

Save Our Peaceful Skies!



THE TIME IS NOW

peacefulchiricahuaskies.com



TWO CRITICAL MESSAGES TO USAF

- 1. Restrict all low-level combat training activities to Barry M. Goldwater Range where they are already happening**
- 2. Stop violating current boundaries and regulations for Combat Training Flights in Tombstone MOA**

MOA HISTORY and CURRENT STATUS

Tombstone MOA created in 1976....

Population is 70% bigger today

Economy is far advanced today

Protected Areas Have Increased in size

EFFECTIVE LOCAL RESPONSE

More than 200 Nuisance Flight Reports filed by area residents since USAF Announced its Combat Flight Training Expansion Plan.

WHY MORE NUISANCE REPORTS?

- **MORE PEOPLE AFFECTED**
- **MORE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES DISRUPTED BY NOISE**
- **MORE VIOLATIONS OF CURRENT MOA REGULATIONS**
- **SOUND IS LOUDER IN CANYONS-WHERE PEOPLE LIVE**

USAF PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

More than DOUBLE the current number of Combat Training Flights—to 8,000/yr. (moved from Barry Goldwater Range to Tombstone MOA)

New Combat Training Flights over Portal/Animas (Boundary Expanded)

Combat Training Flights at 100 feet AGL (down from 500 ft. AGL)

Sonic Booms at 5,000 ft. AGL (down From 30,000 ft. AGL)

30,000 Flares dropped yearly from 2,000 feet AGL (down from 5,000 ft. AGL)

7,000 Chaff Bundles dropped annually from 2,000 ft. AGL (Not allowed Now)

