

**FINAL  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
FOR FORTIFICATION OF SECURITY GATES AT  
NASA JET PROPULSION LABORATORY**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321, et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) policy and procedures (14 CFR Part 1216, Subpart 1216.3), NASA has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to the proposed Fortification of Security Gates at the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). NASA has reviewed the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the proposed fortification of security gates and determined that it presents an accurate and adequate analysis of the scope and level of associated environmental impacts. NASA hereby incorporates the EA by reference in this FONSI.

The EA provides a NEPA-compliant analysis for the proposed alternatives to implement functional requirements for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Construction of Facilities project, Fortify Security Gates, at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in conformance with NASA National Policy Directive (NPD) 8820.2C, *Design and Construction of Facilities* and NASA Procedural Requirement (NPR) 1620.3, *Physical Security Requirements for NASA Facilities and Property*, as implemented through the NASA JPL Prime Contract. This would include widening, reconfiguring, and enhancing access points at the West, South, and East Gates of the NASA JPL facility in order to improve the movement of vehicle traffic, especially during morning and afternoon peak hours. The scope of work would include vehicle guard structures, inspection lighting, electronic monitoring and controls/equipment, pop up bollards, barricades, parking areas, etc. to enhance vehicle safety into and out of the NASA JPL facility.

**1.1 PROPOSED ACTION**

The *purpose* of the Proposed Action is to remedy security inadequacies and improve vehicular circulation issues at each of the three security gates, through development of security infrastructure and reconfiguration of vehicular parking and circulation in discrete areas of the NASA JPL facility.

The *need* for the Proposed Action is to meet NPR 1620.3, *Physical Security Requirements for NASA Facilities and Property*, which specifically requires that designated vehicle inspection areas not interfere with the vehicular traffic or

pedestrian flow on- and off-center to ensure the safety of the NASA JPL workforce and the General Public, and NASA assets. In addition, the need is motivated by inadequacies in current security checkpoint configurations resulting in security vulnerabilities, safety hazards, and delays in traffic flow.

Two alternatives were identified that would meet the *purpose* and *need* of the Proposed Action. In addition, the CEQ regulation Section 1502.14(d) stipulates that the No Action Alternative be analyzed to assess any environmental consequences that may occur if the proposed alternatives are not implemented. Therefore, this alternative is also carried forward for analysis in the EA.

## **2.0 ALTERNATIVES**

### **2.1 IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WEST, SOUTH, AND EAST GATES AT NASA JPL (ALTERNATIVE A)**

Alternative A would implement improvements to the West, South, and East Gates at NASA JPL designed to enhance security at NASA JPL, improve traffic circulation and parking infrastructure within and surrounding the facility, and improve safety. Security-related project elements are being considered that would improve upon and expand the current deployment and use of various systems including access control, communication systems, security command centers, barrier protection, fence protection, vehicle inspection, and video surveillance. In order to improve the movement of vehicle traffic, especially during morning and afternoon peak hours, project elements would be designed to widen, reconfigure, and enhance access points into and out of the facility. Alternative A would include upgraded security checkpoints with associated infrastructure, automatic gates, automatic vehicle barriers and pop-up bollard equipment, security communications, video surveillance equipment, fence protection, roadway enhancements, and pre-access parking areas. NASA JPL and the City of Pasadena work collaboratively to promote and achieve mindful development and environmental stewardship at NASA JPL and in the surrounding area. As part of these cooperative agreements, adjacent to the South gate the City would make available to NASA JPL to access and develop parking approximately 10,000 square feet (sf) of the property currently leased to the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD). Near the East Gate the City would allow NASA JPL use of a proposed roundabout that the City of Pasadena would build east of the NASA JPL Bridge for installation of a modular guard booth. The exact mechanism for acquisition is still being developed but would likely be acquisition via easement. These parcels would be acquired prior to the development of proposed additional parking at the South Gate and installation of a modular security guard booth atop the City's proposed future roundabout outside of the East Gate.

## **2.2 RECONFIGURATION OF THE SOUTH GATE ON-SITE ON FEDERALLY-OWNED LAND (ALTERNATIVE B)**

The proposed on-site reconfiguration of the South Gate east along Surveyor Road would consist of the reconfiguration of the South Gate within the current NASA JPL property boundaries. The acquisition of approximately 10,000 sf from the City of Pasadena currently occupied by LACFD's Fire Camp Facility would not occur. Under this alternative the existing guard booth would be relocated along Forestry Camp Road east of Road A. Additionally, the area to the southeast along Road A, which is currently paved and used for contractor parking, would be reconfigured for limited contractor parking located on NASA JPL land. The existing fencing in this area would be removed and relocated eastward such that the proposed traffic roundabout and limited contractor parking would be contained to direct access to the facility through the South Gate. This configuration would enable parking outside of the fenced NASA JPL facility for the purpose of providing positive control of the South Gate. Similar to Alternative A, Forestry Camp Road would be configured with two inbound lanes and one outboard lane.

