

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Runway 5/23 Safety Area Improvements
Southwest Oregon Regional Airport
North Bend, Oregon
March 2022

Introduction

This document serves as the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and provides the final agency determinations and approvals for the federal actions necessary to implement the improvements described below at the Southwest Oregon Regional Airport. This FONSI is based on the information and analysis contained in the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) dated March 2022, which is incorporated herein by reference. The FEA has been prepared pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations Title 40 CFR §§ 1500-1508, and in accordance with FAA Order 1050.1F *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures* and FAA Order 5050.4B *National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions*.

Proposed Action

The Coos County Airport District (CCAD; Airport Sponsor) owns and operates the Southwest Oregon Regional Airport (OTH) in North Bend, Oregon. CCAD is proposing to construct improvements to the runway safety area (RSA) at the northeastern end of OTH's main runway to comply with current FAA RSA design standards. The RSA is the surface surrounding the runway prepared or suitable for reducing the risk of damage to airplanes in the event of an undershoot, overshoot, or excursion from the runway. The proposed action involves the placement of an 89-foot x 67-foot triangular bulkhead into Coos Bay at the end of Runway 5/23. Chapter 1 and Figure 1-5 of the FEA provide a description and a graphic depiction of the Proposed Action.

Federal Actions

The requested Federal actions and approvals necessary for this project to proceed are:

- Unconditional approval of the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) to depict those portions of the Proposed Action subject to FAA review and approval pursuant to 49 USC 47107(a)(16)(B).
- Determination that Environmental Analysis Prerequisites associated with any future Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding application have been fulfilled pursuant to 49 United States Code § 47101.

Purpose and Need

Chapter 2 of the FEA presents the Purpose and Need. CCAD's purpose of the project is to improve safety by addressing the non-standard RSA at the Runway 23 end. The project is needed because the RSA at the Runway 23 end does not meet FAA RSA design standards for Airport Reference Code (ARC) C-II aircraft, which require the RSA to be 500 feet wide, centered on the runway centerline, and extends to 1,000 feet beyond the end of the runway. Subsequent to the Airport's 2017 FAA Part 139 Certification Inspection, the FAA inspector noted that the RSA at the Runway 23 end does not meet standards. Currently, the RSA extends into Coos Bay and is approximately short of design standards by 79 feet for length and 57 feet for width.

Alternatives

Chapter 3 of the FEA presents the alternatives analysis. The FEA identified and evaluated reasonable alternatives that may accomplish the objectives of the Proposed Action in accordance with NEPA, FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B, and FAA design standards. Section 3.1 of the FEA

presents six preliminary alternatives that were identified during the master planning process and describes two action alternatives considered for evaluation in the EA. Section 3.2 describes the alternatives and/or alternative components that were eliminated from consideration. The FEA carried two alternatives forward for evaluation:

No Action Alternative:

Under the No Action Alternative, no improvements to the RSA would be constructed. The existing RSA would not comply with FAA design standards and would not fulfill the project purpose and need.

Proposed Action Alternative:

The Proposed Action will meet FAA design standards for ARC C-II aircraft at the Runway 23 end by providing a 500-foot-wide RSA that extends 1,000 feet beyond the existing runway length. The Proposed Action involves the placement of a 3,150 square-foot (0.07-acre) bulkhead that will form an 89-foot by 67-foot triangular surface area at the northeastern corner of Runway 5/23. The bulkhead will be created by using pre-cast concrete blocks placed in and adjacent to Coos Bay. The project area includes the area required for RSA compliance, plus a 10-foot road buffer for emergency vehicle access and rip-rap toe armoring, and a 100-foot in-water construction buffer. An additional 60-foot staging area on land will provide for vehicle support and construction staging. Haul routes to the project site will utilize existing airport roadways and paved or disturbed areas. Construction will proceed during the in-water work period (October 1 – February 15) as detailed in Section 3.4. This alternative meets the purpose and need as described in Chapter 2 of the FEA.

Environmental Consequences

Chapter 4 of the FEA evaluates each of the environmental impact categories identified in FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B. No thresholds of significance are expected to be exceeded with the Proposed Action. Most impacts would be minimal and occur during construction.

The following resource is not present in the project area and will not be affected by the Proposed Action: farmlands. The following resources are present in the project area, but most impacts would be minimal, occur during construction, and significant impacts are not expected: air quality, climate, Section 4(f) resources, hazardous materials, solid waste and pollution prevention, historical, architectural, archaeological and cultural resources, land use, natural resources and energy supply, noise and noise compatible land use, socioeconomics, environmental justice, children's environmental health and safety risks, and visual effects. The implementation of Best Management Practices during construction will be employed to further reduce impacts to these resources.

The remaining categories with any impact by the Proposed Action are discussed below. A full discussion of these categories, as well as the complete analysis conducted for all categories, can be found in the FEA.

Biological Resources: Under the Proposed Action, the placement of the bulkhead in Coos Bay would have impacts on fish species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) including Oregon Coast Coho salmon, Southern DPS eulachon or southern DPS green sturgeon, and will result in the loss of 3,150 square feet (0.07 acre) of designated critical habitat for Oregon Coast coho salmon and Southern DPS green sturgeon. The bulkhead construction will also have impacts on designated essential fish habitat (EFH) for coastal pelagic species, Pacific Coast groundfish, and Pacific salmon. These impacts occur from suspended sediment plumes and delivery of contaminants in stormwater and would be mitigated to less than significant levels. As required under Section 7 of the ESA, consultation was conducted with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). NMFS reviewed and approved a permittee-responsible mitigation plan for the impacts to federally-listed species and EFH. The Mitigation Plan details the removal of two adjacent remnant docks in Pony Slough to create ESA critical habitat and EFH at a 2:1 ratio (included as Appendix L of FEA). With the approved mitigation, there will be no long-term impacts to federally-listed fish and wildlife or their designated critical habitat. Therefore, the Proposed Action will not result in significant impacts to biological resources.