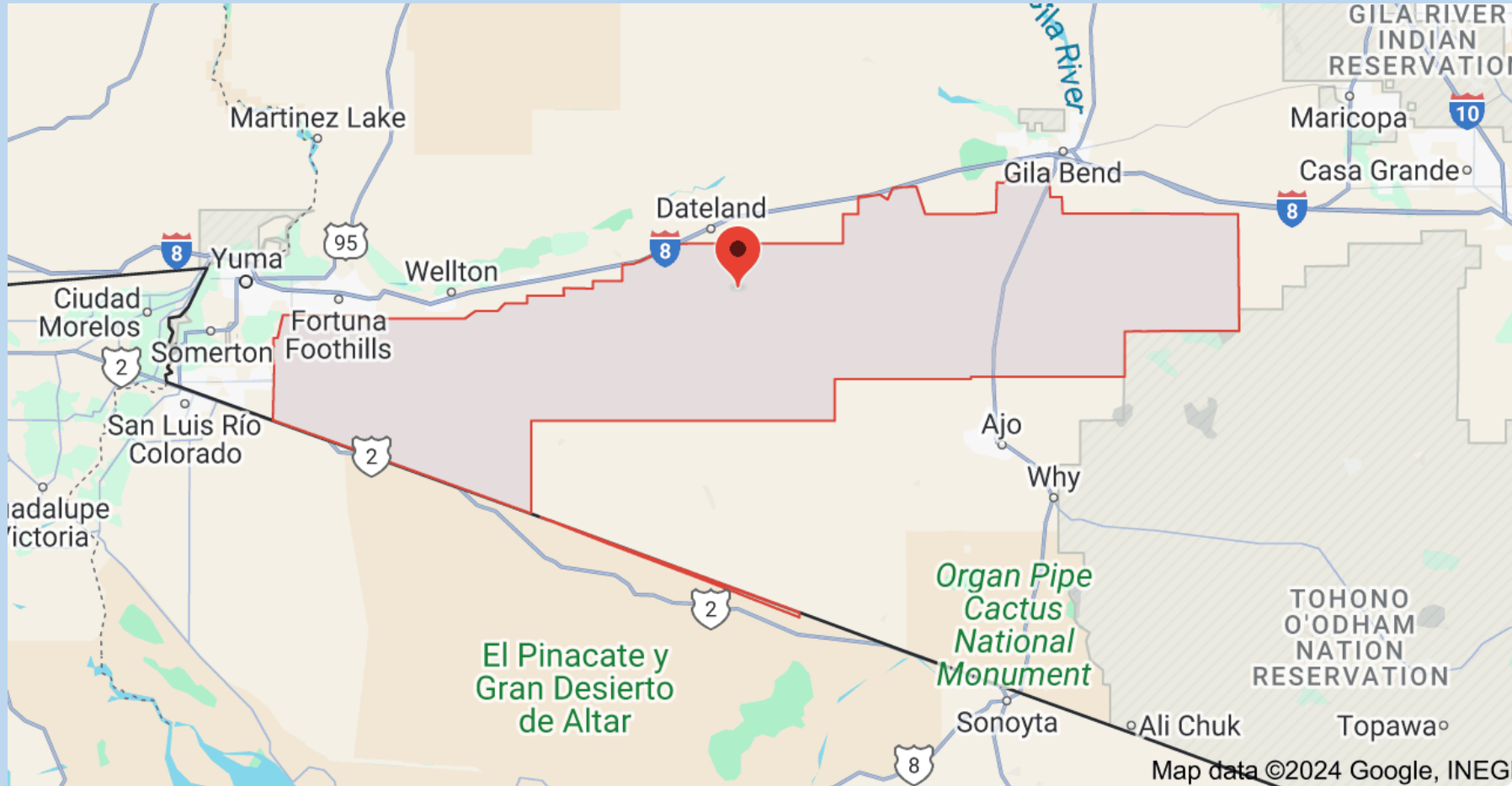
DEIS LACK OF TRANSPARENCY

Rerouting existing combat training away from Barry Goldwater Range to Tombstone MOA is intended to allow increase in “more hazardous” operations at BMGR—but what could be more hazardous than combat training at low elevations over Tombstone MOA wilderness and residential areas with flares, chaff and sonic booms?

Rerouting of combat training flights to Tombstone MOA includes thousands of A-10 training missions now being flown at Barry Goldwater Range that will disappear when A-10s are soon retired—opening vast airspace at BMGR for new “more hazardous” operations at Barry Goldwater. No mention as an alternative in the DEIS.

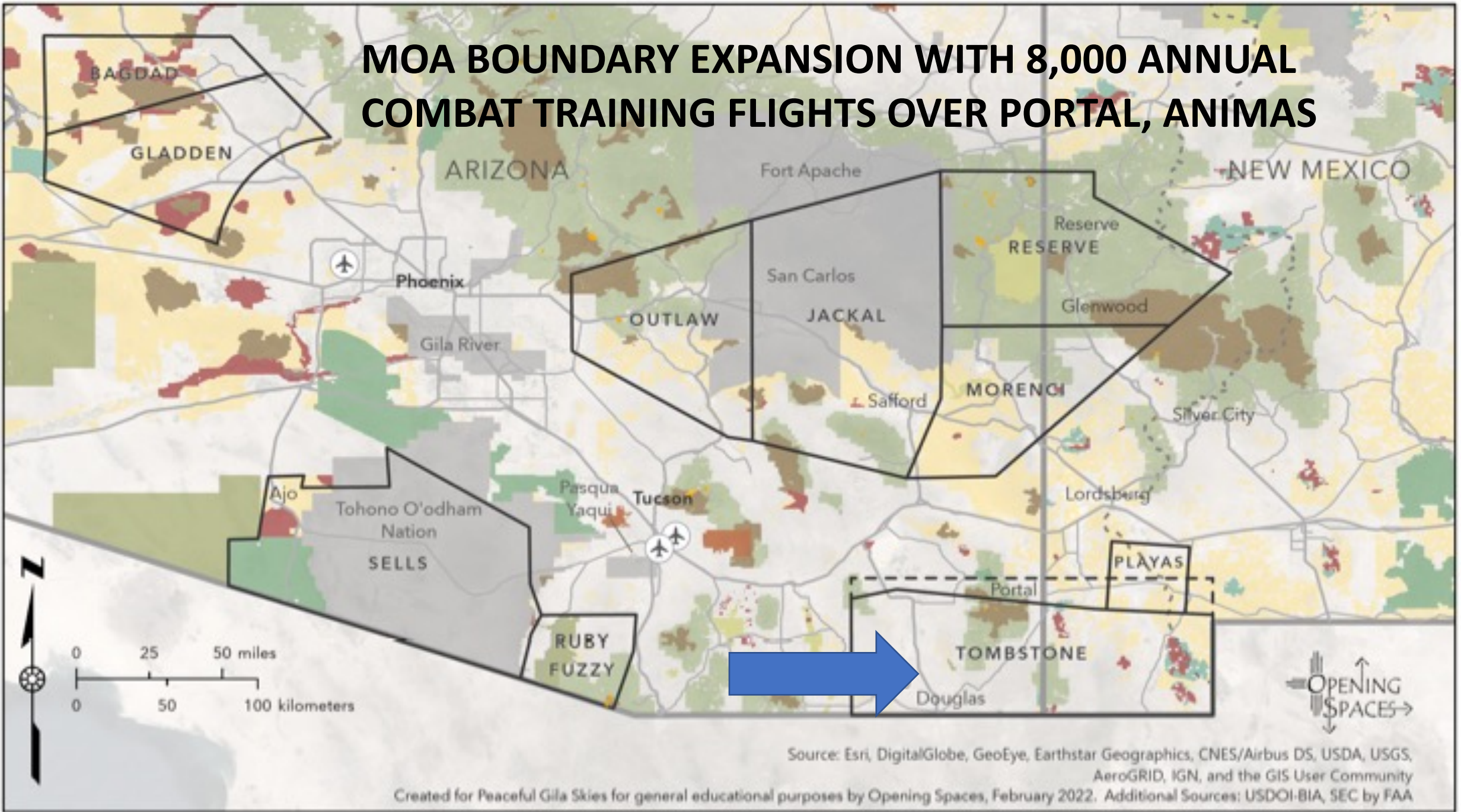
BARRY M. GOLDWATER RANGE

1.9 million acres of undisturbed federal land / 57,000 cubic miles of airspace already used for air-to-air and air-to-ground battlefield training missions

