

**2026 Department of War Environmental Awards
Environmental Quality, Individual/Team Award – Nomination Narrative**

**Nominee: Enhanced Integrated Air and Missile Defense (EIAMD) System on Guam
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Team**

1. Introduction

The Enhanced Integrated Air and Missile Defense (EIAMD) System on Guam Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Team (hereafter the “Guam Defense System (GDS) EIS Team” or “team”) distinguished itself through exemplary performance in support of the GDS program. This mission is a top national security priority, providing a 360-degree integrated defense system to protect over 170,000 United States (U.S.) citizens and critical military infrastructure on Guam from evolving regional threats. This nomination package recognizes the team that successfully completed the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis for the EIAMD System on Guam. The team included a multi-disciplinary, interagency group comprising experts from the Missile Defense Agency (MDA), U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The team’s primary function was to deliver a comprehensive environmental planning framework that institutionalized mission-readiness into the environmental analysis process, ensuring the GDS could be successfully fielded without regulatory delay.

1.1. Project Description

The Proposed Action involved the construction, operation, and maintenance of a 360-degree, integrated air and missile defense system across 16 candidate sites on Guam. The system is designed to protect the island’s population and critical infrastructure from evolving missile threats through a distributed architecture that includes mission assets (such as radars, launchers, and interceptors), and mission support facilities (including sensor operations and command centers). Implementation of the Proposed Action requires significant site preparation and construction, along with the management of associated airspace and utilities, to ensure persistent, integrated defense capabilities for over 170,000 U.S. citizens and military assets in the Indo-Pacific theater.

1.2. Project Team

The GDS EIS Team’s composition and organization resulted in achieving important completion dates, despite several essential evolving program requirements and changes to regulatory timelines. The team achieved success through strong leadership and the dedicated efforts of highly motivated and skilled individuals from multiple commands and disciplines, all working together as a cohesive unit. The team was comprised of over 65 personnel across the five Federal agencies. Key team members included Dr. Buff Crosby, MDA Director for Environmental Management, who led the team from kickoff in December 2022 through the Record of Decision (ROD), signed in August 2025. Ms. Catherine Spencer, MDA Deputy Project Manager, and Ms. Rachel Shaak, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific Project Manager, oversaw schedules, budgets, and contract deliverables. Ms. Karen Waller led the ManTech team as Project Manager for all aspects of the EIS and development of supporting studies and consultations. Ms. Allison Turner served as ManTech’s Outreach Manager for the coordination of public involvement and expanded public outreach. A complete list of team members is provided in the nomination submission form. The team strategically, proactively managed environmental and regulatory hurdles to ensure NEPA compliance and operational readiness of the GDS. By delivering a legally sufficient EIS and ROD in just 26 months, the team eliminated the single greatest impediment to the program’s schedule, ensuring timely construction so the Warfighter can test, train, and operate the system without regulatory delay. The team succeeded due to strong leadership and cooperation among the diverse and skilled individuals

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from multiple organizations who worked as a cohesive team, fully dedicated to the project and the mission.

2. Background

2.1. GDS Team’s Core Duties and Responsibilities

During the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024–25 achievement period, the GDS EIS Team was responsible for the island-wide environmental NEPA planning efforts for the EIAMD System across 16 geographically dispersed sites. The duties included managing a large multi-service team and directing extensive supporting surveys and studies including intensive biological and cultural surveys, utility studies, an aeronautical study and air traffic modeling, a Socioeconomic Impact Analysis Report, and a Traffic Impact Analysis Report, and navigating the complex Endangered Species Action (ESA) Section 7 and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 consultation processes.

2.2. Environmental Quality Program

The GDS EIS Team operated under a highly integrated environmental management program designed to coordinate the distinct requirements of the MDA, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and FAA. Team roles were defined by technical jurisdiction. Management of the environmental aspects of the project relied on deep collaboration between the following functional offices (Table 1).

Table 1: Team Functional Offices

Agency	Role in EIAMD System on Guam EIS
Lead Agency	
MDA	Provided overarching program management, technical data, and system architecture definitions.
Cooperating Agencies	
U.S. Army	Provided a significant amount of equipment and expertise required to operate and maintain the EIAMD system.
U.S. Navy	Ensured effects on naval properties, assets, and ongoing operations, as well as environmental compliance requirements, were properly addressed.
U.S. Air Force	Ensured the EIS properly addressed effects on ongoing operations and environmental compliance requirements as overseer of activities and operations on Andersen Air Force Base.
FAA	Provided jurisdictional expertise for the National Airspace System.

