



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

Airports Division  
Southwest Region  
Arkansas, Louisiana,  
New Mexico, Oklahoma,  
Texas

2601 Meacham Blvd  
Fort Worth, Texas 76137

July 20, 2010

Mr. Jim Hinde  
Director, Aviation Department  
City of Albuquerque  
2200 Sunport Blvd, SE  
Albuquerque, NM 87106

RECEIVED  
AUG 12 2010  
AVIATION DEPT.

Dear Mr. Hinde:

Enclosed please find a copy of the completed environmental Finding of No Significant Impact/Record of Decision (FONSI/ROD) for the proposed improvements at Double Eagle II Airport. The FONSI/ROD should be attached to the Final Environmental Assessment to form the completed environmental determination.

If the City intends to follow through with the project as planned, you are requested to announce the availability of the FONSI/ROD by way of legal notice or other suitable announcement. The announcement should be similar to the following:

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Southwest Region, after careful and thorough consideration of all facts and after coordination with appropriate local, state, and Federal agencies approved on June 10, 2010, an environmental Finding of No Significant Impact/Record of Decision (FONSI/ROD) for the proposed extension of Runway 17/35 and associated improvements at Double Eagle II Airport, Albuquerque, New Mexico. The FONSI/ROD is available at the Airports Division, Louisiana/New Mexico Airports Development Office, FAA Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd, Room 684, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. Copies are also available at \_\_\_\_\_ (identify local city offices where the document will be available for review).

Please provide our office a copy of the notice after publication in at least one newspaper of general circulation for the project area.

Also enclosed is a copy of the Federal signature page from the final EA, making it a Federal document. Please ensure that this page is inserted into the final EA before the FONSI/ROD is attached to it and made available for public review

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. If you need any additional assistance, feel free to contact this office.

Sincerely,

**Original signed by:**

Lacey D. Spriggs  
Manager, Louisiana/New Mexico Airports Development Office

2 Enclosures

cc: Ms. Molly Waller,  
Coffmann Engineers  
237 NW Blue Parkway, Suite 100  
Lee's Summit, MO 64063

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

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
And  
RECORD OF DECISION**

Extension of Runway 17/35 and Associated Improvements  
Double Eagle II Airport  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

April, 20, 2010

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is to briefly present the reasons why the approval of Federal actions supporting the proposed extension of Runway 17/35 and associated improvements at Double Eagle II Airport, which serves the city of Albuquerque, New Mexico, will not have a significant effect on the human environment. The City of Albuquerque, owner of the airport, has requested Federal actions, including:

- A. Approve the revised Airport Layout Plan showing the proposed development;
- B. Federal funding under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 471 for the construction of an extension of Runway 17/35 and its parallel taxiway by 3,000' (2,001' to the north and 1,000' to the south) from a current length of 5,999' to 9,000', along with the following related development;
- C. Installation of runway and taxiway lights associated with the runway and taxiway extensions;
- D. Relocation/installation of the instrument landing system (ILS) and medium intensity approach lighting system with runway alignment indicator lights (MALSR) from Runway 22 to Runway 17;
- E. Construction of additional entrance/exit taxiways to connect new runway ends to the parallel taxiway, additional exit taxiways to reduce runway occupancy times after landing, and connector taxiways to the main apron area;
- F. Relocation of the airport entrance road (including associated utilities) to accommodate sufficient approach/departure clearance as specified in Appendix 2 of FAA AC 150-5300-13, Change 14, and to remove the roadway from the extended Runway 17/35 runway safety area;
- G. Develop and implement under provisions of 49 U.S.C. 40103, air traffic control procedures (ILS and GPS) to reflect the extension of Runway 17/35, appropriate for the safe and expeditious movement of aircraft through the navigable airspace.

Attached to this FONSI is the environmental assessment (EA) on which the finding is made.

## **II. SUMMARY**

The EA 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 EA meets the guidelines identified in FAA Orders 1050.1E, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures* and 5050.4B, *NEPA Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions*.

No thresholds of significance were found to be exceeded in the EA. After review of the EA, the public information workshop transcript, correspondence received from citizens, letters received during the intergovernmental coordination process, and other supporting documentation, the FAA determined that a FONSI was justified for the proposed airport improvements.

Consultation was carried out with appropriate Federal, state and local agencies during preparation of the draft EA (Final EA [FEA], Appendix M). Due to its proprietary responsibilities for the adjacent Petroglyph National Monument (PNM) and the nearby Northern Geologic Window (NGW), the National Park Service (NPS) requested and was granted cooperating agency status. The NPS actively participated throughout the EA process (FEA, Appendix L).