Coastal Resources: Under the Proposed Action, the placement of the bulkhead in Coos Bay occurs within Oregon's federally approved coastal zone and thus must demonstrate consistency with Oregon Coastal Management Program (OCMP). A consistency analysis by the Oregon Department of

Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) concluded that Proposed Action is consistent with the OCMP provided that mitigation measures are provided to reduce potential impacts on nearby oyster beds. With the required mitigation measures, there will be no long-term impacts to coastal resources. Therefore, the Proposed Action will not result in significant impact to coastal resources.

Water Resources: Under the Proposed Action, the placement of the bulkhead in Coos Bay would have permanent impacts to 0.7-acre estuarine subtidal unconsolidated bottom habitat. As part of the Joint Permit Application process, consultation was initiated with US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). USACE determined that the Proposed Action is authorized by Nationwide Permit (NWP) No. 14, Linear Transportation Projects, and No. 27, Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Establishment and Enhancement Activities. Subsequently, Oregon DEQ certified that the Proposed Action complies with the Clean Water Act and state rules through the Nationwide 401 Water Quality Certification process. The USACE issued a Nationwide Permit verification letter in September 2021 dependent on a permittee-responsible mitigation plan that will provide mitigation at a 2:1 ratio. The Mitigation Plan details the removal of two adjacent remnant docks in Pony Slough that will result in 0.14 acre of estuarine habitat (included as Appendix L of FEA). With the mitigation of impacts at a 2:1 ratio, there will be no long-term impacts to Coos Bay. Therefore, the Proposed Action will not result in significant impacts to water resources.

Mitigation

No significant impacts were identified as a result of the Proposed Action; however some mitigation measures are included as part of the Proposed Action and to bring the project into permit compliance. These mitigation measures are provided below. Additional measures to avoid, reduce, or minimize impacts during project construction are provided in Chapter 4 of the FEA.

Biological Resources:

- Provide mitigation for permanent impacts to 0.7-acre of designated critical habitat for Oregon Coast coho salmon and Southern DPS green sturgeon through the removal of two remnant creosote dock structures in Pony Slough to create critical habitat and EFH at a 2:1 ratio (0.14-acre) per the approved permittee-responsible mitigation plan.
- Avoid and minimize impacts to federally-listed species and EFH during construction by implementing the signed NMFS Terms and Conditions and the NMFS EFH Conservation Recommendations within the approved permittee-responsible mitigation plan.
- Implement the two-year monitoring plan required as part of the Section 7 ESA consultation and required in permittee-responsible mitigation plan to assess the indirect effects to EFH from project construction sediment plumes.

Coastal Resources:

- Provide mitigation for potential impacts to nearby oyster beds through oyster bed seeding of installed rip-rap throughout the project area.
- Conduct oyster bed seeding per DLCD mitigation measures which include the use of whole oyster shells, timing of seeding, and location, which are included in the permittee-responsible mitigation plan.

Historical, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources:

- Implement the Inadvertent Discovery Plan developed for the project if cultural resources are discovered during project construction activities.

Water Resources:

- Provide mitigation for impacts to 0.7-acre estuarine subtidal unconsolidated bottom habitat through the removal of two remnant creosote dock structures in Pony Slough to create estuarine habitat at a 2:1 ratio (comprising a 0.14-acre area).
- Avoid and minimize impacts to Coos Bay water quality during construction by implementing the following requirements of the USACE Nationwide 401 Water Quality Certification.

- Implement the monitoring plan required as part of the Section 7 ESA consultation and required in permittee-responsible mitigation plan to measure marine turbidity during construction.

Public and Agency Involvement

Chapter 5 of the FEA summarizes the public outreach, agency, and tribal coordination undertaken for the project.

The FAA and CCAD conducted early coordination meetings with several federal, state, and local agencies to discuss potential impacts to Coos Bay and Pony Slough. On September 20, 2017, prior to the outset of the environmental review process, a scoping meeting was held to solicit initial comments from various federal, state, and local agencies via electronic mail. Agencies were asked to submit comments for consideration prior to the environmental review process and were invited to an agency and stakeholder coordination meeting held via conference call. As part of the Oregon Joint Permit Application, a “Kaizen” pre-application meeting was held on July 17, 2019 with multiple agencies in attendance.

An open house was held May 19, 2019 to inform the public about the project, its purpose and need, and the alternatives analysis process. CCAD staff have also provided updates at public meetings since summer 2018. In total, approximately 15 people have attended project events and meetings since the EA process began.

The FAA conducted consultation with Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (Oregon SHPO) and six affected tribes regarding cultural and historic resources. Consultation was initiated in December 2018 and concluded in August 2021. A detailed summary is included in Chapter 5 of the FEA.

A notice requesting public comment on the Draft EA was published in the Eugene Register Guard from February 1-8, 2022, and The World newspaper on February 4 and 11, 2022. The comment period began February 1, 2022, and ended March 1, 2022. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a public Self-Guided Virtual Open House was hosted on the OTH website. The website provided an update on the draft EA efforts since the first public information meeting, including information on current design for the Proposed Action, project timeline, and notification to the public about the anticipated release of the Final EA. Neither the CCAD nor the FAA received any comments on the Draft EA. The FAA also provided the Draft EA to the tribes for review and no comments were received.

Environmental Finding and Approval

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein, the undersigned finds that the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101 of NEPA and other applicable environmental requirements and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA. As a result, the FAA will not prepare an environmental impact statement for this action.

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