2.3. Management Approach

The GDS EIS Team implemented a superior project management framework characterized by deep technical integration across five federal agencies. Built on a “One Team, One Mission” philosophy, the strategy successfully guided the team through the challenges associated with traditional jurisdictional silos. This unified, collaborative structure enabled the team to navigate the complexities of an island-wide study area and meet the 26-month timeline, significantly outpacing the Federal average for projects of this magnitude. To maintain this accelerated pace, the team relied on a rigorous schedule of weekly synchronization meetings and bi-weekly technical working group meetings to coordinate the required data needed.

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Central to the team’s success was its agility and use of program controls. The GDS EIS Team established comprehensive business rules for document reviews, employed a web-based document commenting system, and utilized an action tracker to address issues in real-time, preventing bottlenecks that could occur with multi-agency NEPA efforts. This proactive approach established a new benchmark for mission-driven environmental planning, ensuring progress was maintained despite frequent changes to both the system’s site design and the Federal regulatory landscape. The following team management strategies proved highly effective:

- **Evolving Mission Needs:** The GDS EIS Team was directly involved in operational siting and design planning sessions, allowing the NEPA analysis to adapt in real-time to shifting siting requirements and technical specifications for the 16 candidate sites.
- **Navigating the Changing NEPA Landscape:** The team successfully managed the transition between multiple iterations of Council on Environmental Quality NEPA regulations, page count requirements, and adjustments to methodologies for Environmental Justice and Cumulative Impacts to ensure legal sufficiency.
- **Continuous Technical and Legal Communication:** The team utilized “early and often” communication to address questions regarding upcoming deliverables and data gaps. By coordinating over-the-shoulder reviews and working in lockstep with legal counsel across all participating agencies, the team ensured the document remained legally sufficient amidst shifting Federal standards.
- **Preemptive Regulatory Resilience:** In collaboration with the Guam Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the team preemptively developed air permit applications and environmental protection plans that accounted for future regulatory shifts to ensure a smooth transition from planning to construction.

2.4. Environmental Aspects of the Program

Utilizing the best available data and research, the project’s environmental aspects encompassed a comprehensive analysis of 15 natural, cultural, and human resource areas. This included terrestrial biological resources, water resources, geological and soil resources, historic properties, cultural practices, visual quality of Guam’s landscape, socioeconomics, protection of children, health and safety, transportation, noise, air quality, utilities, and airspace management. While impacts on most resource areas were determined to be less than significant, significant impacts were anticipated for resources areas of importance to the people of Guam, including removal of limestone forest habitat and *Cycas micronesica*, as well as socioeconomic impacts related to housing availability and medical and health care services.

2.5. Environmental Challenges

The GDS EIS Team delivered an unprecedented 26-month timeline while overcoming a series of historic environmental, regulatory, and social hurdles that threatened the mission’s critical path.

- Typhoon Mawar severely impacted Guam, creating a cascade of logistical challenges, including widespread power outages, flooding, and degraded indoor air quality. Despite these conditions, the team maintained the project schedule by rapidly pivoting to remote coordination and rescheduling critical milestones, including extending public reviews and rescheduling public meetings to ensure

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the community remained informed and were able to meaningfully participate in the NEPA process despite the island's damaged infrastructure.

- The team navigated a shifting federal regulatory landscape while managing the distinct mandates of five Federal agencies with distinct NEPA implementation procedures. The team masterfully synchronized these varying requirements into a single, cohesive document.
- Project implementation resulted in the unavoidable removal of 282 acres of limestone forest habitat, including 155 acres of high-quality native forest and 126 acres of degraded forest, which serve as essential recovery habitat for federally listed species such as the Mariana fruit bat, Guam kingfisher, and Mariana crow. This loss was considered a major, long-term significant impact given the critical role of these forests in supporting Guam's native species.
- Construction at several sites required the removal of over 5,400 individual *Cycas micronesica*, a federally listed threatened plant species. This loss was significant due to the species' ongoing population decline on Guam.
- The project was determined to have significant socioeconomic impacts, specifically related to housing availability and medical and health care services, from the influx of associated personnel and dependents placing further strain on Guam's already overburdened systems.

3. Summary of Outstanding Accomplishments

The GDS EIS Team's accomplishments are fundamentally rooted in the Department of War's (DoW's) primary objectives of rebuilding military capabilities and reestablishing strategic deterrence within the Indo-Pacific theater. Central to this success was the team's ability to execute accelerated delivery of the EIS and ROD, navigating a complex regulatory landscape to produce a signed ROD in just 26 months. This timeline represented a major achievement, operating nearly 50 percent faster than the 3-5-year industry average for projects of similar magnitude. By maintaining this aggressive schedule, the team effectively prevented critical construction and operational delays for a system deemed vital to national security. To achieve 360-degree defense readiness, the team spearheaded an unprecedented multi-agency coordination effort that successfully cleared 16 sites for the EIAMD System.