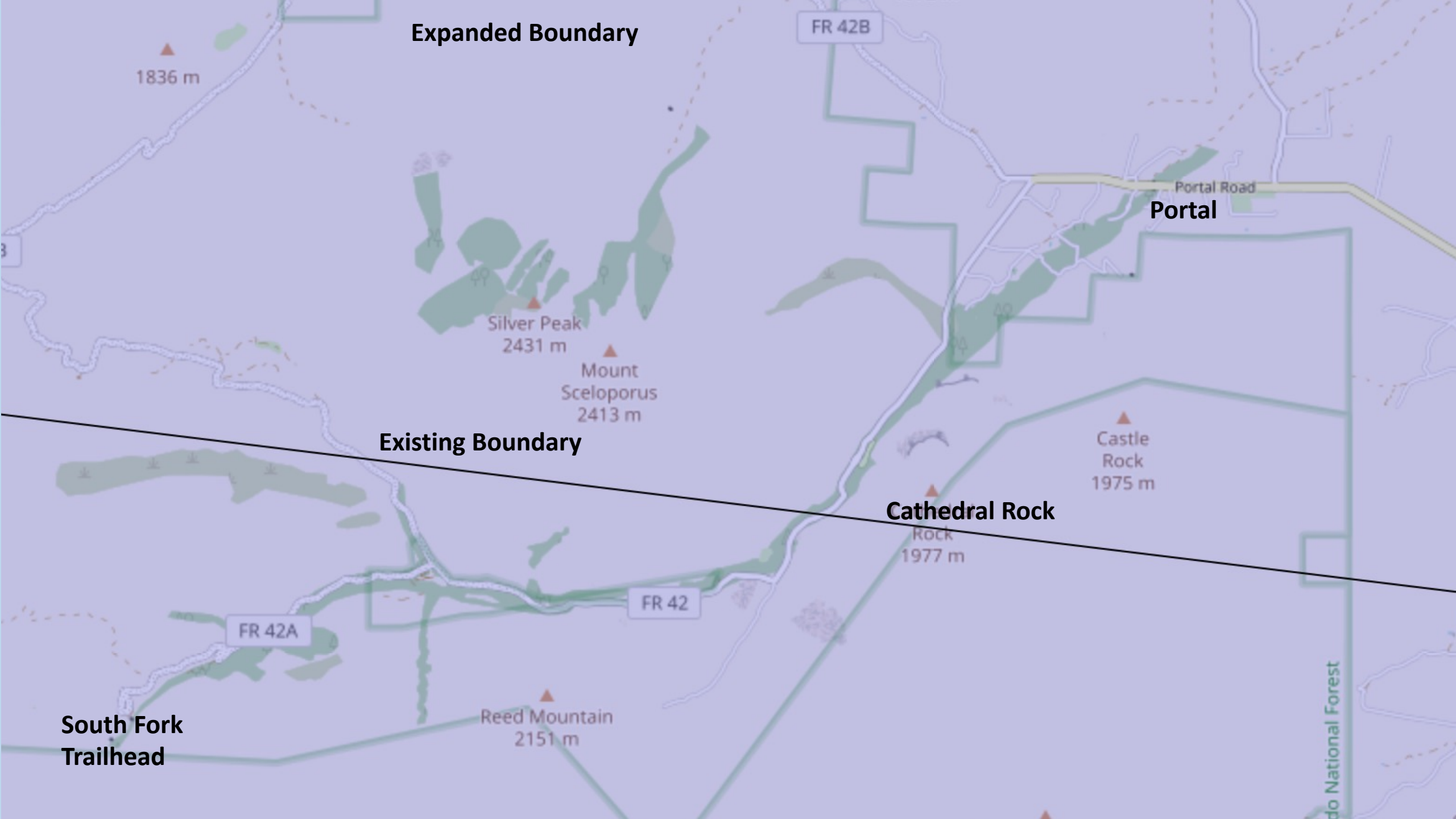


UNACCEPTABLE: Moving hundreds of hazardous flights from this huge, completely unpopulated, federally-controlled airspace to a smaller, heavily-populated Tombstone MOA with highly sensitive economic and biological components.

