

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

NOTICE (94-WFF-01)

National Environmental Policy Act; Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact for the Construction of a Rocket Motor Storage Building at Goddard Space Flight Center/Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Virginia

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 (CEQ) 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) for proposed construction of a rocket motor storage building at Goddard Space Flight Center/Wallops Flight Facility (GSFC/WFF) located at Wallops Island, Virginia. NASA proposes to construct a 743.2 square meter (8,000 square foot) concrete masonry unit rocket motor storage building on the northern portion of Wallops Island. This facility will provide long-term storage of Explosive Class 1.1 rocket motors. GSFC/WFF currently stores Class 1.1 rocket motors in Building V-80 located approximately 0.8 km (0.5 mi) south of the site proposed for construction of the new rocket motor storage building.

DATE: NASA will proceed with this project 30 days from the first date of publication of this FONSI.

ADDRESS: Address all inquiries about the rocket motor storage building FONSI to Ms. Pamela Whitman, Goddard Space Flight Center, Wallops Flight Facility, Code 205.3, Wallops Island, Virginia, 23337.

Interested Parties may request, in writing, single copies of the supporting Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the proposed construction of a rocket motor storage building at GSFC/WFF from the above address. Copies are also available for review at: Goddard Space Flight Center/Wallops Flight Facility, Public Affairs Office, Wallops Island, Virginia; the Eastern Shore Public Library, Accomac, Virginia; and NASA Headquarters Information Center, Room 1H23, Two Independence Square, SW, Washington, DC.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT: The Wallops Flight Facility Public Affairs Office at (804) 824-1579.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NASA has reviewed the supporting EA and determined that it adequately and accurately describes the scope and level of environmental impacts from the proposed construction of a rocket motor storage building at GSFC/WFF. The EA identifies potential impacts that may occur during construction and operation of the rocket motor storage facility. NASA hereby incorporates this EA by reference into this FONSI. Page references herein refer to the EA. The EA includes input from Federal and

Commonwealth of Virginia regulatory agencies and members of the affected public. Copies of the EA have been provided to the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs.

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide NASA with a facility with sufficient storage capacity to house up to 74,844 kg (165,000 pounds) of Class 1.1 explosives. This capacity for storing Class 1.1 explosives is currently not available at any other existing facility on Wallops Island. The proposed storage building must be located in an isolated area to satisfy safety distance requirements established by GSFC/WFF's Range Safety Section.

GSFC/WFF considered the following alternatives to the proposed action: selection of alternative construction sites at GSFC/WFF and continued use of existing GSFC/WFF rocket motor storage facilities.

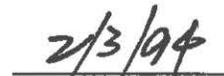
Impacts to the human environment associated with this project can be divided into short-term (construction phase, approximately nine months) and long-term (operational phase) impacts. The EA evaluated impacts on land use, infrastructure, water quality, soils, wetlands and floodplains, health and safety, flora and fauna, threatened and endangered species, socioeconomics, and cultural resources. The following summarizes specific environmental impacts associated with the construction of a rocket motor storage facility on Wallops Island:

1. Land Use Neither construction or operational activities will alter existing land use at GSFC/WFF (p. 19).
2. Soils The construction phase will have a minor short-term impact on soil resources (p. 19). NASA would minimize loss of topsoil and accidental release of silt and sediments into surface waters by ensuring that erosion and sediment controls are used for all construction activities. Once construction is completed, NASA will ensure revegetation of exposed earth surfaces. The operational phase will not impact soils (p. 19).
3. Infrastructure The construction phase will improve electrical utility availability at the proposed construction site (p. 20). Electrical consumption during the operational phase will not differ significantly from current consumption on Wallops Island.
4. Water Resources Neither the construction phase or the operational phase will significantly impact water resources (p. 20).
5. Wetlands and Floodplains The rocket motor storage building will be built in a floodplain (p. 20). Since all of Wallops Island lies within the 100- and 500-year floodplains, no practicable alternative that avoids floodplains exists. The proposed project is not a critical action facility and would be constructed to protect rocket motors from the 100-year flood. Neither the construction nor operational phase will impact wetlands (p. 22). Neither the construction phase nor the operational phase will impact the coastal zone.

6. Health and Safety The construction phase will not impact health and safety (p. 22). Because of the remoteness of the location for the rocket motor storage building, the operational phase will minimize risk to health and safety (p. 22).
7. Flora and Fauna The construction phase will require clearing approximately 0.18 hectares (0.45 acres) of vegetated land (p. 24). NASA will ensure that vegetation is established and maintained through one planting season where exposed surfaces remain. The construction activity may temporarily disturb wildlife in the vicinity of the construction site (p. 24). The operational phase will not impact flora or fauna (p. 24).
8. Threatened and Endangered Species NASA consulted with the State and Federal regulatory agencies having jurisdiction over threatened and endangered species in the Commonwealth of Virginia. These agencies determined that neither construction nor operation of a rocket motor storage building on Wallops Island will impact species or critical habitat protected under the Endangered Species Act (p. 24).
9. Socioeconomic Environment Neither the construction nor operational phases will impact the local economy (p. 25). Once the facility is constructed, NASA will place some restrictions on wildlife research and recreational activities within the safety hazard area surrounding the facility.
10. Cultural Resources The Virginia Department of Historic Resources has concurred that constructing a rocket motor storage building on Wallops Island will not impact cultural resources (p. 25).

No other issues of environmental concern have come to NASA's attention. On the basis of the EA for the proposed construction of a rocket motor storage building at GSFC/WFF and underlying reference documents, NASA has determined that the environmental impacts associated with the mission will not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required. NASA will take no final action concerning the proposed activity until the closing of the 30-day comment period.


 John M. Klineberg
 Director
 Goddard Space Flight Center


 Date

ROUTE SHEET

CODE	BLDG. ROOM	NAME	PUR- POSE*	INITIALS	DATE	REMARKS
205	F-160	Terry M. Potterton	1.2	<i>TP</i>	1/19/94	
130	F-6	Keith A. Koehler	1	<i>KK</i>	1/19	Considered 1/30 Leads collection: item 5
800	F-6	Gary F. Milliner	1	<i>GM</i>	1/19	
800	F-6	<i>for</i> J. T. McGoogan	1	<i>GM</i>	1/19	
205	8 435	Ronald W. Kaese	1.2	<i>RWK</i>	1/25	
200	8 140C	Sharon C. Foster	1.2	<i>SF</i>	1/28	
140	8 540B	94-215 Lawrence F. Watson	1.2	<i>LFW</i>	2/1	
100	8 600A	John M. Klineberg	62	<i>JK</i>	2/25/94	Please FAX a copy once signed. Return original package of signed document to Pamela Whitman, Code 205.3, Bldg. F-160, for additional distribution.
205	F-160	Pamela A. Whitman	5			
		<i>FAX 7-1876</i>				

<p>*PURPOSES</p> <p>1. FOR INFORMATION 2. FOR APPROVAL/REVIEW 3. FOR NECESSARY ACTION 4. FOR SIGNATURE</p>	SOURCE/SENDER 205.3/Pamela A. Whitman		IDENT. SYMBOL & DATE 205.3, January 19, 1994		
	SUBJECT Finding of No Significant Impact for the Construction of a Rocket Motor Storage Building at Goddard Space Flight Center, Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, VA				
	FORWARDED BY 200/Patti L. Potterton			DATE FORWARDED January 19, 1994	
	EXT. 1120		CODE 200	BLDG. F-6	

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