

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
WESTERN-PACIFIC REGION

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Proposed Taxiway Extension Project

Hayfork Airport
Hayfork, Trinity County, California



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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

WHAT'S IN THIS DOCUMENT? This document is the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed extension of the partial parallel taxiway, installation of a culvert under the taxiway and grading of the Runway Safety Area (RSA) and Taxiway Safety Area at Hayfork Airport, Hayfork, California. The purpose of the proposed taxiway extension is to provide a full length parallel taxiway for Runway 7-25. Installation of the culvert is needed to ensure water flow through Kingsbury Gulch. Grading of the RSA and Taxiway Safety Areas is needed to meet FAA Airport Design Standards and enhance aviation safety by removing vegetation and ensuring the properly compacted and graded safety areas in the event of an aircraft undershoot, overshoot or excursion from the runway. This document includes the agency determinations and approvals for those proposed Federal actions described in the Final Environmental Assessment (Final EA) dated August 2015. This document discusses all alternatives considered by FAA in reaching its decision, summarizes the analysis used to evaluate the alternatives, and briefly summarizes the potential environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative, which are evaluated in detail in this FONSI. This document also identifies the environmentally preferred alternative and the agency preferred alternative. This document identifies applicable and required mitigation.

BACKGROUND. In September 2011, Trinity County prepared and published a Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA) for the proposed project. The Draft EA addressed the potential environmental effects of the proposed taxiway extension including various reasonable alternatives to that proposal. The Draft EA was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) [Public Law 91-190, 42 USC 4321-4347], the implementing regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) [40 CFR Parts 1500-1508], and FAA Orders 1050.1E, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures* and 5050.4B, *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions*. FAA Order 1050.1F became effective on July 16, 2015, after the Final EA was substantially completed. Trinity County published the Notice of Availability for the Draft EA on September 14, 2011 and the document was available for review through October 14, 2011. One letter was received from the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board concerning impacts to 0.03 acres (about 1300 square feet) of wetlands and impacts to riparian habitat. FAA approved the Final EA on December 3, 2015.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO? Read the FONSI to understand the actions that FAA intends to take in connection with the proposed taxiway extension, installation of a culvert and grading of the runway and taxiway safety areas at Hayfork Airport.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THIS? Trinity County may begin to implement the proposed action.

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PROPOSED TAXIWAY EXTENSION PROJECT

HAYFORK AIRPORT
HAYFORK, TRINITY COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

- 1. Introduction.** This document is a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on the environment as a result of the proposed taxiway extension project at Hayfork Airport, located in Trinity County, California. The County's proposed action consists of extending the existing partial parallel taxiway and a culvert over Kingsbury Gulch; grading of the Runway Safety Area (RSA) and Taxiway Safety Area (TSA).

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) before being able to take the federal actions of approval of the revision to the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) that depicts the proposed airport development projects, and approval of further processing of an application for federal assistance for those improvements. Approval of the ALP is authorized by the Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982, as amended (Public Laws 97-248 and 100-223). A Final Environmental Assessment (EA) dated August 2015 was prepared pursuant to FAA Order 1050.1F, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures* to the extent practicable, since Order 1050.1F was released on July 16, 2015. The Final EA was also prepared pursuant to FAA Order 5050.4B, *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions*, and is used to support the findings in this document.

- 2. Project Purpose and Need.** The purpose and need of the Sponsor's proposed action is to extend the existing partial parallel taxiway 1,415 feet west because it only serves 2,700 feet of the 4,100 foot Runway 7-25 to eliminate use of the paved turn-around and back taxiing on the Runway 7 end. A culvert will be constructed under the taxiway to support the taxiway extension over Kingsbury Gulch and grading of RSA and TSA. Additionally, the Taxiway Object Free Area (TOFA) would be cleared.

A full parallel taxiway would enhance the safety of aircraft operational activities at the airport. Grading of the RSA and TSA is necessary to ensure these areas meet FAA Airport Design Standards by removing overgrown vegetation and ensuring the RSA and TSA are properly graded to ensure the safety of an aircraft in the event of an overshoot, undershoot, or an excursion from the runway.

