

1. PUBLIC STATEMENT. The National Guard Bureau is embarking on a three-year environmental process to modify the airspace over parts of central Pennsylvania for training. The proposal lowers the existing Duke Military Operating Area (MOA), from 8,000ft to 100ft above ground level (AGL). The main purpose of the proposed is to provide low-altitude airspace to accurately train and prepare for current and future conflicts in an integrated, year-round, and realistic training environment.

Though most likely rarely observed by those on the ground, communities under the Duke MOA can expect to have flight training exercises overhead for one to two hours a day, two to three times a week. The military aircraft will stay under supersonic speeds, and typically, no more than two to four aircraft will be in the airspace at any one time.

The Maryland Air National Guard, assisted by the National Guard Bureau, will complete a full Environmental Assessment (EA).

If the proposal to expand the MOA is approved by the U.S. Air Force and the Federal Aviation Administration, residents of communities under the Duke MOA could begin seeing planes overhead as soon as end of the Fall 2020.

For more information on the Duke MOA, including the environmental process and to submit a comment, visit the Air National Guard's webpage (TBD)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Q1. What is a Military Operations Area (MOA)?

A1. A MOA is a block of airspace where aircraft can perform military training activities (aircraft intercepts, turning and evasive maneuvers, and air combat maneuvers) separated from Instrument Flight Rule (IFR) traffic.

Q2. What role does the Federal Aviation Administration play in the proposal?

A2. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) manages the National Airspace System (NAS) and may review and comment on the draft environmental assessment.

Q3. How are altitudes measured or specified?

A3. Airspace altitudes are primarily defined in terms of Mean Sea Level (MSL), which is measured from the surface of the ocean. Where the height of the airspace floor above the ground or sea is important, the airspace floor can be measured in terms of Above Ground Level (AGL) or Above Sea Level (ASL). Airspace altitudes starting at 18,000 feet are defined in terms of Flight Level (FL).

Q4. Why are other military operations area deficient for training purposes?

A4. In a close air support environment, deploying weapons during an aircraft dive span the altitudes between 100ft and 20,000 ft. The 175thWing requires low-altitude airspace to accurately train and prepare for current and future conflicts. The A-10C is the premier attack platform currently in service worldwide for Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), Close Air Support (CAS), Forward Air Control (FAC-A), Air Interdiction (AI), and Surface Attack (SAT). Each of these mission sets has a specific requirement for use of low-altitude airspace.

Q5. Why was the previously used airspace sufficient for training?

A5. In recent years the U.S. NAVY has decreased the amount of time an outside user is allowed to schedule their range thus severely limiting the ability of the 175th Wing to conduct real-world training.

Q6. What factors influenced the choice of the proposed military operations area?

A6. The 175th Wing studied areas within 200 miles of Martin State Airport and determined there was not a suitable area to create a new stand-alone military operations area. The Duke military operations area is closer, larger, and used less frequently than other MOAs.

Q7. What units and what aircraft use the military operations areas?

A7. Many aircraft and units use the airspace from all over the United States. However, the primary need for the low altitude airspace is coming from the 175th Wing which flies the A-10C and 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey National Guard, which flies the F-16C.

Q8. How often and when are the military operations areas planned to be used?

A8. The modified Duke MOA would be activated Tuesday - Friday between 10:00am-12:00pm / 2:00pm-4:00pm. Weekend and nighttime operations at low-altitude would be limited.

Communities under the Duke MOA can expect to have flight training exercises overhead for one to two hours a day, two to three times a week. Typically, no more than two to four aircraft will be in the airspace at any one time.

Generally speaking, the number of aircraft using the airspace on a regular basis will largely remain unchanged.

Q9. How many military aircraft will fly in the military operations areas at any one time?

A9. Typically, two aircraft will be flying in the operations area but can be as many as four aircraft depending on the training needs.

Q10. What will be the impact on noise levels on the ground?

A10. While proposed changes to the Duke Military Operating Area airspace will increase low altitude air operations and noise experienced on the ground, there will be no super-sonic operations, release of chaff and flares, or weapons firing and ordnance deployment in the modified airspace. We will be accessing the environment and local communities with industry experts to minimize impact.

Q11. What happens if the current airspace is not expanded?

