

National Aeronautics and Space Administration Notice

Notice: National Environmental Policy Act; The Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center (JSC), a NASA installation, proposes to construct a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and partial repair/alteration of existing Building 25. **This Notice announces the availability of the Environmental Assessment and draft Finding of No Significant Impact for the proposed activity.**

Agency: NASA and the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center (JSC)

Action: Publication of a Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

Summary: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), and implementing NASA policy/procedures (14 CFR 1216), NASA announces the availability of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and draft FONSI that address the environmental impacts expected to result from the construction of proposed EOC and modifications/renovations of existing Building 25 (Fire and Operations Facility). The proposed action will result in temporary adverse impacts to environmental resources in the vicinity of the proposed construction site of the EOC and the modifications/renovations of Building 25. No long-term, significant adverse impacts to the human environment will be realized after completion of the proposed action. The proposed action will result in more efficient energy usage and a reduction in air emissions because of the sustainable design of the proposed EOC.

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Address: NASA-JSC (Mail Code JP); 2101 NASA Parkway Houston, Texas

The EA which supports this FONSI is available for public review at the Clear Lake City – Harris County Freeman Branch Public Library, 16616 Diana Lane, Houston, Texas 77062.

For Further Information: Requests for copies of the EA and draft FONSI, or for additional information, please contact Mr. Richard Fowler, NASA-JSC Environmental Office at the above address or by email: richard.b.fowler@nasa.gov.

Supplemental Information: NASA prepared an EA for the construction of a new EOC and the partial repair/renovations to Building 25. The EA represents an accurate and adequate analysis of the scope and level associated environmental impacts. The EA is hereby incorporated by reference into this FONSI and both are available for public and interagency review and comment.

NASA evaluated two alternatives: the Proposed Action Alternative and the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action Alternative includes the construction of a new EOC addition and partial repair/alterations to Building 25. Under the No Action Alternative, NASA will not take action to modify Building 25 or construct a new EOC and will result in no impacts to the environment. This alternative will not improve the infrastructure deemed necessary to meet the current and future initiatives of NASA and JSC.

NASA evaluated the potential physical, water, coastal, biological, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts of the construction of the new EOC and the partial repair/alterations to Building 25. Potential adverse impacts to cultural resources, specifically an eligible historic building JSC's eligible historic district, require Section 106 consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Consultation with SHPO and other interest parties will mitigate adverse effects of the proposed action. No additional related adverse impacts were identified.

Evaluated resources include: land resources, air quality, surface water, groundwater, wetlands, floodplains, coastal resources, biological resources, cultural resources, noise levels, hazardous materials, socioeconomics, and environmental justice. The proposed construction of the new EOC and modifications/renovations to Building 25 will have no long-term, significant adverse impacts on any of these resources.

Cumulative Impacts: The EA reviewed cumulative impacts that could result from the incremental impact of the proposed activities when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Development projects within this context will be consistent with the JSC Master Plan. Cumulative beneficial impacts to certain environmental resources may result from current and future development as NASA Policy Directive 8820.2C requires new construction to incorporate sustainable design features with the current recommendation to achieve, at a minimum, a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification through the U.S. Green Building Council. The new EOC addition to Building 25 will be built to meet the Silver certification.

Mitigation: Standard construction best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented to reduce erosion potential during ground-disturbing activities and compliance with regulatory requirements to ensure appropriate storm water runoff control. The construction contractor will be required to develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and file a Notice of Intent with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) prior to the start of construction. Areas of construction near drainage features will need to employ erosion and sedimentation controls to ensure minimal discharge of sediment to nearby ditches. Prior to demolition, the proper handling of asbestos, lead paint, and other hazardous materials and industrial solid and hazardous waste will be determined and incorporated into project requirements and specification. Any hazardous waste generated during construction will be managed and disposed of in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations. To minimize construction noise impacts to surrounding residential areas, construction will take place during normal business hours and equipment will meet all local, state, and federal noise regulations. To reduce potential impacts to traffic in the immediate vicinity of the proposed activities construction vehicles and equipment will be stored on-site during project construction and appropriate signage will be posted on affected roadways. Section 106 consultation with the SHPO will mitigate potential adverse impacts to the eligible historic building and JSC's historic district. Additionally, all construction activities will be performed by qualified personnel and in accordance with the standards specified in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations and JSC's Safety and Health Handbook (JPR 1700.1).

In accordance with JPR8550, any SWPPP prepared must not be submitted to any regulatory agency without prior review and approval by the NASA Environmental Office. In addition, as long as the TOTAL IMPACTED AREA does not equal or exceed 5 acres, then a Notice of Intent will not be required. Even if the area does exceed 5 acres, the NOI is submitted to TCEQ (pending review/approval by the Environmental Office); EPA receives no notifications of this directly.

On the basis of the EA, NASA has determined that the physical, biological, socioeconomic, and cultural impacts associated with the construction of the new EOC and partial repair/alterations to Building 25 and related demolition activities will not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, NASA has determined that an Environmental Impact Statement need not be prepared. NASA will take no final action prior to the expiration of the 30-day comment period.

Mark Geyer, Director
Johnson Space Center

Date
