NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

NOTICE 93-LERC-02

National Environmental Policy Act; Finding of No Significant Impact; Rehabilitation of Rocket Engine Test Facility (RETF) at the Lewis Research Center

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration

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 Procedures for Implementing NEPA (14 CFR Subpart 1216.3), NASA has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to the planned Rehabilitation of the Rocket Engine Test Facility at the Lewis Research Center located in Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. The RETF provides a capability to test fire rocket engines up to 50,000 pounds (222,411 Newtons) thrust and also a capability to test rocket engine turbopumps.

DATE: Comments in response to this notice must be received in writing no later than (30 days after the first date of publication in the local newspaper).

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to Mr. Peter W. McCallum, Chief, Office of Environmental Programs, NASA Lewis Research Center, Mail Stop 6-4, 21000 Brookpark Road, Cleveland, OH 44135; telephone 216-433-8852. The Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the Rehabilitation of the Rocket Engine Test Facility which supports this FONSI can be reviewed at:

NASA Lewis Research Center
Office of Environmental Programs, Building 6
(Contact Peter W. McCallum, 216-433-8852)

Berea Public Library, 7 Berea Commons
(Contact Mary Ellen Nichols, 216-234-5475)

Fairview Park Public Library, 4449 West 213th Street
(Contact Gary Claxton, 216-333-4700)

North Olmsted Public Library, 27425 Butternut Ridge Road
(Contact Donna Meyers, 216-777-6211)

Rockport Branch, Cleveland Public Library
4421 W. 140th Street
(Contact Eunice Peters, 216-623-7053)

NASA Headquarters Information Center
Room 1H23
Two Independence Square, S.W.
(Washington, DC)

A limited number of copies of the EA are available by contacting Mr. Peter W. McCallum, Chief, Office of Environmental Programs, at the address and/or telephone number indicated herein.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mr. Peter W. McCallum, Chief, Office of Environmental Programs, NASA Lewis Research Center, Mail Stop 6-4, 21000 Brookpark Road, Cleveland, OH 44135; telephone 216-433-8852.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

NASA has independently reviewed the EA prepared for the Rehabilitation of the Rocket Engine Test Facility (Lewis Research Center) 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 NASA Lewis Research Center is proposing a project which will replace deteriorated systems at the Rocket Engine Test Facility which support the atmospheric test stand 'A' which was constructed in the mid 1950's. The bulk of this replacement work is associated with the water supply, water spray, and water detention systems. Replacements will include piping, valves, electrical wiring and controls, and various instrumentation. Replacement work will also include some of the soil retaining walls at the site, carbon steel high pressure piping, electrical distribution equipment in the upper area, high pressure water system, and various roofs.

The project is also addressing some facility modifications to enhance the capabilities and operations aspects at the test site. This work includes a high pressure hydrogen vaporizer system, a new high pressure liquid hydrocarbon fuel system, a new facility distributed controls system, construction of a 1100 square foot (102 square meter) shop expansion, and construction of a new 7300 square foot (678 square meter) control building to house the control room for the three test stands that are part of the RETF.

Two major alternatives to the proposed action were considered. First, the implication of not doing the work was examined. This alternative was judged to be significantly less desirable than the proposed action since it would result in continued degradation of a National Historical Landmark, continued erosion of the facility's capability and ability to accomplish the research mission, and continued inefficient utilization of water resources.

The second alternative considered a duplicate Rocket Engine Test Facility at an alternate site. While this alternative presents some environmental impacts similar to the proposed action, it was judged to be inferior since this alternative would do nothing to protect the existing National Historic Landmark. In addition, developing an alternate-site would be more expensive and is considered to have a greater impact on the social and economic factors.

The proposed construction effort will generate some excavation waste that must be disposed of properly. There will be a minor impact on local air quality due to dust generated by demolition, excavation, sandblasting, and painting, and a minor amount of construction noise will occur. Appropriate measures will be taken to mitigate short term water quality degradation which is expected during the construction phase. NASA has determined that the proposed project will not affect long-term air or water quality, wetlands, cultural resources, threatened or endangered species or critical habitat, or other flora or fauna. The facilities are not located in a floodplain. No other matters of potential environmental concern have been identified.

On the basis of the EA developed in connection with the Rehabilitation of the Rocket Engine Test Facility (Lewis Research Center) and underlying reference documents, 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 environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required. NASA will take no final action or authorize construction activities prior to the expiration of the 30-day comment period.

for L. J. Ross, Director
Lewis Research Center

10/13/93
Date

Concurrence:

Billie J. McGarvey, Director
Facilities Engineering Division
NASA Headquarters

8/24/93
Date