A11. No action would mean local and deployed units will continue losing adequate training opportunities. The lack of low-altitude airspace to conduct realistic training will severely degrade the combat capability of the 175th Wing and the 177 Fighter Wing.

Q12. If citizens have noise complaints, how will they know whom to call?

A12. The ANG is a good neighbor and provides citizens an outlet for providing feedback about aircraft noise. The FAA actively maintains a Flight Standards District Offices phone number (412-886-2580) for community members. Unlike complaints about noise from commercial and general aviation overflights, citizens have direct access to ANG flight operators who can research and resolve noise issues.

Q13. What effect will this action have on livestock feedlots in the affected areas?

A13. The National Guard Bureau will be accessing the environment and local communities with industry experts to minimize impact. With the introduction of new environmental noise, studies show the effects reduce over time as livestock habituates.

Q14. What effect will this action have on commercial aviation in the affected area?

A14. The boundaries of the low altitude airspace portion in the Duke MOA will not include local airports. Commercial aviation is currently routed around the airspace and will not change with this modification.

Q15. What is the impact on general aviation?

A15. General aviation and military aircraft operate safely in military operations areas throughout the nation every day. During good weather, all aircraft operate under Visual Flight Rules (VFR) using the “see and avoid” concept for deconfliction. When visibility is low, pilots operate under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR). These aircraft will either divert around the military operations area or operate within the training airspace under FAA control.

Q16. What units currently train in the Duke MOA?

A16. Units that currently train in the Duke MOA include: 175th Fighter Wing (Maryland ANG, A-10s), 177th Fighter Wing (New Jersey ANG, F-16s), 113th Fighter Wing (DC ANG, F-16s)

Q17. What’s so important about “over land” training?

A17. Over land training is necessary to provide multirole fighters, such as the A-10C, with realistic simulated employment opportunities for the most realistic air-to-ground training possible. Additionally, the MD ANG trains to CAS and FACA, which sometimes requires geo-located Air Force personnel to help train and facilitate these mission sets.

Q18. Is it safe to be flying so low?

A18. Air National Guard pilots are well-trained and well-equipped to accurately fly in realistic environments like the Duke MOA. They carried out missions for mobilization readiness, humanitarian and contingency operations

Q19. How often will aircraft be at the minimum operating altitude?

A19. The time expected will be minimal. Only brief moments the aircraft will be low during a sortie. Most of the time in the Duke MOA would be in a holding pattern at medium altitudes (5,000-17000ft).

Q20. Why does the MOA cover this space above Pennsylvania and New York?

A20. The Duke MOA has been in its original location for decades. The boundary areas set are there for air traffic control and don't necessarily account for state lines. The Duke low MOA uses the existing northern boundaries of the Duke MOA which helps alleviate concerns with future air traffic.

Q21. Will chaff and flare be used in this MOA?

A21. No chaff and flare will be permitted in the Duke MOA airspace.

Q22. What is a Special Use Airspace (SUA)?

A22. A Special Use Airspace is designated airspace for military aircraft to conduct mission-specific maneuvers that cannot be conducted in the National Airspace System (i.e. civilian airspace). SUAs are developed under the National Environmental Policy Act constraints, are difficult to develop and generally take years to be approved.

Q23: Why can't the military just move the SUA?

A23: SUAs are extraordinarily difficult to adjust or move, and requires years of effort. Coordination with the Federal Aviation Administration, the Airline industry, private pilots, landowners, tribes, and federal agencies, is very complex. Many times, these SUA adjustment requests are not approved.

5. POINTS OF CONTACT:

NGB-PA, Branch Chief, Civic Engagement:

Lt Col Devin Robison

(703) 612-9355

devin.t.robison.mil@mail.mil

Pennsylvania National Guard's Public Affair Office, State Public Affairs Officer:

Lt Col Keith Hickox

(717) 861-8468

keith.w.hickox.mil@mail.mil

Maryland National Guard's Public Affair Office, State Public Affairs Officer:

MAJ Kurt Rauschenberg

(410) 576-6179

kurt.m.rauschenberg.mil@mail.mil

New Jersey National Guard's Public Affair Office:

(609) 530-6939

New York National Guard's Public Affair Office:

Mr. Eric Durr

(518) 786-4581

eric.durr5.nfg@mail.mil

6. REFERENCES:

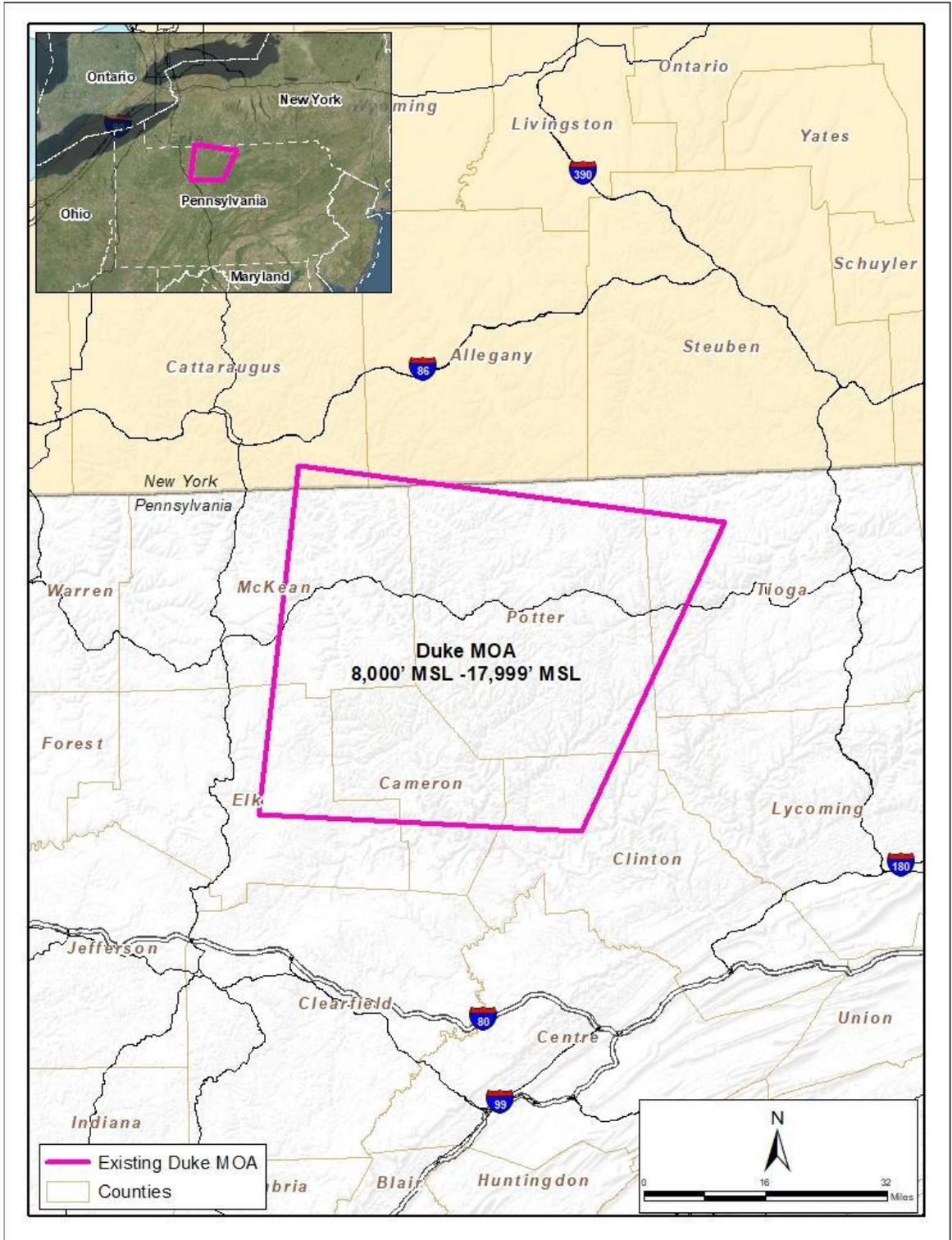
- a. Test/Training Space Needs Statement, Air National Guard 18-03, District of Columbia Air National Guard, 113th Wing, Joint Base Andrews, Maryland
- b. Air Force Instruction 13-201 Airspace Management