MOA BOUNDARY EXPANSION WITH 8,000 ANNUAL COMBAT TRAINING FLIGHTS OVER PORTAL, ANIMAS



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community
Created for Peaceful Gila Skies for general educational purposes by Opening Spaces, February 2022. Additional Sources: USDOI-BIA, SEC by FAA



Expanded Boundary

1836 m

FR 42B

Portal Road

Portal

Silver Peak
2431 m

Mount
Sceloporus
2413 m

Existing Boundary

Castle
Rock
1975 m

Cathedral Rock

Rock
1977 m

FR 42

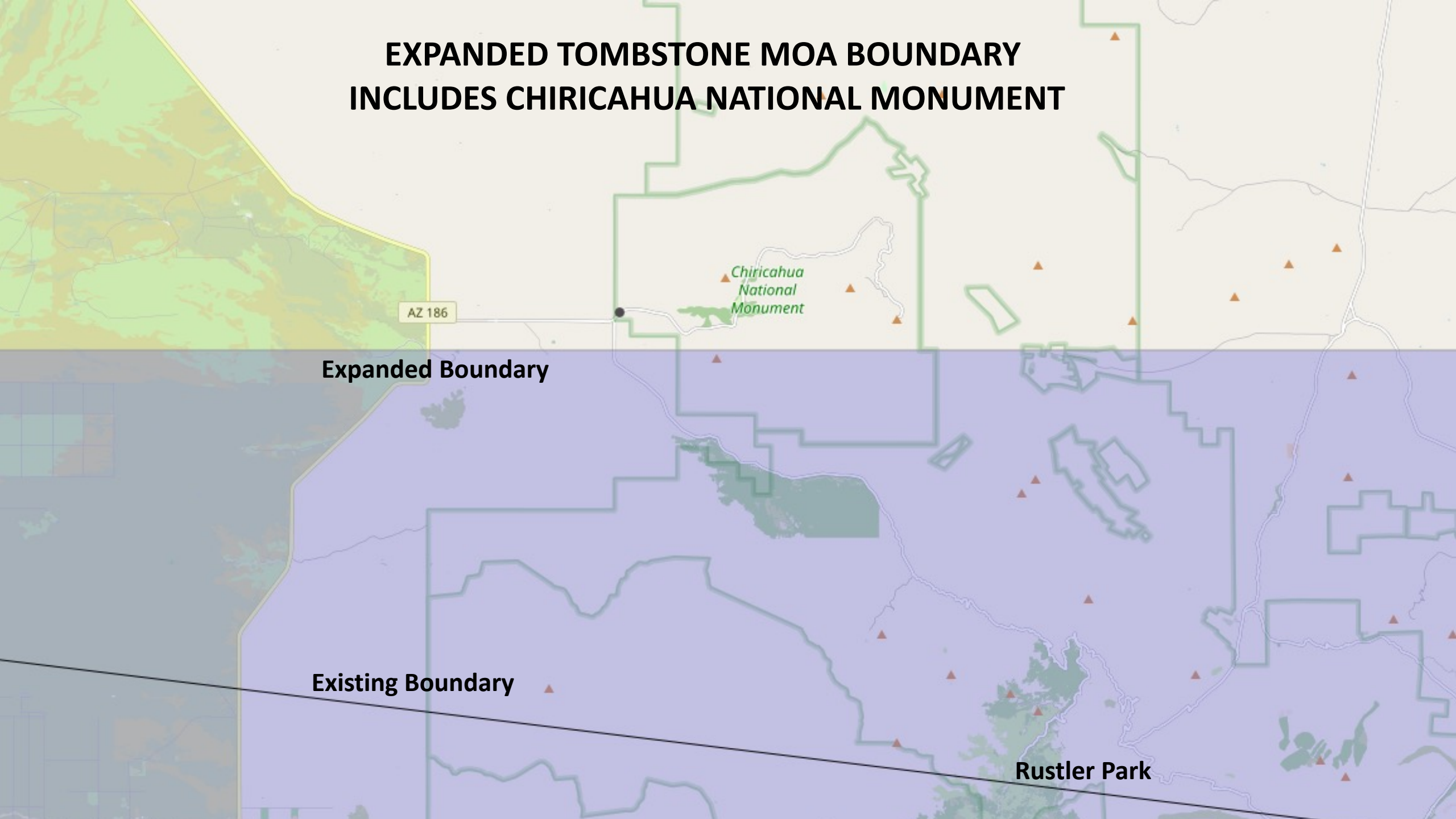
FR 42A

Reed Mountain
2151 m

**South Fork
Trailhead**

do National Forest

EXPANDED TOMBSTONE MOA BOUNDARY INCLUDES CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL MONUMENT





**NO PUBLIC HEARINGS IN
COCHISE COUNTY—
