term impact from construction, such as fugitive dust emissions, will be mitigated through the use of dust suppression techniques, thereby reducing dust exposure to areas in the vicinity of the proposed construction sites. The expected basewide remediation of contamination, currently underway by the U.S. Army, both in the Verbeck site and throughout

Ft. Devens, would minimize impacts from existing sources of contamination upon the natural systems and resources.

Based upon preliminary analysis, no significant levels of radon exist on site. Water quality of both the Ft. Devens water supply and the adjoining Town of Aver water supply document no levels of lead present in the drinking water. An asbestos assessment of the existing building complex is currently underway and all asbestos will be removed in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal safety and health laws, when the buildings are razed. Leadbased paint, abandoned underground storage tanks, and contaminated soils will be similarly removed when the site is demolished.

The proposed project would have no significant adverse impact upon current air quality, noise levels, and lighting. Air quality is good in the area and the proposed project would not be a source of air emissions. Operational noise levels of the project are consistent with rural/suburban areas and, with the exception of the construction period, would not be source of additional noise in the area. Finally, street lights for the proposed project can be modified in the final design to ensure levels of illumination consistent with those in the surrounding area.

The proposed project would have no significant adverse impacts upon the existing infrastructure represented by water, sewer and stormwater systems. Adequate water is available to the site through the Ft. Devens water supply system or that of the nearby Town of Ayer. Stormwater runoff is accommodated by an in-place system that can be improved with minimal repairs. The sanitary sewer collection system is in place and deemed to be adequate. Wastewater treatment can be achieved at the nearby Ft. Devens Wastewater Treatment Plant or the Town of Ayer's Treatment Plant once those facilities have met the state regulations for treatment and discharge—activities that are currently underway.

The proposed site has an abundance of electrical power and natural gas delivered to its boundaries, but would require installation of new distribution systems to bring all facilities up to codes. The proposed demands on electric power and natural gas, however, are not expected to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. Similarly, traffic behavior patterns are not expected to change as a result of the proposed project; the main intersection (Verbeck Gate) would continue to provide an adequate level of service

onto West Main Street, so no significant adverse impact is expected.

It is not anticipated that the proposed site will have a significant adverse impact upon the local medical emergency, fire and police facilities, all of which are located in the Town of Ayer, which is within one mile of the proposed site. The existing facilities will be adequate to address normal emergencies; however, they can be supported, if necessary, by other medical facilities such as the seven hospitals located within a fifteen-mile radius of the site. There are additional emergency, fire and police facilities in the neighboring towns of Harvard and Shirley, and in Ft. Devens itself.

The proposed project would not have a significant adverse effect on the surrounding community, which is characterized by a diverse ethnicity and offers an abundance of recreational, educational and cultural opportunities. Similarly, the proposed project would not have a significant adverse impact on demographics and socioeconomic characteristics of the area. Rather, the implementation of a Job Corps Center on the proposed site will help to fill a void created by the closure of Ft. Devens by providing jobs and educational opportunities for local residents.

À public forum was held in Fort Devens on February 2, 1994. There was voiced strong support from the Towns of Ayer, Harvard, and Shirley for the proposed project. All towns were in favor of siting a Job Corps Center on Fort Devens, and concluded that the Job Corps program is a very worthwhile Program and would benefit the area as a whole.

The alternatives considered in the preparation of the EA were: (1) The "No Build" alternative, (2) the "Alternative Sites'' alternative, and (3) the "Continue as Proposed" alternative. The "No $\,$ Build" alternative is considered inadequate because it would require fitting the Job Corps program into an existing building complex that is illequipped for its intended use and, due to its age, is characterized by old, outof-date systems and potential sources of environmental contamination (e.g. asbestos, lead-based paint, contaminated soils). Alternative locations, meanwhile, are determined to be not available because all locations were originally evaluated through a formal rating process nationwide before selecting the Ft. Devens site. The Proposed Project meets both the goals of the Job Corps and the location requirements. After construction, the new facilities would be suitable for their intended purpose in the Job Corps, and would be environmentally safe and