3.1. Program Management

The GDS EIS Team demonstrated superior program management skills by prioritizing urgency, efficiency, and accountability across five Federal agencies. Serving as the lead for this collaborative effort, the MDA team ensured seamless interagency coordination to quickly resolve complex environmental and operational siting challenges to avoid schedule delays. This unified approach effectively prevented bottlenecks that can frequently happen when working on large-scale, multi-service environmental efforts.

The GDS EIS Team oversaw the complex management of more than 20 specialized technical and supporting studies and surveys, ranging from traffic impacts to socioeconomic impacts to wastewater studies. The team simultaneously managed highly specialized investigations, including an air quality impact study, biological resource surveys, a wetland assessment, and natural resources assessment reports. To ensure full regulatory compliance, the team completed a biological assessment, cultural resources surveys, eligibility determinations, a Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) consistency determination, and an aeronautical proposal utilizing sophisticated airspace modeling. By successfully integrating these diverse technical work products, the team ensured the ROD was supported by a defensible administrative record. A cornerstone of the team's risk mitigation strategy was also the

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preemptive development applications of air quality permits and environmental protection plans in direct coordination with the Guam EPA. By identifying and addressing project risks during the initial planning phase, the team allowed operational planning to proceed with high confidence and ensured a smooth transition from environmental review to construction. This proactive management directly resulted in strict milestone adherence, as the team met every major regulatory milestone on schedule despite the remote geographic challenges of Guam and evolving mission requirements.

3.2. Stakeholder Interaction

The GDS EIS Team excelled in engaging both internal and external stakeholders to maintain project transparency as well as community awareness and confidence throughout the 26-month achievement period. The team's commitment to regulatory coordination was made evident by the execution of intensive consultations with the Guam State Historic Preservation Officer, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Guam Bureau of Statistics and Plans. These efforts were not merely a check-the-box activity; they ensured that the complex Section 106 consultation, Section 7 consultation, and CZMA process were completed ahead of critical deployment milestones.

A cornerstone of the team's success was its public and stakeholder responsiveness. Through the rigorous execution of a strategic public involvement plan, the team managed five open-house public meetings and multiple virtual engagement sessions, ultimately organizing and processing over 1,100 substantive public comments. Every comment was responded to in the Final EIS, ensuring it was truly community-informed. Refining the town hall meeting format of the public meetings promoted honest and open conversations to better inform stakeholders and the public. Transparency was further strengthened by establishing robust local partnerships with the Government of Guam and 19 village mayors. By building and maintaining these relationships, increasing project-related communication with stakeholders, and hosting a landmark two-day Government of Guam stakeholder summit, the team successfully prevented conflicts that could have jeopardized the mission's critical timeline.

3.3. Technical Merits and Innovative Approaches

The GDS EIS Team balanced urgent national security requirements with a high standard of environmental stewardship by institutionalizing advanced scientific modeling into the decision-making process. The team used a suite of innovative technical tools for a robust, data-driven foundation for the EIS, ensuring both mission readiness and long-term regulatory resilience.

- **Enhanced Biological Resources Mitigation Strategies:** The GDS EIS Team's work on biological conservation was a major success, leading to strategies that included up to 282 acres of limestone forest habitat enhancement through native species out planting and invasive removal. Rather than adding environmental protections as an afterthought, the team built them directly into the project design from the start to protect critical habitats for endangered species like the Guam kingfisher. A central feature of this innovation was the identification and development of 22 potential habitat enhancement sites, representing a commitment to ecosystem-based stewardship and utilizing a combination of ungulate exclusion fencing, invasive plant eradication, and propagation of dominant and rare native species. These technical strategies were validated in the July 2025 Biological Opinion, which institutionalized native plant salvage and translocation protocols. By leveraging success data from previous translocations, the team provided the

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technical assurance needed to field national security assets in a sensitive island environment while ensuring the long-term survival of Guam's unique flora.