- 3. Proposed Action and Federal Actions.** The following is a listing of the various components of the proposed project, as discussed in Chapter 1 of the Final EA:

- Extend the partial parallel taxiway 1,415 feet to the west to the end of Runway 7-25.
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- Construct culvert to support the taxiway extension over Kingsbury Gulch.
- Grade the RSA (approximately 240 feet long and 250 feet wide, centered on the runway) to the west of the end of Runway 7 as well as grading approximately 10 feet either side of the taxiway extension to meet FAA Airport Design Standards.
- Grade and clear both sides of the taxiway to create a Taxiway Object Free Area (TOFA).

The proposed federal actions are:

- Unconditional approval of the portion of the ALP that depicts the proposed extended partial parallel taxiway, installation of a culvert under the taxiway extension, grading of RSA and TSA pursuant to 49 USC §§ 40103(b), 44718 and 47107(a)(16) and Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 77. The approval of the ALP is based on determinations through an aeronautical study process, regarding obstructions to navigable airspace, that the airport development proposal is acceptable from an airspace perspective.
- Determination of eligibility for federal assistance for the Proposed Action project components under the Federal grant-in-aid program authorized by the Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982, as amended (49 USC § 47101 et. seq.).
- Determine under 49 USC § 44502(b), that the proposed project is reasonably necessary for use in air commerce or in the interests of national defense.
- Approval of further processing of an application for federal assistance for Proposed Action project components for federal funds from the Airport Improvement Program, as shown on the ALP.
- Approval of a Construction Safety and Phasing Plan to maintain aviation and airfield safety during construction pursuant to FAA Advisory Circular 150/5370-2F, *Operational Safety on Airports During Construction*.

4. Reasonable Alternatives Considered

The Final EA evaluated two alternatives in Chapter 2.

- No Action Alternative - Under this alternative the existing partial parallel taxiway would not be extended, the existing runway culvert would not be extended and no grading of the RSA, TSA, and clearing of the TOFA would occur. Analysis of the No Action Alternative is required pursuant to 40 CFR § 1502.14(d).

- Proposed Action Alternative – Create a full parallel taxiway by extending the existing taxiway 1,415 feet to the west to achieve a full parallel taxiway, construct a new culvert under the taxiway extension, grade the RSA and TSA and clear the TOFA.

As described in Chapter 2 of the Final EA, alternatives eliminated from further consideration include:

- Modified Culvert Alternative;
- Fill Kingsbury Gulch Alternative;
- Construction of a New Airport Alternative; and
- Closing Hayfork Alternative.

Paragraph 6-2.1 of FAA Order 1050.1F states, in part: *“The alternatives discussed in an EA must include those that the approving official will consider. There is no requirement for a specific number of alternatives or a specific range of alternatives to be included in an EA. An EA may limit the range of alternatives to the proposed action and no action when there are no unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. Alternatives are to be considered to the degree commensurate with the nature of the proposed action and agency experience with the environmental issues involved.”* FAA need not examine other alternatives because the project does not involve any unresolved conflict of resources (FAA Order 5050.4B, paragraph 706.d(5)).

5. Assessment

The potential environmental impacts and possible adverse effects were identified and evaluated in the Final EA. The Final EA examined Air Quality; Water Quality; Fish, Wildlife, and Plants; Wetlands; Floodplains; Construction Impacts and Cumulative Effects environmental resource categories in detail.

Section 4.1 of the Final EA considered and eliminated the following environmental resource categories from detailed examination as the resources are not present in the study area or would not be affected by the Proposed Action or No Action Alternatives: Noise; Compatible Land Use; Socioeconomic Impacts, Environmental Justice and Children’s Environmental Health and Safety Risks; Department of Transportation Act 4(f); Historical, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources; Coastal Resources, Farmlands; Wild and Scenic Rivers; Natural Resources and Energy Supply; Hazardous Materials and Solid Waste; Light Emissions and Visual Impacts; and Secondary (Induced) Impacts. The Trinity County, Department of Transportation land use assurance letter for the Hayfork Airport is provided in Appendix E of the Final EA.

