

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Southwest Region

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Fuel Farm Improvements

Austin-Bergstrom International Airport
Austin, TX

April 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS), located in Austin, TX, is classified by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as a medium-hub airport and is the fifth busiest airport in Texas. Passenger traffic at the airport has followed a consistent upward trend.

2. PURPOSE AND NEED

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B, an Environmental Assessment (EA) must include a description of the purpose of a proposed action and the reasons it is needed. The purpose of and the need for the Proposed Action are discussed below.

2.1 Purpose of the Proposed Project

The purpose of the proposed fuel farm improvements is to meet current and anticipated future demand for airline fuel reserves at AUS. Currently the inability to meet fuel reserve requirements has resulted in the airlines “ferrying” fuel into the airport on occasion, thereby increasing operational costs and impacting to the fueling capabilities of other airports. On occasion there is less than two days of fuel reserve at the current facility which is an operational risk.

2.2 Need for the Proposed Project

The need for additional fuel capacity is described within the Airport Master Plan. Jet-A fuel storage requirements were defined for future conditions within the Master Plan. Table 1 in the attached EA describes the fuel deficits. As described within the table, continued growth of the airport results in a continuing need for more fuel capacity. Considering the current and ultimate fueling needs and the airport’s planned development within the existing fuel farm footprint, the Airline Consortium (AUS Fuels Company) determined development of the new fuel farm site is needed to allow existing demand to be met while considering future development needs of the airport and fuel farm facility.

3. FEDERAL ACTION

The requested FAA actions include the following:

- Unconditional approval of the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) to depict the proposed improvements pursuant to 49 USC §§40103(b) and 47107(a)(16).

4. ALTERNATIVES

4.1 Proposed Action

A number of alternative fuel farm sites were evaluated within the Airport Master Plan. Based on the airport's future development plans at the current fueling facility, the proposed fuel farm expansion is planned to occur in the area noted as "future fuel farm" within the Airport Master Plan and detailed on the ALP.

Phase one, depicted as projects "1" and "2" on Figure 2 of the attached EA, occurs within the footprint of the existing fuel farm on the east side of Taxiway Charlie, at 3324 Spirit of Texas Drive. To improve the current fuel deficit situation, an additional interim fuel delivery truck offload rack will be constructed to facilitate additional fuel delivery. This will allow three fuel trucks to simultaneously offload fuel, versus the current condition which allows only two trucks to simultaneously offload fuel. Currently 75-80 trucks deliver fuel to the airport each day. Due to the amount of time needed to offload fuel from the trucks to the storage tanks, these operations occur 23 hours per day. Providing the third offload position will allow for additional fuel deliveries with the goal of temporarily reducing the existing fueling deficit. Finally, a new ground service equipment fuel service station will be constructed adjacent to existing load rack facility. These improvements consist of two, separate above ground tanks, one for diesel and one for gasoline. Each tank will be 10,000 gallons.

Phase Two includes the development of the fuel farm in the area recommended within the Airport Master Plan and depicted on the Airport Layout Plan. Specific details are included on Figure 2 of the attached EA (Projects "3" through "11"). As shown, the Proposed Action includes construction of two additional 1.5-million-gallon fuel storage tanks, new offload racks, and supporting infrastructure and equipment. The existing fuel tanks will remain in operation until airfield improvements require them to be removed.

4.2 No Action

The No Action Alternative is the baseline against which the operational, economic and environmental characteristics of the Proposed Action are assessed. In addition, the No Action Alternative is retained for detailed analysis in this EA to fulfill Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Part 1502) implementing NEPA, and to comply with FAA Order 1050.1F, Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures, and FAA Order 5050.4B, NEPA Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions.

The No Action alternative involves no improvements to the existing Fuel Facilities. The facility would continue to operate at a deficient level. This results in the periodic need for aircraft to “ferry” fuel to the airport, thereby increasing demand at those airports aircraft arrive from. The No Action alternative does not meet the purpose and need of the project.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

FAA evaluated the potential impacts associated with the proposed action by following the guidance in FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B, in accordance with NEPA and CEQ regulations. FAA Orders require the evaluation of specific environmental impact categories. Chapter 5 of the EA provides an analysis of anticipated environmental impacts resulting from the proposed action. In accordance with NEPA, the FAA compared the proposed action alternative to the no build alternative in evaluating potential impacts.

A number of resources will not be impacted by implementation of the proposed action and will not be further discussed in detail in this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). These categories include: Air Quality; Biological Resources; Climate; Coastal Resources; Department of Transportation Act, Section 4(f); Farmlands; Floodplains; Historical, Architectural, Archeological, and Cultural Resources; Natural Resource and Energy Supply; Noise and Noise Compatible Land Use; Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, and Children's Environmental Health and Safety Risks; Visual Effects/Light Emissions; Water Resources; and Wild and Scenic Rivers.

However, because implementation of the proposed action has the potential to impact the following resource categories, FAA's review is more detailed.

