

Economic and Tax Impact of CONDOR

The Draft EIS includes no economic or tax impact analysis and scant economic data. Further economic data and analyses might be gleaned from written testimony submitted by outside parties, but the Air National Guard has not seen fit to release this testimony.

The following is a preliminary analysis of baseline economic data and economic and tax impact on the tourism and second home markets and on real estate valuations throughout the CONDOR area. Other economic sectors, including agricultural livestock and general aviation, are not included.

ECONOMIC AND TAX BENEFITS

There are no economic or tax benefits to the people of the State of Maine from CONDOR.

NEGATIVE ECONOMIC AND TAX IMPACTS FROM CONDOR

The Draft EIS appears to conclude that no economic analysis is relevant as it has found CONDOR to “not have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment.” Were this true, the 104th could as easily justify doing its LOWAT training over the Boston suburbs. The no significant impact finding clearly doesn’t pass the straight face test.

The State of Maine’s 1992 response to a previous CONDOR lowering proposal details the disruptive effect a single low level flight can have. The response warns that with such activity “the remoteness of the region will become a detriment rather than an asset in attracting visitors.” This can have profound impacts on the tourist and second home economic structure and the value of real estate underlying CONDOR.

Tourist and second home market: A 1996 study of the Franklin County economy alone showed tourism contributed \$88 million annually. The tourism industry in the four counties, combined with the very robust second home industry, constitutes a several hundred million dollar annual economy together with its consequential sales tax and payroll tax receipts.

The tourist industry has long accepted the "Rule of Seven" whereby a bad experience by one tourist can cause seven others to rethink their plans. The second home industry, where a purchaser makes a major financial commitment, likely features a higher multiplier. The negative impact of low flights on visitor decisions must be measured against the comparatively minor \$1.2 million cost to the 104th for deploying to an existing MOA for training.

Real estate valuation: The municipalities underlying Condor have a total real estate valuation of \$8.8 billion, excluding the valuation of unorganized townships. Deleting the valuation of paper mill towns leaves \$6 billion, which yields some \$90 million per year in real estate taxes. Note that just the four tourist towns of Bethel, Newry, Rangeley, and Carrabassett Valley alone enjoy valuation in

excess of \$2 billion. A lowering of CONDOR would likely result in a loss of property value and tax revenue which would dwarf the cost of deploying the 104th to an existing MOA.

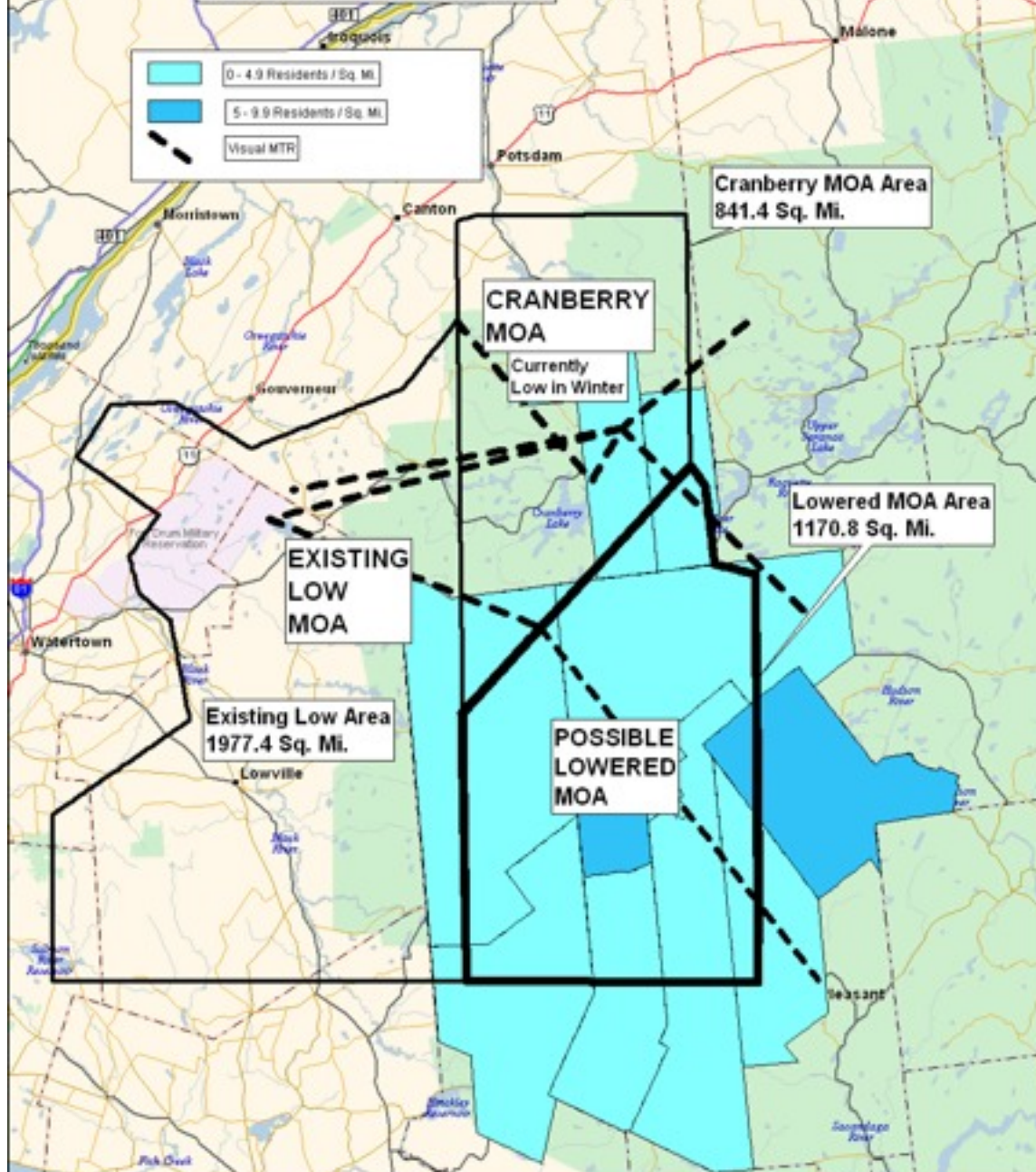
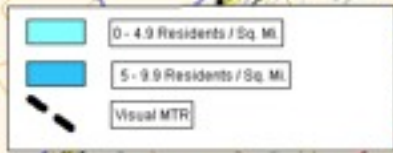
Alternatives to CONDOR