Security related elements under consideration would include relocating the guard booth, pop-up bollards and swing gates would be installed adjacent to the relocated guard booth. Additionally, a vehicle inspection system that would include an automatic license plate recognition camera and undercarriage vehicle inspection system would be installed at the relocated guard booth. Contractor vehicles would enter the on-site traffic roundabout and park. Contractors would then undergo inspection and badging at the gatehouse located outside of the NASA JPL fence. Then contractors would continue onto the facility through either the relocated South Gate or through a one-way remote operated gate that would be installed at the southern end of the on-site contractor parking lot.

The proposed improvements at the South Gate would include vehicle and pedestrian directional signage and striping, including reconfiguration of the existing parking to accommodate the proposed on-site traffic roundabout. This alternative would reduce the existing on-site parking in this area from approximately 21 spaces to just 13 spaces. Additionally, this alternative would require the relocation of existing Southern California Edison power poles. However, the existing nature trail as well as the mature specimen oak trees located in the vicinity of the South Gate would be protected in place. Further, many of the existing improvements along Viking Road (within NASA JPL) would be retained.

## 2.3 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed improvements to the West, South, and East Gates would not be implemented and the existing parking and circulation issues at the West Gate, and existing security risks at the West, South, and East Gates would persist. However, because CEQ regulations stipulate that the No Action Alternative be analyzed to assess any environmental consequences that may occur if the Proposed Action is not implemented, this alternative was carried forward for analysis in the EA. The No Action Alternative provides a baseline against which the Proposed Action can be compared.

## 3.0 ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In addition to fulfilling the requirements of NEPA, its associated regulations, and the regulations of NASA, this EA complies with all applicable environmental, natural resource, and cultural resource statutes, regulations, and guidelines. Such additional statutes, regulations, and guidelines may require permits, approvals, consultations with outside agencies, or implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) or control measures. A summary of impacts associated with the Proposed Action is included below, by resource area.

**Traffic and Transportation:** Under the Proposed Action temporary less than significant impacts to traffic congestion, traffic volume, and parking availability would be anticipated on- and off-site as a result of construction activities. A Construction Traffic Control Plan would be prepared and implemented during construction activities to reduce these temporary construction-related impacts to the maximum extent feasible. However, over the long-term, implementation of the Proposed Action would result in beneficial impacts associated with traffic circulation at the West, South, and East Gates of NASA JPL.

**Utilities and Services:** Under the Proposed Action there would be temporary less than significant impacts to utilities and services at NASA JPL resulting from interruptions during utility relocation and installation. However, there would be no long-term impacts as a result of the Proposed Action as the proposed security gate improvements would only negligibly increase overall utility usage at the facility.

**Air Quality:** General Conformity under the Clean Air Act Section 176(c) (as amended) has been evaluated for the Proposed Actions according to the requirements of 40 CFR 93, Subpart B. Total direct and indirect emissions associated with the Proposed Actions were well below the *de minimis* threshold levels, as promulgated in 40 CFR 93.153(b). Therefore, the Proposed Action would not have an adverse impact on the region's ability meet the National

Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Under the Proposed Action there would be minor short-term adverse impacts at the regional and local scale to air quality during construction. Impacts from construction activities include the generation of fugitive dust and particulates from the removal and grading of soil, excavation operations, and other associated construction activities. In addition, there would be minor, short-term emissions from vehicles that would travel in the construction area. During construction, BMPs including dust suppression measures and soil water would be used to minimize fugitive dust emissions. Over the long-term implementation of the Proposed Action may have a minor beneficial impact on air quality as a result of reduced vehicle queuing/idling.

**Hazardous Materials and Waste:** With proper housekeeping and maintenance, the Proposed Action would have a negligible adverse impact on hazardous materials used during construction. Hazardous materials used during construction, including petroleum products, would not be expected to noticeably increase overall hazardous materials use at NASA JPL. Minor adverse impacts on hazardous wastes would be generated from construction and minor demolition activities. However, it is anticipated that the volume, type, classifications, and sources of hazardous wastes would be similar in nature with the existing waste streams. All applicable Federal and state hazardous material and waste regulations would be adhered to during construction.

**Geological Resources:** As a result of the Proposed Action, short-term negligible adverse impacts would occur as a result of construction activities, including minor grading. Negligible adverse impacts to soils and topography would be expected. However, erosion and sedimentation control measures would be implemented in accordance with site-specific specifications for construction projects. Additionally there would be no adverse impacts or effects on pre-existing seismic conditions.

