

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR THE COMBINED STRUCTURAL/AIRCRAFT FIRE
RESCUE FACILITY AT THE NAVAL AIR ENGINEERING STATION, LAKEHURST NEW JERSEY

Pursuant to section 102(2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA, the Department of the Navy gives notice that an Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required for the Combined Structural/Aircraft Fire Rescue Facility at the Naval Air Engineering Station (NAES) Lakehurst New Jersey.

The proposed action is to construct and operate an approximately 20,000 square foot, single story, fire/rescue facility in the eastern portion of the NAES. The proposed action includes the addition of a new parking lot, stormwater basin, extending utility lines and demolishing existing obsolete facilities at the Station. Demolition will occur on three structures (totaling 8785 square feet): Building 335, the current aircraft fire rescue station; Building 616, the current structural fire station administration building; and Building 263, a former hazardous materials warehouse.

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide adequate space for fire/rescue functions (personnel and equipment) at the NAES. Other objectives relating to this action are: to reduce current building maintenance and utility costs, to enhance emergency response capability and to remove airfield clear zone obstructions.

This action is needed because current facilities are generally cramped, require distant storage of response vehicles and other equipment in other buildings, and also because one facility is situated in violation of FAA taxiway clearances. Current garage spaces are not wide or tall enough to house modern day fire-fighting vehicles. Consolidating the structural and aircraft fire/rescue functions will also increase mission efficiency and allow the demolition of obsolete and maintenance intensive buildings.

Four alternatives, including the no action alternative, were considered for the project. The no action alternative, Alternative A, is to keep existing structural and aircraft fire/rescue facilities in their current buildings. Alternatives evaluated to meet the need for additional fire rescue space were: 1) Alternative B, replace the aircraft fire rescue station and expand the structural station; 2) Alternative C, construct a combined structural/aircraft fire rescue station along Taxiway 5, 750 feet east of West Field Hangar; and 3) Alternative D, construction and operation of a combined facility at the intersection of McCord and Rounds Roads. Alternative D is the preferred alternative to accomplish this proposed action.

The principle environmental issues of concern for the project include: 1) threatened and endangered species, 2) wetlands and water quality, 3) public safety and noise, 4) historic buildings, and 5) air quality.

Threatened and endangered species: Alternative A would have no impact. Alternatives B and C could potentially impact habitat that could be used by state-listed grassland birds. Alternative D would be sited in a location that is not suitable for habitation by any threatened or endangered species. None of the alternatives would impact any federally listed threatened or endangered species.

Wetlands and water quality: Alternative A would not conform to Phase II stormwater permit requirements. Alternatives B, C, and D would conform to Phase II stormwater permit requirements. Alternative C would site the facility within a wetlands buffer zone. Alternatives B and D would not impinge on wetland buffers.

Public safety and noise: Alternative A compromises response time due to the inefficient and inadequate storage space for fire fighting vehicles and inadequate personnel spaces. This alternative would also continue to violate airfield clear zones. Alternatives B, C, and D would improve response time with better coordination of response actions and would conform to airfield clear zone requirements.

Historic buildings: Alternative A would have no impact on historic buildings. Alternative B proposes an addition to building 128, which would require State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) approval. Alternatives C and D would not utilize building 128, but would demolish building 263, requiring SHPO approval. Building 128, the current structural fire station, is considered historically significant and would not be demolished under any alternative considered.

Air quality: As this is a federal project with potential impacts to air quality, a conformity analysis was performed in accordance with 40 CFR 93 (Subpart B). Both Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and NOx were evaluated. It is estimated from the conformity analysis that the combined construction, demolition and operations related emissions for the first year of the proposed action would generate approximately 5.18 tons of VOC and 7.75 tons of NOx emissions. This is well below the *de minimis* threshold of 25 tons/year for each pollutant. A project is considered regionally significant if estimated emissions represent more than 10 percent of the emissions inventory for the non-attainment area. Estimated emissions for the project represent a maximum of 0.6 percent of the VOC inventory and 0.8 percent of the NOx inventory, well below the 10 percent limit. Since estimated emissions are below the *de minimis* threshold and are not considered regionally significant, this project is exempt from the Conformity Rule under 40 CFR 93.153 (c)(1). A Record of Non-Applicability was completed and included in the EA. To further minimize construction and operations-related air quality effects, potential fugitive dust sources will be maintained in a wet condition. A soil conservation plan will be submitted to and permit obtained from the Ocean County Soil Conservation District prior to the start of construction.

There are no irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources associated with the proposed action. There are no other proposed activities that would utilize the same area as any of the alternatives. Therefore, there are no cumulative impacts identified for this action. There are no significant indirect effects associated with the proposed action. Implementation of the proposed action would be consistent with federal, regional, state and local plans, policies, and controls to the extent required by federal law and regulation. No potential conflicts have been identified

Based on the information gathered during preparation of the EA, the Navy finds that the proposed combined structural/aircraft fire rescue station at NAES Lakehurst, New Jersey, situated at the intersection of McCord and Rounds Roads per alternative D, will not result in any significant impacts on the environment.

The EA addressing this action may be obtained from the Naval Air Engineering Station, Code 8.7.3, Building 5, Lakehurst NJ 08733 (Attn: Dorothy Peterson), telephone (732) 323-4863. A limited number of copies of the EA are available to fill single copy requests.


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Date