MOST HEAVILY IMPACTED
COUNTY IN THE EXPANSION**

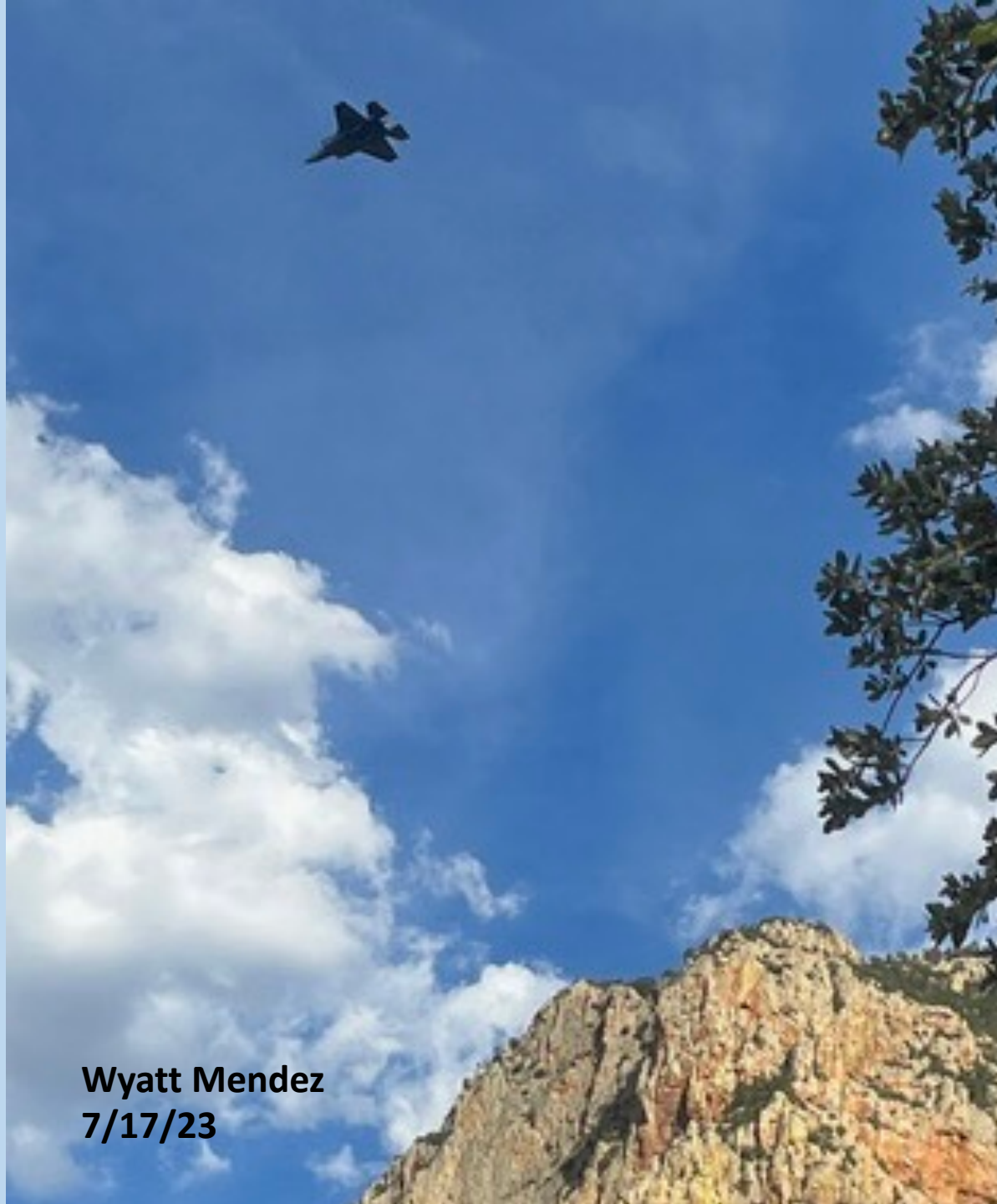
Need a 60-day Comment Extension

**Submit Public Comments By October 9—
even if you commented previously**

Examples of Violations

**F-35
over
Cave
Creek
Canyon
Near
Cathedral
rock**

Wyatt Mendez
7/17/23



**Location
outside of
MOA Boundary**

**CBD FOIA REQUEST
FOR DETAILED DATA
BLOCKED**

Lawsuit in progress

Examples of Violations

PAVEHAWK HELICOPTER

Flying 100 feet
above residence
near Horseshoe
Canyon on
Aug. 14, 2023



S. Huckabay



Examples of Violations

F-16 below minimum 500' AGL from any building or person

Cave Creek Canyon near Portal, AZ

R. Wyatt Mendez,
July 28, 2022



Examples of Violations

C-130 over Portal, AZ @200 ft.

