

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

National Environmental Policy Act; Finding of No Significant Impact for the proposed demolition of various facilities and infrastructure at NASA Langley Research Center

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Langley Research Center (LaRC)

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 – 1508), and NASA's policy NPR 8580.1, "Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act and Executive Order 12114," NASA has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to the proposed demolition of Building 640 (the 8-Foot Transonic Pressure Tunnel), Building 641 (the 8-Foot High Speed Tunnel – Tunnel portion only), Building 643 (the Full Scale Tunnel), and Building 1146 (the 16-Foot Transonic Tunnel – Tunnel portion and ten small support facilities). The 8-Foot High Speed Tunnel was closed by NASA in 1956, the 8-Foot Transonic Pressure Tunnel and the Full Scale Tunnel were closed in 1996, and the 16-Foot Transonic Tunnel was closed in 2004. NASA proposes the demolitions based on the confirmation of no current or future government need to use the tunnels and the lack of interest from non-governmental entities (industry, universities, etc.) to operate or adaptively reuse the facilities. The proposed demolitions would reduce NASA's infrastructure and allow LaRC to direct limited resources toward facilities that support NASA's overall mission, both currently and in the future.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) that supports this FONSI may be reviewed at:

- a) NASA LaRC Technical Library, Bldg. 1194, 2 W. Durand St., Hampton, VA 23681
- b) Poquoson Library, 500 City Hall Avenue, Poquoson, VA 23662
- c) Hampton Library, 4207 Victoria Blvd., Hampton, VA 23669

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Roger Ferguson, NASA LaRC Environmental and Logistics Branch, MS 213, Hampton, VA 23681-2199, (757) 864-6912.

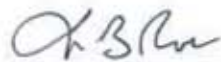
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: NASA has reviewed the EA prepared for the proposed demolition project and has determined that it represents an accurate and adequate analysis of the scope and level of associated environmental impacts. The EA is incorporated by reference in this FONSI.

The Proposed Action and the No-Action Alternative were considered in the EA. Under the No-Action Alternative, NASA would not demolish the facilities. The No-Action Alternative would not fulfill the need to reduce NASA's infrastructure and allow maintenance resources to be redirected toward mission critical infrastructure.

The EA addressed environmental impacts in the areas of Land Use; Noise; Cultural Resources; Hazardous, Regulated and Solid Waste; Pollution Prevention; Health and Safety; Visual

Resources; Air Quality; Water Resources; and Wildlife Resources. With the exception of Cultural Resources, the impact of the Proposed Action on the resource areas would be very minor and temporary. The 8-Foot High Speed Tunnel and the Full Scale Tunnel are National Historic Landmarks (NHL's) and the 8-Foot Transonic Pressure Tunnel and the 16-Foot Transonic Tunnel are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places both individually and as contributing resources to a proposed historic district. The Proposed Action would result in an adverse effect to LaRC's cultural resources, however, NASA is minimizing the impact through performing consultation and carrying out mitigation measures. In accordance with the Programmatic Agreement (PA) among NASA, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) regarding undertakings affecting NASA's NHL's, NASA LaRC has fulfilled the consultation and mitigation requirements of the PA for the 8-Foot High Speed Tunnel and the Full Scale Tunnel. NASA LaRC is developing a separate Memorandum of Agreement with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, and the ACHP if participating, to minimize the adverse effect of demolishing the 8-Foot Transonic Pressure Tunnel and the 16-Foot Transonic Tunnel. In order to mitigate the loss of the four historic properties, LaRC has prepared Historic American Engineering Record documentation for each of the facilities to Level 1 standards of the National Park Service. Additionally, NASA has developed a publicly accessible cultural resources website which includes the history, photographs, film clips, interviews with researchers, and virtual reality tours of the properties. NASA is also consulting with the Smithsonian Institution regarding salvage of significant artifacts from the historic properties.

On the basis of the information provided in the EA, NASA has determined that the environmental impacts associated with this project will not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, issuance of a FONSI is warranted, and preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, is not required.



Lesa B. Roe
Director

6/12/08

Date