As documented in Appendix B of the FEA, the FAA carried out consultation with thirty-one Native American tribes. Three tribes responded, and the only substantive comments addressed site monitoring, a request for further consultation if burials or funerary objects were encountered during construction, and one request for review of the draft EA. The draft EA was provided to the requesting tribe, and an emergency discovery condition has been incorporated into this FONSI.

Local citizens were also encouraged to provide comments (EA, Appendix M). Notice of a public information workshop was advertised in the local papers and said workshop was held on August 27, 2009. The major concerns expressed at the hearing have been addressed, and action will be taken to the extent possible to mitigate or minimize adverse impacts of the proposed project. Notable concerns about Alternative A - extension of Runway 17/35 – were expressed by many pilots/airport users. Several issues of concern were raised, including safety, taxi time/distance, airspace utilization and cost. While not environmental issues *per se*, they have been addressed adequately in Appendix M of the Final EA.

## **III. PURPOSE AND NEED**

An update to the airport Master Plan was completed in 2002. This update provided an inventory of existing facilities, projected aviation demand forecasts, and identified facility requirements to accommodate forecasted demand. The study also examined

airside and landside alternatives, and recommended an airport layout and improvement schedule.

#### **A. Need for the Proposed Project:**

The need for the proposed action is described in the FEA on pages 1-1 through 1-5 and Appendices C and E. A master plan update, completed in 2002, evaluated the airport's ability to meet design standards and provide a safe and efficient operating facility for existing and anticipated future users of the airport. Among other findings, it identified the need for additional runway length, construction of a crosswind runway, and construction of a parallel Runway 04/22 to accommodate smaller GA aircraft. The master plan update indicated that these proposed projects would be considered as demand warranted.

In 2005, the City decided to consider near-term improvements, primarily the extension of one or both runways at AEG. During the recent EA process addressing a proposed air traffic control tower (ATCT) for AEG, the NPS expressed concern regarding aircraft noise and overflights of PNM and the NGW. The former is located east of and adjacent to the airport, and the latter is northeast of the airport. At that time, both the FAA and the City of Albuquerque committed to the consideration of alternative runway scenarios that could potentially reduce noise and overflights of PNM and the NGW during any future planning or environmental studies for AEG.

The City determined that existing demand justified the extension of only one runway. In accordance with the aforementioned commitment to NPS that alternative runway scenarios would be considered, analysis was undertaken to determine which runway should be extended first. Additional wind data, most of which was unavailable at the time of the Master Plan update, was now available from the Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) installed at AEG in 2001. This new data was utilized in the wind analysis provided on pages 1-2 through 1-3 and in Appendix E of the FEA, and it facilitated a reconsideration of which runway should be the primary runway. In summary, the data demonstrated that Runway 17/35 provides marginally better wind coverage than Runway 04/22.

Additional runway length is required for the airport to accommodate the more demanding segment of the airport's existing and forecast general aviation fleet and its stage length requirements. While AEG does not meet the criteria for Federal designation as a reliever airport for nearby Albuquerque Sunport (ABQ) due to the latter's lack of meeting threshold delay criteria, it nevertheless serves the City's stated purpose of minimizing GA-related constraints on ABQ's operational capacity.

AEG has two runways, Runway 04/22 (7,400' x 100') and Runway 17/35 (5,999' x 100'). Runway 22 is served by an instrument landing system (ILS). In light of increased operations by more demanding aircraft, it has been determined that AEG's runways lack adequate length, particularly during the warmer months when density altitude becomes a significant factor. As indicated in the EA, a primary runway length of 9,000' would

adequately accommodate the GA business fleet without payload restrictions.

Taking the new wind analysis into account and assuming future construction of the crosswind Runway 08/26 recommended by the Master Plan update, the issue of which parallel runway alignment (04/22 or 17/35) would afford the most airport capacity was revisited. It was determined that the construction of a parallel Runway 17/35 would yield more capacity than a parallel Runway 04/22.

#### **B. Purpose of the proposed project:**

The proposed solution to the lack of sufficient runway length is to extend one of the existing runways to a length which would accommodate the more demanding GA aircraft without imposing weight/payload penalties.

### **IV. ALTERNATIVES**

The FAA explored and objectively evaluated reasonable alternatives that were considered practical and feasible in meeting the purpose and need.

Chapter 2 of the FEA describes the criteria that established the initial alternatives, the evaluation of the initial alternatives, the alternatives carried forward for further environmental evaluation, and the alternatives excluded from further consideration along with the reasons for such exclusion.

