

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Southwest Region

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
and
RECORD OF DECISION

Revisions to Relocation of Terminal Complex
Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport
Kenner, Louisiana

August 31, 2015

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Finding of No Significant Impact and Record of Decision (FONSI/ROD) is twofold. First, it briefly presents the reasons why revisions to the proposed project to relocate the terminal complex at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (Airport), would have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Second, it documents the decision of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to approve the federal actions requested by the airport sponsor, the New Orleans Aviation Board (NOAB), to support the proposed project. This FONSI/ROD includes necessary environmental findings and determinations.

Attached to this FONSI/ROD is the Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) on which these findings and determinations are made. This FONSI/ROD also incorporates by reference the 2013 EA and FONSI/ROD addressing the original proposal to relocate the terminal complex.

The NOAB has requested the following Federal actions:

- Unconditional approval to revise the Airport Layout Plan to depict revisions to the proposed terminal relocation and associated projects as shown in Figures 2-2 through 2-4 of the SEA;
- A determination that the environmental prerequisites for future Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) Program or Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding application have been fulfilled pursuant to 49 U.S.C §40117 and 49 U.S.C §47101, respectively¹; and

¹ The FONSI/ROD does not constitute a decision by the FAA to award AIP grants or to approve the use of PFC revenues in support of the proposed project.

The SEA was prepared pursuant to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 C.F.R. Parts 1500-1508). Additionally, the SEA meets the guidelines identified in FAA Orders 1050.1E², *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures* and 5050.4B, *NEPA Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions*.

After review of the SEA, correspondence received during the intergovernmental coordination process, and other supporting documentation, the FAA determined that a FONSI was appropriate for the Airport's proposed revisions to the terminal complex relocation project.

II. PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose and need for the proposed relocation of the terminal project, as presented in the 2013 EA, has not changed. However, since issuance of the 2013 FONSI/ROD, the NOAB has identified several revisions to the Approved Action. The proposed revisions are addressed in Chapter 2 of the SEA and, when incorporated into the 2013 Approved Action, are designated as the Modified Action. The specific components of the Modified Action are presented in Sections 2.2.1 through 2.2.21 of the SEA, and a summary is located in Section 2.3.

III. ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives for the terminal relocation proposal were presented and addressed in the 2013 EA, FONSI and ROD. The Northside Alternative remains the Preferred and Selected Action (the Approved Action in the 2013 FONSI/ROD), and the Modified Action addressed in the SEA merely represents revisions to that action³.

IV. STUDY AREAS

The study areas for the Modified Action are the same as those utilized in the 2013 EA.

V. MODIFIED ACTION

As with the 2013 Approved Action, the Modified Action was evaluated based on numerous factors, including environmental impacts, operational efficiency and cost considerations. The FAA has completed an independent evaluation of the SEA and finds that the 2013 Approved Action should be modified to encompass the revisions set forth herein as the Modified Action. The FAA has found that the Modified Action, among other factors, would best address the purpose and need and would best meet the FAA's

² On July 16, 2015, FAA Order 1050.1F became effective, updating and replacing Order 1050.1E. Because the 2013 EA was completed, and the SEA was substantially drafted, while Order 1050.1E was in effect, it was not practicable to fully revise the SEA to follow the procedural structure of Order 1050.1F. See Order 1050.1F para. 1-9.

³ In other words, for purposes of this FONSI, the no-action alternative is the 2013 Approved Action, which was fully analyzed in the 2013 EA.

statutory mission of promoting a safe and efficient nationwide airport system.

In arriving at this decision, the FAA considered all pertinent factors, including the environmental impacts as well as the FAA statutory charter in the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, as amended, to promote, encourage and foster the development of civil aeronautics (49 U.S.C. § 40101).

Details of the Modified Action can be found in Section 2.2 of the SEA. Improvements associated with the Modified Action are:

Added project components: The proposed revisions to the Approved Action would add the following project components.

- A 150-room, 8-story hotel would be built adjacent to the relocated parking garage discussed below.
- Two public surface parking lots affecting a total of 14.90 acres and providing 1,301 parking spaces.
- A 0.5-acre parking lot for airline station managers and other select terminal tenants providing 50 parking spaces.
- A 0.5-acre cell phone parking lot providing 30 parking spaces.
- A 23,100-square-foot central utility plant.
- Access roads to relocated glycol tanks and deicing pads.
- Hydrant fuel system.

Relocated project components: The Modified Action would relocate the following, FAA-approved project components.

- The proposed terminal and concourses would be moved 225 feet south of its originally-proposed location.
- A 4,000-space, 480,000-square-foot parking garage planned for the west side of the airport would be relocated to the north of the terminal and would be reduced to be a 396,000-square-foot, 2,089-parking space, five-story parking garage.
- Access roads and circulation system would be re-aligned to reduce wetland effects and simplify traffic patterns.
- A proposed 70,000-square-foot, 240-space taxi waiting lot north of the roadway system would be relocated to the center of the roadway system and would be increased to be a 90,000-square-foot, 354-space taxi waiting lot.
- A 4,700-square-foot airfield lighting vault.
- Glycol tanks and deicing pads.
- A blue water disposal station to process aircraft lavatory waste for proper disposal.
- A storm water pumping station would be moved 1,000 feet west so it is closer to a discharge canal.
- Moving three NAVAIDS the proposed terminal would displace.

- Taxiway G would be moved 320 feet north of the previously approved location to improve aircraft movement.
- A transit center would be relocated under elevated roadways serving the terminal complex in lieu of a center northeast of the proposed terminal.

Reduced project components: The following features have been reduced in size or length in the Modified Action.