5.1 Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention

5.1.1 Existing Condition

Neither the existing nor proposed fuel farm sites contain features listed on the National Priority List (NPL). The existing fuel farm operates under numerous permits including, among others, an Austin Fire Department Hazardous Materials Permit; a City of Austin Stormwater Discharge Permit, a State of Texas Pollution Discharge and Elimination System Permit; and a Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan and Facility Response Plan (FRP). Additionally, the existing fuel farm is located within a contaminated groundwater buffer zone attributed to a deed restricted area.

5.1.2 Environmental Consequences

Implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative directly involves the transport of hazardous materials as well as the removal of existing facilities that household hazardous materials as it includes the construction at an existing fuel farm location. Construction and operation of the proposed fuel farm would involve some ancillary use of hazardous materials, including vehicle fuels, jet fuel, oils, transmission fluids, cleaning solvents, and architectural coatings. Compliance with existing federal, state and local regulations and routine precautions would reduce the

potential for accidental releases of a hazardous material to occur and would minimize the impact of an accident should one occur.

The proposed fuel farm site consists of regularly maintained grasses. The site was heavily disturbed during construction of the airport and has not historically been used for any purpose other than open space.

There is a potential to encounter existing hazardous materials at the current fuel farm site during construction as the site is used to house fuel and other hazardous materials. However, no facilities at the current fuel farm are planned to be removed or disturbed, only new equipment will be installed.

All necessary federal, state, and local permits will be obtained prior to construction of the Proposed Action Alternative. Therefore, the project will not violate applicable Federal, state, or local laws or regulations regarding hazardous materials and/or solid waste management. The project will not be constructed on a site listed on the NPL nor will it produce an appreciably different quantity or type of hazardous waste. Final implementation of the proposed action will not generate an appreciably different quantity or type of solid waste or use a different method or collection or disposal and/or would exceed local capacity as the fuel storage facility is simply moving to a different site on the airport. With the use of standard industry project design and construction, it is not anticipated hazardous materials will be released into the environment. Project design will consider all standard industry practices for the construction and operation of the fuel tanks, fuel distribution lines, and associated facilities.

5.2 Cumulative Impacts

Consideration of potential cumulative impacts applies to those impacts resulting from implementation of the Proposed Action. The consideration of cumulative impacts addresses the potential for individually minor but collectively significant impacts to occur over time.

CEQ Regulations, Section 1508.7, define cumulative impacts as the incremental impacts of the action when added to the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of the agency (federal or non-federal) undertaking such actions. Because the Proposed Action would result in minor construction impacts and have no or minimal impact on other resources, the Proposed Action in combination with other foreseeable projects in the area of potential effect would not reach or exceed thresholds of significance. See Section 5.4.4 of the attached EA for a more detailed analysis.

6. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND AGENCY COORDINATION

Given that no special purpose laws apply and that the Proposed Action does not meet the definition of a project requiring public notification under FAA Order 5050.4B, no agency coordination or public involvement was undertaken.

7. CONDITIONS AND MITIGATION

As prescribed by 40 CFR §1505.3, the FAA shall take steps as appropriate to the action, such as through special conditions in grant agreements, property conveyance deeds, releases, airport layout plan approvals, and contract plans and specifications and shall monitor these as necessary to assure that representations made in the EA and FONSI will be carried out. Specific conditions of approval associated with this project are listed below:

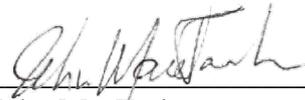
- Construction activities would be subject to requirements of the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit to Discharge Wastes (TXR150000) for construction sites and the Airport's established Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SW3P).
- Mitigation measures shall be incorporated into the project to include use of best management practices (BMPs) during construction to minimize erosion and sedimentation; controlling runoff; and controlling waste and spoils disposal to prevent ground contamination.
- Mitigation measures shall be incorporated into the project to include use of BMPs during construction to minimize fugitive dust and to minimize mobile and stationary emissions sources.

8. FEDERAL FINDINGS

Throughout the development of the airport, including the proposed improvements described above, the FAA has made every effort to adhere to the policies and purposes of NEPA, as stated in CEQ Regulations for Implementing NEPA, 40 CFR §1500-1508. The FAA has concentrated on the truly significant issues related to the action in question. In its determination whether to prepare an EIS or process the EA as a FONSI, the FAA weighed its decision based on an independent examination of the EA, comments from Federal and state agencies, and all other evidence available to the FAA.

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 of Section 101 of NEPA and other applicable environmental requirements and, with the required mitigation referenced above, will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or include any condition requiring any consultation pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of NEPA. As a result, the FAA has determined that preparation of an EIS is not necessary for this Proposed Action and is therefore issuing this FONSI.

RECOMMENDED
FOR APPROVAL



DATE: 4/7/2020

John MacFarlane
Environmental Protection Specialist

APPROVED:



DATE: 4/8/2020

Ben Guttery
Manager, Texas Airports
District Office