A. Air Quality. Section 4.2.1 of the Final EA discusses the air quality conditions for the project. The Proposed Action will not result in changes to the number or type of aircraft operations at the airport. The Final EA notes that the airport accommodates

about 1,500 annual operations and is forecast to have 2,750 annual operations by the year 2026. The proposed extension and grading will not affect the number of aircraft operations or type of aircraft using the airport. A General Conformity analysis is not required because Trinity County and the North Coast Air Basin are classified as Attainment or Unclassified for the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. The construction emissions are evaluated in Section 4.2.1.4 and Appendix H of the Final EA and show that the project will not exceed *de minimis* levels, therefore, there would be no significant Air Quality impacts from implementing the Proposed Action.

B. Water Quality. Section 4.2.2 of the Final EA states the proposed project would result in no significant impact to water quality. A culvert structure with an open bottom would be constructed where the taxiway extension crosses the intermittent Kingsbury Gulch drainage. While the taxiway extension would increase impermeable surfaces at the airport, the increase would not result in significant surface water ponding. The existing drainage system has the capacity to handle the minor surface water runoff from the additional pavement. Additionally, the highly permeable soils surrounding the taxiway have the capacity to absorb the small amount of additional runoff that could occur.

To avoid the potential for increased sedimentation construction activities will be limited to periods when Kingsbury Gulch is dry, typically from early summer until winter storms have saturated the soil enough to create runoff. Sections 4.2.2.4 and 4.2.2.5 of the Final EA include Erosion Control and Sediment and Concrete Release Control Mitigation Measures, respectively, that are required during implementation of the Proposed Action.

C. Fish, Wildlife, and Plants. Section 4.2.3 of the Final EA evaluates the impacts to various fish, wildlife and plants. This section of the Final EA also discusses the Biological Assessment (BA), provided in Appendix A of the Final EA. The proposed project is within the boundary of designated critical habitat for the Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast (SONCC) Coho salmon and the essential fish habitat for the SONCC Coho and Chinook salmon. The FAA conducted informal consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in a letter dated January 21, 2011. The FAA determined that the proposed improvements may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect the SONCC Coho salmon and its designated critical habitat or essential fish habitat for SONCC Coho and Chinook salmon. NMFS responded in an April 7, 2011 letter, concurring with FAA's determination. NMFS determined that the proposed project would adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for Chinook salmon and Coho salmon. However, the NMFS letter states the proposed project contains adequate measures to avoid, minimize, mitigate or otherwise offset the adverse effects to EFH. The FAA also conducted informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) by letter dated January 26, 2011. FAA determined the proposed project may affect, but not likely to adversely affect the northern spotted owl. The USFWS concurred by letter dated February 22, 2011, with FAA's determination. The FAA, USFWS, and NMFS consultation and response letters are located in Appendix D of the Final EA.

D. Wetlands. Section 4.2.4.3 of the Final EA concluded that there would be no significant impact to wetlands. The Proposed Action will directly impact jurisdictional waters and wetlands within the project area. Approximately 0.03 acre of a seasonal wetland would be filled and approximately 0.08 acre of Kingsbury Gulch, an intermittent streambed, would be disturbed during installation of the proposed culvert. By obtaining and abiding by the general conditions, including any compensatory mitigation, required by the Nationwide Permit and obtaining a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, impacts to jurisdictional Wetlands and Waters of the U.S. would be offset so that no net loss would result.

E. Floodplains. Section 4.2.5.4 of the Final EA states the proposed project is located within a 100-year floodplain for Kingsbury Gulch. Figure 4.2.5.1 in the Final EA, shows this floodplain bisects the airport. The proposed project would not create a significant impact to floodplains because the culvert would have a natural bottom to allow a 100-year flood flow to pass under the proposed taxiway and it would connect to the existing runway culvert. The natural bottom would also allow for unimpeded fish passage when there is water in Kingsbury Gulch and for erosion control. There is no practicable alternative to locating the taxiway extension in the 100-year floodplain. The Proposed Action would not adversely affect property or increase risk to human life, nor would it significantly affect the floodplain's natural and beneficial values.