- The number of overnight parking spots for aircraft would be reduced from 13 to 10.
- The proposed removal of the 2,615-foot-long Taxiway D would not occur. About 420 feet would remain to provide better aircraft access from the proposed terminal to Taxiway S.
- The length of the proposed improvements to Bainbridge Road would be reduced.

Demolitions: The following features will be demolished and removed in the Modified Action.

- Concourses B and C and the portion of the existing east terminal east of the Parabola would be demolished and removed.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The potential environmental impacts from the Modified Action, as compared with the Approved Action, were evaluated in the attached SEA for each of the environmental impact categories identified in FAA Orders 1050.1E and 5050.4B. Chapter 3 of the SEA provides detailed evaluations of the environmental consequences for each of the environmental impact categories.

As described in Chapter 3 of the SEA, the conclusions of no significant impacts presented in the 2013 EA and FONSI do not change in regard to the Modified Action, with the following exception. The original Approved Action was determined to impact approximately 0.96 acre of wetlands, while the Modified Action would impact none. The findings with respect to all other impact categories and special purpose laws presented in the 2013 FONSI are incorporated by reference.

VII. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

During preparation of the SEA, public comments were solicited as described in Sections 4.3 and 4.4. No comments addressing the Modified Action were received.

VIII. CONDITIONS and MITIGATION

As prescribed by 40 CFR § 1505.3, the FAA shall take steps as appropriate to the action, through mechanisms such as enforcement of existing grant assurances, special conditions

in future grant agreements, property conveyance deeds, releases, airport layout plan approvals, and/or required contract plans and specifications and shall monitor these as necessary to ensure that the airport sponsor fulfills representations made in Chapter 5 of the 2013 EA under the various impact categories and orders included in the 2013 FONSI and ROD with respect to mitigation of impacts. The airport sponsor will coordinate mitigation plans with the appropriate jurisdictional agencies in conjunction with the FAA.

The conditions included in the 2013 FONSI and ROD are incorporated by reference and pertain in full to the Modified Action.

IX. DECISION CONSIDERATIONS AND ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Throughout the development and review of the SEA, including the proposed improvements described in Part V above, the FAA has made every effort to adhere to the policies and purposes of NEPA, as stated in CEQ Regulations for Implementing NEPA, 40 CFR § 1500-1508. The FAA has concentrated on the truly significant issues related to the Modified Action. In its determination whether to prepare an EIS or issue a FONSI, the FAA weighed the following considerations:

After examination of the SEA, comments from Federal, state, and local agencies (no public comments were received), as well as all other evidence available to the FAA, the FAA has determined the available record demonstrated that no thresholds indicating the potential for significant impact were exceeded and an EIS, therefore, is not required. In addition, the FAA determined that existing evidence available to the agency clearly points to the Modified Action as beneficial in fulfilling the FAA's statutory mission of promoting a safe and efficient nationwide airport system.

The FEA has adequately provided the agency with the information it needs: (a) to make an informed, objective decision on the environmental effects, as well as other effects, of the Modified Action; and (b) to take actions that protect, restore, and enhance the environment. The FAA weighed both the potential positive and negative consequences that the Modified Action may have on the quality of the human environment.

The determinations prescribed by the statutory provisions set forth in the Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982, as codified in 49 U.S.C. §§ 47106 and 47107, which are preconditions of FAA's approval of airport funding applications for AIP-eligible airport development, were presented in the 2013 FONSI and still pertain, with one exception. The determination regarding Executive Order 11990 Wetlands is moot, since the Modified Action avoids impacts to wetlands.

I have carefully and thoroughly considered the facts contained in the attached SEA. Based on that information, I find the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives of Section 101(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and other applicable environmental requirements. I also find the proposed Federal action with the required mitigation referenced above will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or

include any condition requiring any consultation pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of NEPA.
As a result, FAA will not prepare an EIS for this action.

APPROVED:



James H. Jones
Manager, Airports Division

8/28/15
Date

DECISION AND ORDER

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The FAA recognizes its responsibilities under NEPA, CEQ regulations, and its own directives. Recognizing these responsibilities, the FAA has carefully considered the objectives of the proposed projects in relation to aeronautical and environmental factors at and around Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. Based upon the above analysis, the FAA has determined that the Modified Action meets the purpose and need of the proposed project and is consistent with FAA design standards.

Having carefully considered the aviation safety and operational objectives of the project, as well as being properly advised as to the anticipated environmental impacts of the proposal, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator of the FAA, I find that the project is reasonably supported. I certify, as prescribed by 49 U.S.C. 44502, that the proposed project is reasonably necessary for use in air commerce.

The findings included in the 2013 FONSI/ROD are unchanged and still pertain to the Modified Action.

This decision does not constitute a commitment of funds under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP); however, it does fulfill the environmental prerequisites for the FAA to consider applications for AIP grants in connection with the proposed project in the future (49 U.S.C. 47101 et seq.).

Similarly, this decision neither grants approval to use Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) fees nor constitutes a commitment of PFC approval; however, it does fulfill the environmental prerequisites for future PFC determinations.



Kelvin L. Solco
Regional Administrator
Southwest Region

Right of Appeal

This FONSI/ROD constitutes final order of the FAA Administrator and is subject to exclusive judicial review under 49 U.S.C. 46110 by the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia or the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the circuit in which the person contesting the decision resides or has its principal place of business. Any party having substantial interest in this order may apply for review of the decision by filing a petition for review in the appropriate United States Court of Appeals no later than 60 days after this order is issued in accordance with the provisions of 49 U.S.C. Section 46110. Any party seeking to stay implementation of the ROD must file an application with the FAA prior to seeking judicial relief as provided in Rule 18(a) of the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure.