

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

### **NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT IN SUPPORT OF EXERCISE STEEL KNIGHT 20 (SK-20)**

U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) is preparing an Environmental Assessment of a large-scale military readiness training exercise to be conducted on several Department of Defense military installations, and select public lands in Riverside and Imperial counties in California (CA), and in La Paz County, Arizona (AZ), 2-20 December 2019. Exercise STEEL KNIGHT 20 (SK-20) is an exercise conducted under the command and control of the Commanding General, 1ST Marine Division (CG, 1ST MARDIV), who is designated as the Officer Conducting the Exercise (OCE).

STEEL KNIGHT 20 (SK-20) is a I MEF directed, division-level exercise representing a series of training events combined into a common scenario spanning the following military installations: Camp Pendleton, CA; Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, CA; Naval Air Station, El Centro (NAS-EC), CA; Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), AZ; and the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range (CMAGR), CA. Select public lands will be utilized to access these military installations, as described below.

A culminating event in the SK-20 exercise is a river (wet gap) crossing operation to be conducted on the Colorado River south of Blythe, CA. Military units will move between Camp Pendleton, Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center, Naval Air Station-El Centro, the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range and eventually the Yuma Proving Grounds by way of the Colorado River crossing site. Military vehicles will use a combination of paved public roads (e.g. highways and freeways) and County and Bureau of Land Management authorized, public off-highway vehicle (OHV) roads to access the bridging site. The exercise will be supported by military aircraft.

Reasonable Alternatives to the Proposed Action will be considered. Alternatives that do not meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action and/or do not meet mission requirements to train to maintain proficiency in core warfighting competencies for crisis and contingency response will be eliminated from consideration.

The EA will describe the Proposed Action, Reasonable Alternatives and the No-Action Alternative.

Questions or comments on the Final EA can be submitted to:

Marine Corps Installations West-Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton  
Attn: MCIWEST - Regional Planning Branch, Environmental Security  
Box 555008, Bldg. 22165  
MCB Camp Pendleton, California 92055-5008  
Telephone (760) 725-4512.