The Draft EIS gives a very short shrift to the possible alternative of enlarging the low altitude portion of the existing Adirondack MOA rather than establishing a new low altitude MOA under CONDOR. The attached maps show such a possible enlargement of the Adirondack MOA and compare its population density with that of CONDOR. The Adirondack enlargement has the following advantages over CONDOR.

- It is closer to the 104th base in Westfield, MA.
- It impacts only 1/10th as many people.
- It impacts only 1/4 as much land area.
- It enjoys adequate radar and communication support where that in CONDOR is inadequate for low altitude operations.
- It is adjacent to Griffiss Airport in case emergencies arise.
- It contains no public use airports while CONDOR includes 3 hard surfaced public airports and several unpaved public use fields.
- Only designated lakes in the Adirondack Park can be used for float plane operation. All lakes underlying CONDOR are open to floatplanes.

POSSIBLE LOW ADIRONDACK MOA

With Resident Population Density



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MN (13 8° W)



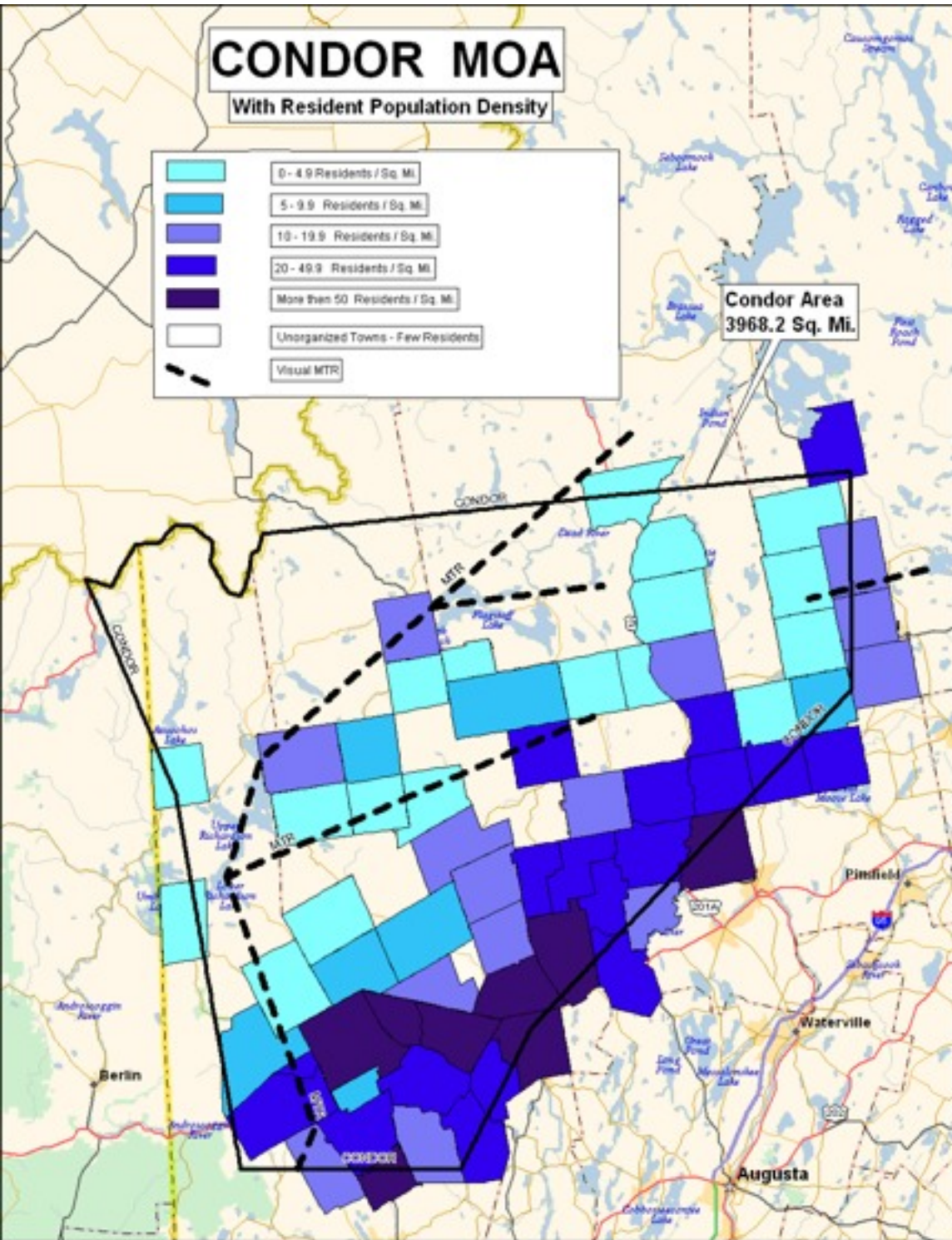
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CONDOR MOA

With Resident Population Density



Condor Area
3968.2 Sq. Mi.



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MN (16.2° W)

0 4 8 12 16 20 24 mi
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