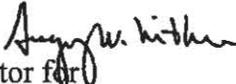




UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SATELLITE, DATA  
AND INFORMATION SERVICE  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

AUG 20 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: Susan Kennedy  
Deputy Director  
Strategic Planning Office

FROM: Gregory W. Withee   
Assistant Administrator for  
Satellite and Information Services

SUBJECT: Proposed Sanitary Sewage Lift Station and Force Main, and  
Water Main Connection at the National Environmental  
Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS) Wallops  
Command and Data Acquisition Station (CDAS), Wallops  
Island, Virginia

An Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared in conformance with regulations implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) at 40 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 1500–1508 issued by the Council on Environmental Quality; NOAA Administrative Order 216-6, Environmental Review Procedures for Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act; and NASA Procedures and Guidelines 8580.1, Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act and Executive Order 12114. The final EA, dated June 2004, analyzes the potential for proposed improvements to the sanitary sewage disposal and potable water supply infrastructure at the Wallops CDAS to result in significant effects on the environment. The final EA also examines the potential for environmental effects resulting from taking no action for comparison purposes. Based on careful review of the information and findings contained in the final EA, I find that implementation of the proposed actions would not result in significant impacts on the environment. The following information supports this finding:

- The final EA includes a comprehensive analysis of the potential for environmental effects and neither individual nor cumulative environmental impacts will be significant.
- Based on consultation with federal and state agencies, implementation of the proposed action will not significantly affect species protected under federal or state law.
- Based on consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer, no adverse effects will result on resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.



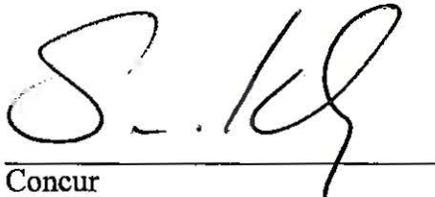
- Based on consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, implementation of the proposed action will not impact wetlands, and measures will be taken to prevent indirect impacts to wetlands and water resources adjacent to the project area in compliance with Executive Orders (E.O.) 11988 and 11990.
- Implementation of the proposed action will be consistent with federal policies to promote environmental justice and to protect children contained in E.O. 12898.

The final EA document associated with this proposed acquisition has been reviewed and concurred with by NOAA's Office of Environmental Compliance (Central Administrative Support Center).

I request your concurrence with this EA by signing below and on the attached letter advising all interested Government agencies and public parties of the availability of the Finding of No Significance Impact (FONSI) and signature on the attached FONSI.

Please return this memorandum for our files.

Attachment

  
Concur

8/26/04  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Do Not Concur

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) FOR THE PROPOSED  
SANITARY SEWAGE LIFT STATION AND FORCE MAIN, AND WATER  
MAIN CONNECTION AT THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SATELLITE,  
DATA, AND INFORMATION SERVICE (NESDIS) WALLOPS COMMAND AND  
DATA ACQUISITION STATION (CDAS), WALLOPS, VIRGINIA**

**1. Purpose and Need**

The National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS) is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce. NESDIS operates environmental satellites, which collect information on atmospheric, oceanic, and terrestrial environmental conditions. The Wallops Command and Data Acquisition Station (CDAS), operated by NESDIS, gathers data from satellites via radio downlinks and controls satellites via transmission of radio signals. The Wallops CDAS is a tenant on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) Main Base. NASA served as a cooperating agency in the preparation of this Environmental Assessment (EA) and provided valuable data on the WFF's natural environmental resources, cultural resources, potable water and sanitary sewerage utilities, and subsurface contaminant characterization studies.

NOAA prepared this EA to set forth: (1) its decision-making authority for this project, (2) its evaluation of the possible alternatives and the effects of each alternative's effect on the environment, (3) its determination from the evaluation of all the alternatives that, other than the no-action alternative or other partial aspects of the preferred alternative, the preferred alternative would be the most ecologically sound alternative, and (4) its determination that an environmental impact statement (EIS) will not need to be prepared for this project.

Section 1508.27 of the NEPA regulations describes the minimum criteria that federal agencies should consider in evaluating the potential significance of proposed actions. The regulations explain that significance embodies considerations of both context and intensity. In the case of site-specific actions such as those proposed in this EA, the appropriate context for considering significance of action is local, as opposed to national or worldwide.

**2. Description of Proposed Action**

NOAA/NESDIS proposes to improve the sanitary sewage disposal and potable water supply infrastructure of the Wallops CDAS by the end of fiscal year 2004 by installing a new sanitary sewage force main, and new water main connection. Specifically, to implement the sanitary sewerage and water main infrastructure projects, NOAA will:

- Construct a new sanitary sewage lift station and an approximately 6,000-linear-foot (ft), 2-inch-diameter sanitary sewage force main that will connect the Wallops CDAS sanitary sewage disposal system to the existing NASA WFF Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP).
- Modify the existing Wallops CDAS septic tank to serve as the sanitary sewage lift station, which will house two sewage grinder pumps.
- Abandon in place the existing Wallops CDAS sewage leach field.
- Construct a new water main, consisting of an approximately 250 linear ft, 6-inch-diameter potable water supply line that will connect to an existing 6-inch NASA WFF fire hydrant supply line adjacent to the Wallops CDAS Operations Building.
- Remove from service the existing 6-inch-diameter, 220 ft deep water supply well by installing a securable, removable cap over the existing wellhead. The well will remain inactive and will be available for future emergency use as needed by the Wallops CDAS.

These improvements would occur entirely on existing Wallops CDAS and NASA WFF property. As required by federal law, the alternative of taking no action is also examined in this EA. Under the no action alternative, NESDIS would not construct the needed new infrastructure at the Wallops CDAS.

### **3. Environmental Consequences**

Implementation of the capital improvements proposed by NESDIS would cause minimal physical change in the environment. The amount of vehicle traffic, noise, and emissions of air pollutants would be temporary and insignificant during construction of these utilities. No long-term impacts will result from implementation of the proposed action. Construction expenditures by NESDIS would represent a modest beneficial impact. No long-term increase in employment at the Wallops CDAS or the NASA WFF is expected to result. Socioeconomic impacts would be insignificant. The census tract containing the Wallops CDAS has lower per capita income, a lower unemployment rate, a lower percentage of persons living in poverty, and a higher percentage of minority persons than Accomack County as a whole. However, the proposed action would not result in emissions of noxious odors and would improve the level of treatment for wastewater generated by the CDAS. Disproportionately high and adverse environmental effects on minority or low income communities would not result. Socioeconomic impacts would be insignificant.

Installation of the sanitary sewage force main and water main would not significantly affect ecological or natural resources. Based on consultations with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Department of Game and Inland

## 7. Conclusion and NASA Finding

After careful and thorough consideration of the Final EA report, the undersigned NASA officials find that the proposed federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives set forth in sections 101(a) and 101(b) of NEPA and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise result in any condition requiring consultation pursuant to section 102(2)(c) of NEPA. As described in section 5.4.3 of NASA Procedures and Guidelines 8580.1, *Implementing the National Environmental Policy and Executive Order 12114*, a FONSI is supported and appropriate for the proposed action.

  
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Dr. John H. Campbell  
Director, Suborbital and Special Orbital Projects  
Wallops Flight Facility  
Goddard Space Flight Center  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

  
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Date