- **Proactive Environmental Compliance:** The team implemented a forward-thinking strategy of proactive compliance by working with the Guam EPA-DoW liaison team, as well as members of the One Guam Initiative to develop and submit applications for air permits, spill plans, and environmental protection plans long before they were required. This approach significantly reduced the risk of future violations, stop-work orders, and costly delays that could have jeopardized the mission schedule. By front-loading the compliance effort, the team ensured that environmental standards would be met seamlessly throughout the project's lifecycle, demonstrating a sophisticated management system that integrated environmental planning with operational imperatives. All required plans were prepared and kept current, meeting all program milestones. Furthermore, the team demonstrated innovations in national security by successfully receiving a National Security Exemption from the U.S. EPA for the emissions of 39 mission-critical generator engines. This exemption provides significant Warfighter capabilities by assuring continuous operations without power interruptions and meets Clean Air Act emission requirements. This capability ensures that the GDS remains fully operational without compromise during emergencies, while the team's proactive planning ensures long-term adherence to regulatory air quality standards during routine operations. This approach on power generation for mission-critical activities can be transferred to other critical national defense assets for missile defense.
- **Aviation Environmental Design Tool (AEDT) Modeling:** An example of technical innovation was the integration of the AEDT, the FAA's standard for modeling aircraft performance to assess noise, fuel burn, and emissions, to quantify the complex impacts of aircraft rerouting due to the establishment of 14 new restricted areas. By modeling actual flight track data and evaluating anticipated standard instrument departure and arrival routes, the GDS EIS Team demonstrated that rerouting would result in a negligible change to total annual flight times and emissions. This advanced tool demonstrated that, while the new restricted areas were essential for high-energy radar safety, they would not cause significant flight delays, congestion, or excessive fuel costs for commercial aviation. Furthermore, the model confirmed that aircraft rerouting would result in a minimal change to the day-night average sound level in affected areas, ensuring minimal acoustic disruption to the local community.
- **Strategic Outreach and Engagement:** The GDS EIS Team had to manage an active and energized public and agency environment. The team briefed dozens of key stakeholders in person over 26 months and hosted a landmark two-day stakeholder summit to review their comments and listen to their needs and concerns. This summit brought together 24 Guam agencies to review and resolve concerns, ensuring that their feedback was documented and considered before the Final EIS release. The team also managed protests at public meetings, where all stakeholders had an open and respectful opportunity to voice their concerns and have them entered into the public record. Recognizing the project's sensitivity, the team conducted intensive risk communication training for all members before public meetings, which proved critical for maintaining professionalism during public interactions during high-intensity public meetings. Lastly, the team organized and categorized over 1,100 complex public comments, providing detailed technical responses that preserved community trust and project defensibility. The success of the EIS was underpinned by the team's superior management of a wide array of both internal and external stakeholders. The team coordinated with leaders from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and FAA, along with three on-island military installations, local Guam officials, regulators, and the public. The EIS process

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included substantive opportunities for public involvement through individual notices, EIAMD system EIS website, public meetings, and comment periods, ensuring two-way communication and enhancing community awareness.

4. Operational Impact, Resource Efficiency, and Strategic Benefit

The GDS EIS Team's effort distinguished itself from typical environmental analyses through its exceptional scale, complexity, and unprecedented speed. The team's purpose was not merely to ensure compliance, but to function as a strategic enabler, proactively clearing environmental and regulatory hurdles to accelerate the operational readiness of a system vital to protecting U.S. interests and citizens in the Indo-Pacific region. The outcomes of the team's efforts represent a significant advancement for the DoW, ensuring the GDS is poised to meet long-term national security objectives without compromising environmental integrity and setting an optimal stage for the forthcoming missile defense. The signing of the ROD provides a sustained operational readiness framework, establishing a clear and compliant path for the construction and operation of the GDS as a permanent, 360-degree shield for U.S. territories in the Indo-Pacific. This achievement is a vital component of regional deterrence, removing environmental and regulatory uncertainty from the system's fielding schedule. Furthermore, the team institutionalized environmental resilience by integrating site-specific mitigation measures directly into the design of the 16 sites. These measures include the limestone forest habitat enhancement activities and the implementation of advanced stormwater management systems, ensuring the GDS footprint remains sustainable for decades to come. Ultimately, this effort has established a new benchmark for the DoW, proving that mission-driven environmental planning and rigorous regulatory compliance are not competing interests, but mutually reinforcing goals that secure the Warfighter's success in a sensitive island environment.

One critical lesson learned was early and continuous stakeholder engagement, building a foundation of mutual trust that moved well beyond traditional NEPA requirements. An example of this success was the GDS EIS Team's execution of a landmark two-day stakeholder summit with all Government of Guam agencies and the implementation of a strategic engagement plan to guide communications on this complex and controversial project. This proactive approach allowed the team to resolve community and technical concerns with local agencies simultaneously, ensuring their feedback was considered before reaching critical mission milestones. These efforts forged an enduring partnership with the Government of Guam that will stabilize this project and future defense requirements for years to come. By establishing clear communication and a shared understanding of island challenges, the team created a collaborative environment for future mission growth that is highly transferable, providing a replicable template for other high-priority and high-profile missions in the Indo-Pacific where community confidence is as vital as operational capability.