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**(S.D.)-Training Expansion On Hold For B-1, B-52 Bombers**

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 12/31/2012 08:22 AM

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) - A plan to more than triple the airspace in which the U.S. Air Force can conduct training exercises with its Dakotas-based B-1 and B-52 bombers is still awaiting a final environmental impact statement.

The six-year effort to expand the airspace is a complex process that involves working with the Federal Aviation Administration, the region's Native American tribes and the public through a detailed environmental review.

A draft environmental impact statement was released in August 2010, and public hearings were held in the Dakotas, Wyoming and Montana later that year to solicit public comments.

Officials earlier had expected the statement to be released last winter.

Air Force spokesman Maj. Matthew Reese says it's still being finalized, and it's currently out of the hands of Ellsworth Air Force Base.