- c. Air Force Instruction AFI 11-2A-10C, A-10C Flying Operations
- d. Air Force Instruction 35-105 Community Relations
- e. Air Force Instruction 35-108 Environmental Public Affairs

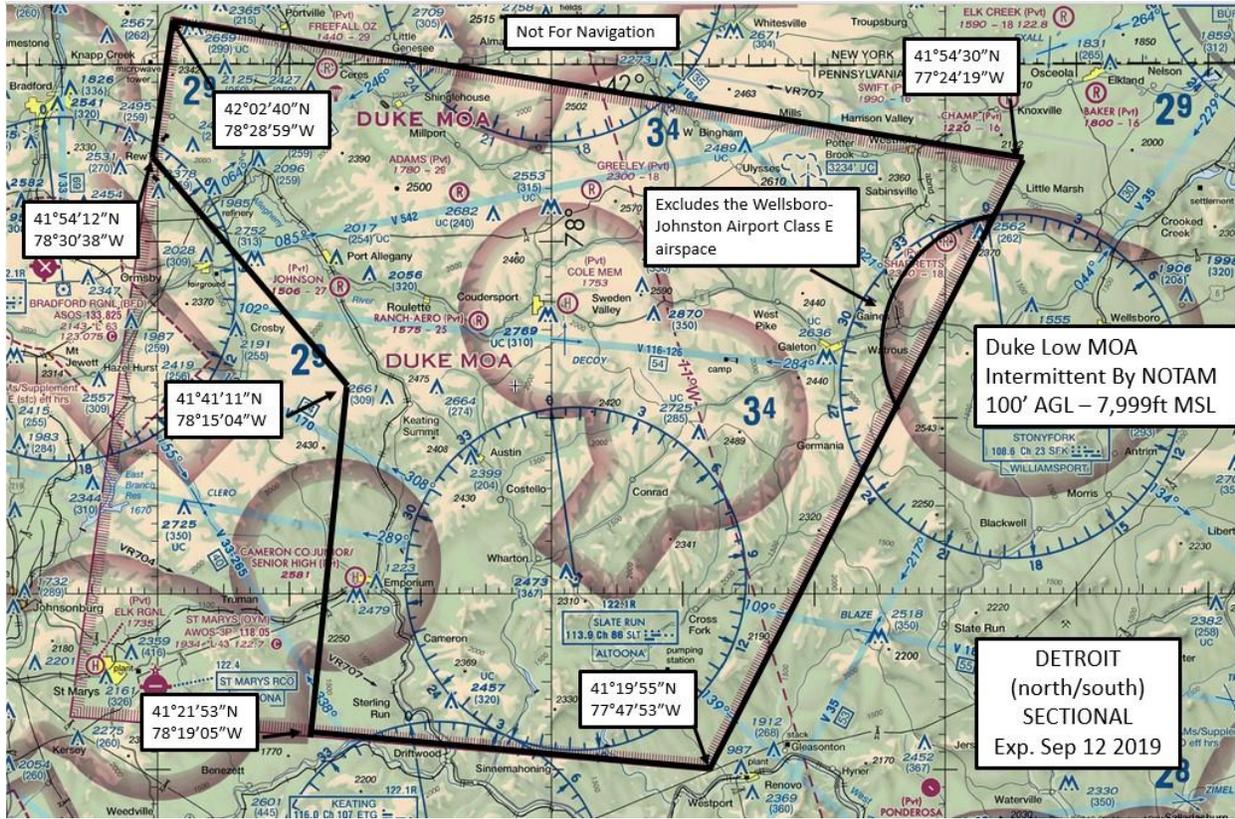
7. MAPS:

a. Affected Counties

Pennsylvania counties: Cameron, Clinton, Elk, McKean, Potter, and Tilga
New York counties: Allegany and Cattaraugus



b. Duke MOA Low



Not For Navigation

42°02'40"N
78°28'59"W

41°54'30"N
77°24'19"W

Excludes the Wellsboro-
Johnston Airport Class E
airspace

41°54'12"N
78°30'38"W

Duke Low MOA
Intermittent By NOTAM
100' AGL - 7,999ft MSL

41°41'11"N
78°15'04"W

DETROIT
(north/south)
SECTIONAL
Exp. Sep 12 2019

41°19'55"N
77°47'53"W