January 31, 2024

D. Lane
1/31/24

DAMAGE FROM “SONIC BOOMS”

F-16 or F-35 at 5,000 feet = 200 decibels

Air Pressure burst can damage structures, injure ears



**More than double the OSHA
allowable decibels without
hearing protection**

**PEOPLE — LIVESTOCK — PETS — WILDLIFE — STRUCTURES
— ECONOMY —**

RELEASE of 7,000 Bundles of CHAFF annually

Countermeasure to confuse enemy radar



**NEW PROPOSAL WOULD ALLOW DROP OF CHAFF
FROM 2,000 FEET above ground**

(Currently: NOT ALLOWED IN TOMBSTONE MOA)



CHAFF FIBERS EASILY REACH THE GROUND

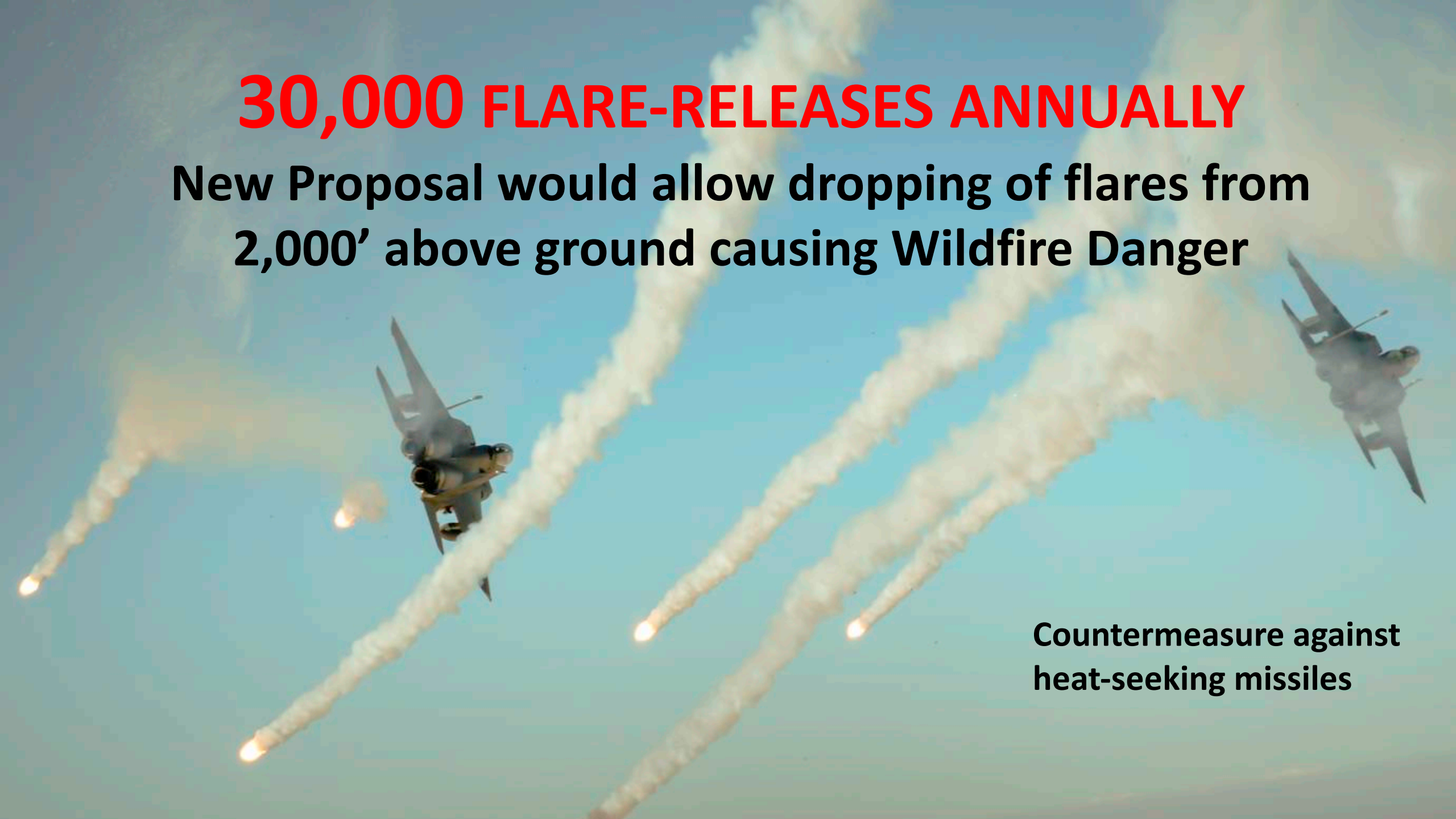
**ALUMINUM-COATED
FIBERGLASS STRANDS**

**Contain Toxic PFAS
FOREVER CHEMICALS**

**USAF FIGHTING LAWSUITS OVER
REFUSAL TO CLEAN UP PFAS POLLUTION**

30,000 FLARE-RELEASES ANNUALLY

**New Proposal would allow dropping of flares from
2,000' above ground causing Wildfire Danger**




**Countermeasure against
heat-seeking missiles**

2,000-degree Magnesium Flare



Flares do not always ignite,
do not always burn out
before hitting ground

An aerial photograph showing a large fire burning in a forest. The fire is bright orange and yellow, with thick black smoke rising from it. The surrounding forest is dark green and brown. The text is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

Flares caused 10 different fires on San Carlos Apache Tribal lands torching 21,000 acres.

