

Tuesday, October 13, 2009, 3:41pm MST

El Mirage wants Luke to test F-35 noise levels

The Phoenix suburb of El Mirage is asking that the new F-35 jet fighters be tested for noise levels at **Luke Air Force Base**.

Luke is in the hunt for F-35 fighter jet training as a replacement for the military's F-16, whose pilots are trained at Luke.

El Mirage Mayor Michele Kern wrote U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates asking that F-35 jets be brought to Luke so noise levels can be compared to the F-16.

"We respectfully request the Department of Defense and the Department of the Air Force bring at least two of the of the F-35 prototypes to Luke Air Force Base and fly them in full training mission for a week so that all residents living in the vicinity of Luke AFB can evaluate for themselves the full environmental impact the F-35 will have on them should Luke AFB be selected for the F-35," Kern wrote in the Oct. 13 letter.

The Pentagon is expected to start an environmental impact study on the F-35 soon with training flights at Luke. El Mirage also requested other west side cities provide information they have on Luke and the F-35.