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## **NEWS RELEASE – JANUARY 21, 2009**

### **CITY PREPARING LIST OF BASE EXPANSION CONCERNS**

Responding to concerns expressed by the City Council and local residents regarding base expansion plans for the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC), the City of Twentynine Palms will be submitting a list of comments to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will be prepared by the Department of the Navy for the proposed project.

The comments recommended by the Circulation Task Force, consisting of Council members Jim Harris and John Cole, will be considered by the City Council at their meeting on January 27. Any changes made by the Council on the 27th will then be forwarded to the Department of the Navy before the deadline for comments on January 31.

City staff will also be attending a proposed meeting of the Citizens Alliance for Wonder Valley this Saturday\* regarding the base expansion and will report back to the City Council the discussion points of this meeting.

The Circulation Task Force recommends that the following comments be made to the Department of Navy by the City Council:

That the City of Twentynine Palms recognizes MCAGCC as an important part of the community, and its successful training mission is important to the entire Morongo Basin.

That expansion to the East has the potential to negatively impact the current circulation of private and commercial vehicles on Amboy Road, which is an increasingly important access point into the City of Twentynine Palms and the Morongo Basin from the east.

That the expansion to the East has the potential to increase Special Use Air Space, which will inconvenience private and commercial pilots and impact the future development of the Twentynine Palms Airport.

That the expansion to the South has the potential to include the taking of private property, which includes several homes. Such action would impact the quality of

life for many of our neighboring residents and might be avoided with minimal modifications to the South expansion plans.

That expansion to the West has the potential to negatively impact recreational opportunities in Johnson Valley. Said opportunities have become a substantial part of the local economy for neighboring communities. Westward expansion plans should leave substantial area for recreation activities.

The City notes the exemplary past performance by MCAGCC in preserving biological and cultural resources and anticipates this same level of concern will be carried forward with any future expansion.

Residents are encouraged to attend the Jan. 27 City Council meeting to express their concerns, and may obtain additional information online at [www.29palms.usmc.mil/las](http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/las).

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*\*NOTE: The next Citizens Alliance for Wonder Valley meeting is proposed for Saturday, Jan. 24, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. at Wonder Valley Community Church on Amboy Road.*