SERIOUS CRASH RISKS

"Six F-16s have been involved in accidents in 2023. About three Fighting Falcons have been totaled each year on average for the past decade."

—*The Air Force Times*

"29 F-35s have crashed since the plane was developed 10 years ago."

—*Aviation Safety Network*

THREATS TO WILDLIFE / WILDLANDS

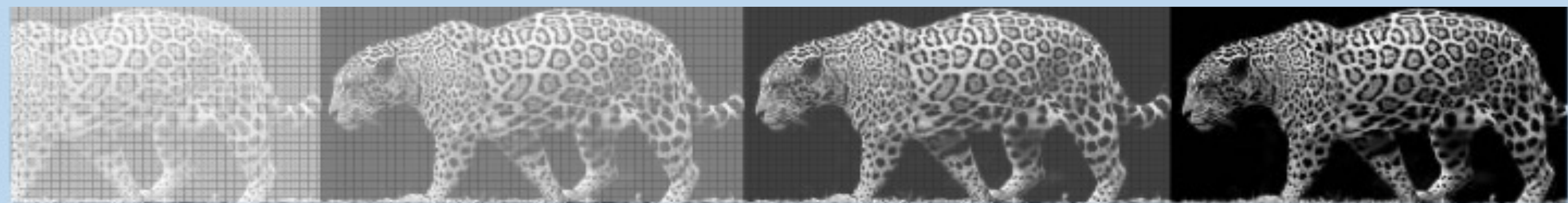
DEIS AIRSPACE COVERS:

140 ESA-Listed plant and animal species

1,234,543 acres of Designated Wilderness

1,956,010 acres of Critical Habitat Designations

**Low-level, High-Decibel Training flights can
“adversely modify designated critical habitats”
for ESA-Listed species—USFWS**



DEIS IGNORES IMPACTS

What are the benefits for local residents and communities?

- **No Tangible Benefits Reported in the just-released DEIS**

What are the negatives for local residents and communities?

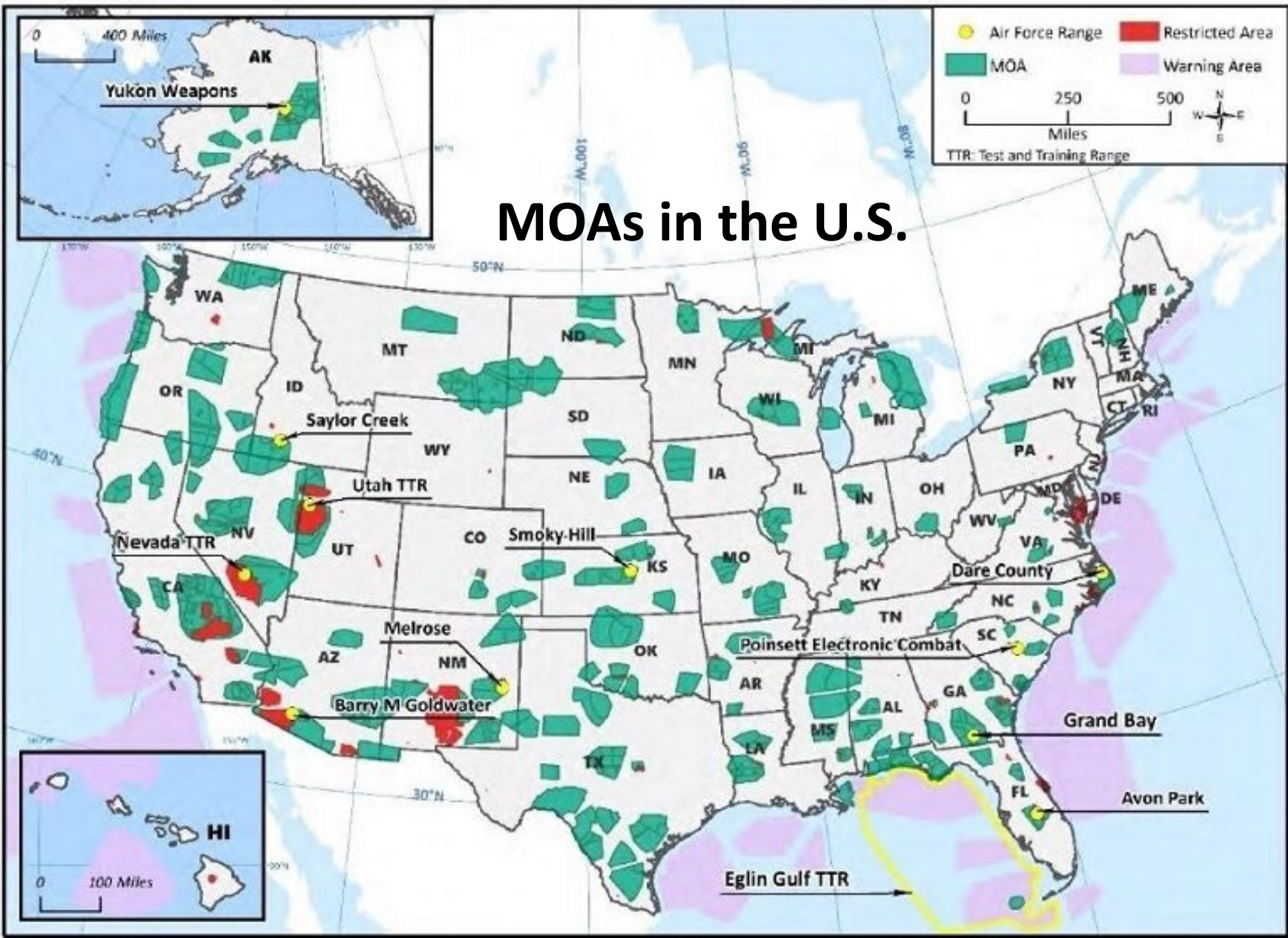
- **Loss of quality of life and safety—“No Significant Impacts”**
- Stress on personal health and well-being, loss of privacy
- Reduced R.E. values (disclosures, lost sales, county prop. tax losses).
- Reduction in tourism due to loss of quiet and wildlife in recreation areas
- Disruption of livestock and pet activities due to extreme noise levels.
- Increased risk of wildfires from flares, crashes
- Biodiversity damage from chaff releases
- Damage to structures caused by sonic booms