**Water Resources:** Under the Proposed Actions, there would be a potential for minor adverse impacts to surface water during construction as a result of surface water runoff. However, the proposed activities would primarily be conducted in areas of existing infrastructure. Additionally, standard BMPs including covering soil stockpiles and use of silt fences and other barriers would be implemented during construction activities. Further, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements will be met for soil disturbances. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be prepared to ensure low impact disturbances from proposed construction activities. In accordance with Executive Order (EO) 11988, contractors at NASA JPL would avoid adverse impacts on the 100-year floodplain associated with the Arroyo Seco by limiting construction activities to the elevated ground above Arroyo Seco embankments.

**Cultural Resources:** Under the Proposed Action, it is anticipated that there would be no short- or long-term adverse impact to cultural or historic resources at NASA JPL. Construction activities are not expected to impact the seven buildings eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Further, all construction activities would take place at areas within the NASA JPL facility that were previously disturbed. Should an inadvertent discovery of a cultural artifact occur during implementation of the Proposed Action NASA JPL would follow the Protocol for the Inadvertent Discovery of Cultural Artifacts (NASA JPL Rule Doc ID 72132).

**Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice:** The Proposed Actions would result in negligible short-term beneficial impacts at NASA JPL due to temporary employment during construction. No long-term on-site or off-site adverse impacts to population, housing, or employment are anticipated at NASA JPL.

**Noise:** Under the Proposed Action, there would be minor adverse impacts on ambient noise from site preparation, grading, and construction activities. Impacts would be short-term and minor because these activities would be carried out during normal working hours. No long-term adverse impacts are anticipated.

**Land Use:** The Proposed Action would result in temporary change in land use during construction (e.g., temporary entrances, parking areas, etc.). Further, there would be a negligible change in land use associated with obtaining easement from the City of Pasadena for land at the South Gate and East Gate. However, the proposed uses would be consistent with current land use as well as regional plans and zoning.

**Biological Resources:** Under the Proposed Actions, it is anticipated that there would be minor adverse impact to vegetation and wildlife during construction activities. Implementation of the Proposed Action would require the removal of a few specimen trees at the South Gate including one 40-foot silk oak (*Grevillea robusta*), two 60-foot Canary Island pines (*Pinus canariensis*), one 25-foot oak (*Quercus* spp.), and one other unidentified tree species. Removal of these trees would require coordination with the City of Pasadena. NASA JPL would obtain all appropriate permits under the City's Tree Protection Ordinance 8.52 Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) prior to the initiation of construction related activities. If construction activities at the South Gate would occur during migratory bird season or raptor breeding season, NASA JPL would survey these areas to establish the current breeding status of resident species. This survey would include recommendations regarding minimizing impacts during construction, including setbacks and restrictions on construction scheduling. In accordance with EO 11990, no adverse impacts to wetlands are anticipated. No long-term adverse impacts are anticipated at NASA JPL. Further, no short- or long-term

adverse impacts to federally-listed threatened, endangered, or sensitive plants or wildlife are anticipated. No further consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is required for NASA JPL.

**Visual Resources:** Implementation of the Proposed Action would result in short-term visual impacts during construction activities, including equipment use and materials staging. However, there would be a minor beneficial impact resulting from the reduction in visual clutter at the security gates, including redundant and inconsistent fencing types at the West Gate.

#### 4.0 PUBLIC AVAILABILITY

NEPA, 40 CFR §§1500-1508, and 14 CFR Part 1216, Subpart 1216.3 require public review of the EA before approval of the FONSI and implementation of the Proposed Action. A Notice of Availability (NOA) for public review of the Draft EA was published in the Pasadena Star News and the La Cañada Valley Sun on January 28, 2016 and the Draft EA was made available for public review at the following locations:

NASA Headquarters, Library, Room 1J20  
300 E Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20546

Pasadena Public Library  
285 East Walnut  
Pasadena, CA 91101

Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Visitors Lobby,  
Building 249  
4800 Oak Grove Drive  
Pasadena, CA 91109

La Canada Flintridge Public Library  
4545 West Oakwood Avenue  
La Canada, CA 91011

Altadena Public Library  
600 East Mariposa  
Altadena, CA 91001

Through the agency coordination process, NASA notified relevant Federal, state, and local agencies and allowed them sufficient time to make known their environmental concerns specific to the Proposed Action. The total review period for public and agency comments was 30 days, ending on February 27, 2016, during which 43 comment letters were received, the majority of which requested additional information regarding bicycle transit facilities at the East Gate. Following the close of the public comment period, NASA JPL met with the City of Pasadena on 15 March 2016 to discuss the comments received, determine appropriate actions to address comments, and identify the responsible party for

ensuring cyclist access remains unencumbered. All public, agency, and Native American comments received on the Draft EA are provided in Appendix A and responses have been incorporated into the Final EA.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis presented in the EA and coordination with all appropriate Federal, state, and other local agencies, NASA has determined that the environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action would not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the quality of the human or natural environment or generate significant controversy. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required and NASA is issuing this FONSI.



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Marcus Watkins  
Director NASA Management Office

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Date