F. Construction Impacts – Construction of the Proposed Action would include grubbing/clearing, excavation and grading, using both heavy duty and light duty construction equipment. Section 4.2.6.3 of the Final EA discusses the Best Management Practices (BMP) that will be used to control erosion, prevent stormwater pollution, avoid water quality effects, control dust, limit runoff and adequately maintain construction vehicles. Construction disturbances are temporary in duration and decrease as work is finished. Implementation of the Proposed Action requires conformance with Air Quality and Water Quality BMPs and Clean Water Act Section 404 and 401 permits and certifications, therefore, no significant impact from construction would occur.

G. Cumulative Impacts – Chapter 5 of the Final EA discusses the cumulative effects on the environment from the Proposed Action with the effects of other past, present and future projects within or in the vicinity of the airport. Results of Trinity County and Federal Highway Administration consultations with NMFS and USFWS are included for the identified road and bridge projects. These surface transportation related projects located in the vicinity of Hayfork Airport resulted in “not likely to adversely affect” or “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” determinations for the SONCC Coho salmon, Northern spotted owl and their designated critical habitat. No cumulative impacts from the Proposed Action and other past, present, and future projects were identified; therefore, no significant cumulative impact would occur.

6. Public Participation

The public was encouraged to review and comment on the Draft EA. The County of Trinity published a Notice of Availability for public review on September 14, 2011 in the *Trinity Journal*, the local newspaper for the City of Hayfork. A copy of the Draft EA was made available during a 30-day public review period at the Hayfork Branch Library, the Trinity County Department of Transportation office, Trinity County's website, and the FAA's San Francisco Airports District Office. No requests were made verbally or in writing to hold a public hearing and there was one agency comment received pertaining to the Proposed Action. A comment letter was received from the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (NCRWCB). The NCRWCB letter was a reminder to Trinity County that Low Impact Development techniques, Best Management Practices (BMPs), permits, and mitigation would be required for the Proposed Action implementation. The comment letter and responses to comments can be found in Appendix G of the Final EA. The Notice of Availability for the Draft EA is discussed in Chapter 8 and the Affidavit of Publication found in Appendix F of the Final EA.

7. Inter-Agency Coordination

In accordance with 49 USC § 47101(h), FAA has determined that no further coordination with the U.S. Department of Interior or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is necessary because the proposed project does not involve construction of a new airport, new runway or major runway extension that has a significant impact on natural resources including fish and wildlife; natural, scenic and recreational assets; water and air quality; or another factor affecting the environment.

8. Reasons for the Determination that the Proposed Project will have No Significant Impacts

The attached Final EA examines each of the various environmental resources that were deemed present at the project location, or had the potential to be impacted by the Proposed Action. The proposal to extend the current partial parallel taxiway, construction of a new culvert under the taxiway extension, the grading for the RSA and TSA and creation of the TOFA at Hayfork Airport would not involve any environmental impacts that would exceed the threshold of significance as defined by FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B.

Based on the information contained in this FONSI and supported by detailed discussion in the Final EA, the FAA has selected the Proposed Action, extension of the partial parallel taxiway 1415 feet to the west, installation of a culvert under the extended taxiway, grading of the RSA and TSA and creation of the TOFA as the FAA's Preferred Alternative. The FAA has decided to implement the Proposed Action as described Section 3 of this FONSI.

9. Finding of No Significant Impact

I have carefully and thoroughly considered the facts contained in the attached EA. Based on that information, I find that 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). I also find the proposed Federal action 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:



Robin K. Hunt
Acting Manager, Airports Division, AWP-600



Date

DISAPPROVED:

Robin K. Hunt
Acting Manager, Airports Division, AWP-600

Date