BOTTOM LINE

The DEIS Preferred Alternative would fundamentally redefine outdoor life across a vast section of Southeast AZ and Southwest NM

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- 1. SUBMIT COMMENTS BY OCTOBER 9!**
arizonaregionalairspaceeis.com/comments
- 2. REPORT EVERY NUISANCE FLIGHT**
- 3. SIGN PETITION ON PCS WEBSITE (2,500 now!)**
- 4. ADD YOUR NAME TO OUR MAILING LIST**
- 5. TELL ELECTED OFFICIALS TO OPPOSE-(It's Working!)**
- 6. WRITE LETTERS TO EDITORS**
- 7. SPREAD THE WORD ON SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS**



MOAs in the U.S.

**WE'RE
NOT
ALONE!**

Military Training Airspace Used by the U.S. Department of Air Force, 2023

COMMENT LOGISTICS

- **Due OCTOBER 9**
- Can be submitted online or in writing (must be postmarked by Oct. 9)
- Submit written comments even if you commented earlier or presented oral comments
- You may submit multiple comments



Your Comment

I am providing my comment *

Please Check Here

Would you like to receive a notification when the Final EIS is available? *

Yes

No

*If yes, please provide name and mailing address. If you do not wish to receive notification, this information is optional.

First Name *

Last Name *

Address

City

State

Zip Code

I am submitting my comment as a: *

Comment *



YOUR COMMENTS

- What is “substantive” and does it matter?
- What are the most effective comments to make?
- Does this matter if the USAF is ignoring us anyway?
 - Likely future actions including lawsuits

Important Comment Ideas

- **Adequate alternatives are not provided in the DEIS.**
Suggest flights stay at Barry M. Goldwater Range.
- **Draft EIS is analytically inadequate.**
See the PCS website about chaff, flares, fire risk, wildlife, etc.
- **Adequate mitigations are not provided.**
Suggest excluding wilderness areas, national parks, tribal lands
- **The USAF DEIS process lacks transparency and accountability.**
Not adhering to NEPA; lack of public and agency input; ignoring scoping comments; not responding to nuisance flight reports; refusing FOIAs; etc.
- **Comment Period Needs to be Extended 60 Days**
More time needed to Comply with NEPA

Tell your stories!

Top-Line Comment Phrases that Matter....

- 1. Tell the Air Force that expanding military combat training over rural communities and tribal and public lands is not acceptable.**
- 2. The Air Force should restrict its lower elevation and supersonic flights, and other combat training, such as dropping chaff and flares, to the Barry M. Goldwater Range where it's already happening.**
- 3. The Air Force must not shift the burden of risk to rural and tribal communities in southern AZ and NM.**

More comment ideas at:

peacefulchiricahuaskies.com/resources/deiscomments/

Thank You....
QUESTIONS?



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