
Talkeetna Airport Improvements Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment

Project No. 54660

Prepared for
Alaska Department of Transportation and
Public Facilities, Central Region

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Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
**Finding of No Significant Impact
for
Talkeetna Airport Improvements
Talkeetna, Alaska**

Federal Project Number: 3-02-0287-0402

State Project Number: 54660

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was circulated in draft form for two 30 day public and agency reviews, the first in October/November 2006 and the second during April/May 2007. Five comments were received during the first review and no new issues were identified that were not included in the final Environmental Assessment. No comments were received during the last public and agency review of the Proposed FONSI.

Purpose and Need for the Project

- The purpose of the project is to enhance safety, to satisfy current and forecast demand for airport facilities, and to improve the efficiency of airport operations. The proposed project would provide improvements to meet forecast demands through 2008, as identified in the Talkeetna Airport Master Plan (USKH, 2001). The airport's deficiencies are identified in Section 2 of the Environmental Assessment (EA).

Proposed Federal Actions

- Federal funding for the project proposed in the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) through the Airport Improvement Program
- ALP approval

Description of the Project

- Construction of additional lease lots, aircraft parking positions and two new aircraft aprons
- Construction of automobile parking spaces
- Construction of a heliport separating fixed wing and rotary aircraft
- Installation of security fence
- Paving the access road
- Construction of a pedestrian safety path

For a detailed description of the project, refer to Section 3.2.1 of the EA.

Alternatives Considered

The Environmental Assessment evaluates two alternatives: The Proposed Action Alternative and the No Action Alternative.

Assessment

The project has been developed to avoid impacts to the floodplain and minimize impacts to wetlands and other resources (EA, Section 5) and is consistent with the Talkeetna Comprehensive Plan (Mat-Su Borough, 1998) Transportation Element goal pertaining to the state's Talkeetna Airport: "Need to provide for the continued improvement of the airport." The Talkeetna Comprehensive Plan recommendations supporting this goal include managing the airport for continued efficiency, an additional taxiway and expanded apron area, need for additional airplane tie-downs, and routing fixed wing and rotary powered aircraft to minimize the impact of noise on the community. The proposed Talkeetna Airport improvements are consistent with these Talkeetna Comprehensive Plan recommendations.

Minimization, Mitigation or Enhancement Measures:

This project has been coordinated with the appropriate resource agencies, and their comments have been incorporated into the EA. Conditions of approval associated with this project are detailed in the EA and project permit applications, clearances, and authorizations, and will be included in the construction contract documents. The project incorporates the following minimization, mitigation, or enhancement measures to minimize impacts (see also Table 5-1, page 5-22 of EA):

Historical, Architectural, Archeological, and Cultural Resources

- The construction contract will contain the provision: "Should cultural or paleontological resources be discovered as a result of this activity, all work that would impact these resources will halt and the SHPO will be notified immediately."

Water Quality

- Work would be performed in accordance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit. An approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan would be required to minimize effects of erosion and potential contaminants on nearby water bodies. An Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan would be included in the final design. A Section 401 Water Quality Certification would also be obtained from ADEC as part of the permitting for this project.

Fish, Wildlife, and Plants

- Best management practices, such as drainage controls and grassy swales to prevent erosion and sedimentation to water bodies (including wetlands), would be implemented.
- Vegetation clearing would be done outside the May 1 to July 15 nesting periods for migratory birds in accordance with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service guidelines.

Wetlands

- Compensatory mitigation in conformance with the Interagency Memorandum of Agreement. In-lieu fee compensation for unavoidable loss of wetland at a fee of \$500 per acre shall be deposited into the Alaska Wetland Conservation Fund.

Floodplains

- The pedestrian pathway and airport access resurfacing would be designed and constructed at or below existing elevations, thereby avoiding any effect on floods. The

security fence would be designed with moose fence fabric to reduce any potential effect on base flood water surface elevation. Also, ADOT&PF would modify its operating plan, as FAA may allow, opening gates to reduce their effect on flow when a flood is predicted.

Light Emissions and Visual Impacts

- To minimize visual intrusion on the adjacent residences, a minimum of 25 feet of vegetated buffer would remain between the access road and the nearest residential property boundary.

Construction

- Haul trucks and other engine-powered equipment would be equipped with mufflers that meet the minimum original equipment manufacturer specifications.
- Haul trucks would be operated in accordance with posted speed limits.
- A Hazardous Materials Control Plan (HMCP) would be developed and implemented by the project contractor.
- Emergency response actions/protocol would be identified and implemented by the construction contractor.
- A Traffic Control Plan would be implemented to keep circulation moving safely with minimal inconvenience to automobile and pedestrian passage during construction
- Vehicle speed would be restricted in and around the construction activities and along material haul routes.
- The area of disturbed lands would be minimized.
- The time between initially disturbing the soil and revegetation or other surface stabilization would be minimized
- Water active grading and other disturbed, unpaved areas as appropriate during dry periods, would be used.

Required Permits, Approvals, and Clearances:

- Section 404 Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for fill in wetlands
- National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Section 401 Water Quality approval from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)
- Coastal Zone Consistency determination from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) and Office of Project Management and Permitting (OPMP)
- Floodplain Development Permit and Land Use Regulation Development consistency determination from Mat-Su Borough.

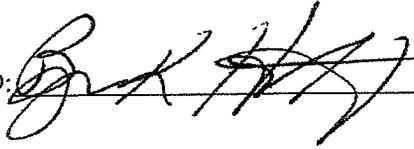
Final Environmental Assessment

The Final EA and Proposed Finding of No Significant Impact were advertised in the Talkeetna Times, Frontiersman, Anchorage Daily News, and online with the State's Public Notice system for two 30 day review and comment periods. Comments were received from four individuals and the Talkeetna Community Council during the first review. Except for comments on specific items incorrectly stated or figures not labeled correctly that do not change the outcome of the EA, the comments received reiterated previous comments addressed in the EA. No comments were received during the second public review.

Federal Funding 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 the 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.

APPROVED: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "B. K. H. J.", written over a horizontal line.

DATE: _____

6/14/07