Three alternatives were addressed in the FEA (see pages 2-7 through 2-13). These consisted of Alternative A, extending Runway 17/35 by 3,001' (2,001' to the north and 1,000' to the south) from its current length of 5,999' to 9,000'; Alternative B, extending Runway 04/22 by 1600' (to the southwest) from its current length of 7,400 to 9,000'; and the No Action Alternative. A detailed explanation of each alternative is provided in the FEA and will not be repeated herein. Note that the No Action Alternative is always required to be analyzed in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations 40 CFR § 1502.14

The alternatives were evaluated based on numerous factors, including the following: wind coverage; airspace utilization; taxi time/distance; cost considerations; and environmental impacts. After thorough consideration of all alternatives studied in the EA, and previous studies, Alternative A was selected as the preferred alternative by the City of Albuquerque, and FAA concurred in this recommendation. Alternative A was preferred because, among other factors, it was found to be the most beneficial, would accommodate the long-term plan for development of the airport, would have no significant environmental impacts, and would best meet FAA's statutory mission of promoting a safe and efficient nationwide airport system.

Implementation of Alternative A would be more expensive than Alternative B. First, it requires the construction of more pavement to achieve the 9,000' length; i.e., the shorter

of the two runways would be extended. However, given that this would result in more total runway pavement available for airport users, the FAA considers that additional expense a reasonable rationale for Federal participation. Second, the City of Albuquerque has stated its desire to relocate the ILS and associated equipment (e.g., approach lighting) from Runway 22 to Runway 17, in order to provide an instrument approach on its longest runway and to accommodate the potential for a future parallel Runway 17/35. The FAA adopted a position that ILS relocation is unnecessary since 1) runway length is primarily a factor during take-off rather than landing and 2) wind velocities typically are low during IFR weather (i.e., runway orientation is less of a factor). The cost of relocating the ILS and associated lighting is significant. However, the City of Albuquerque has agreed to bear those costs (i.e., it will not seek Airport Improvement Program funds) and, with the cost issue resolved, the FAA has no objection to the relocation.

Therefore, the FAA, in this FONSI, has determined that Alternative A, the Proposed Action, is the FAA's preferred and selected alternative. 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 encourage and foster the development of civil aeronautics (49 U.S.C. § 40101).

## **V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

### **A. Potential Impact Resource Categories**

Implementation of the Proposed Action or Alternatives has the potential to impact the following resource categories:

#### **Noise**

The potential for noise impacts as a result of the proposed action and alternatives was analyzed in the subject environmental assessment.

The FAA's criterion for evaluating the impact of "noise energy exposure" is expressed in terms of yearly day/night average sound level (DNL). The threshold of significance for purposes of determining whether a proposed action will cause significant noise impacts is set forth in FAA Order 1050.1E. A "significant noise impact" is defined as a 1.5 decibel (or greater) increase within the 65 DNL contour over any noise sensitive area when compared to the "no action" alternative. Applying the above criteria, the environmental study modeled potential noise level increases for years 2010 (existing conditions) and 2015 (project implementation plus five years).

The noise analysis determined that the DNL 65 noise exposure contours remain within the airport boundaries for both 2010 and 2015 under all three alternative scenarios (Alternative A, Alternative B and No Action). There are no noise-sensitive land uses within the DNL 65 noise exposure contours; therefore, no significant noise impacts

would occur for any of the three alternatives studied, and no mitigation would be warranted.

Although off-airport noise levels would remain below the DNL 65 threshold for all three alternatives, the sponsor and FAA acknowledge that the recognized threshold might not be the most appropriate means for assessing potential impacts to the unique resources at PNM and the NGW. Therefore, noise monitoring data and INM grid point analyses were utilized to determine the relative impacts of the alternatives on selected sites within PNM and the NGW (FEA, pages 4-17 through 4-21 and Appendix L). Implementation of Alternative A would result in slight decreases over the No Action alternative for most sites and slight increases for some. However, the increases would be well below the threshold for human perception. Similarly, implementation of Alternative B would result in slight increases for some sites, and slight decreases or no change to others. Once again, the magnitude of the changes would be below the level of human perception. Since Alternative B would retain Runway 04/22 as the primary runway, its results are very similar to those of the No Action alternative.

As described in the FEA, a voluntary "Fly Friendly" program, proposed by the City, potentially could further reduce impacts of overflights and noise on PNM and the NGW. However, due to uncertainty, potential benefits of such a program did not figure into the FAA's decisionmaking process.

As documented on page B-66 of the FEA, the NPS has expressed its support for Alternative A.

#### **B. Resource Impact categories Unaffected by the Proposed Action or Alternatives**

As documented in Chapter 4 of the FEA, no resources specified in FAA Orders 1050.1E, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures* and 5050.4B, *NEPA Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions* would be impacted significantly under Alternatives A, B or No Action. While no known archaeological resources would be impacted, this FONSI is conditioned to address emergency discovery (see below).

## **VI. CONDITIONS**

As prescribed by 40 CFR § 1505.3, the FAA shall take steps as appropriate to the action, such as through special conditions in grant agreements, property conveyance deeds, releases, airport layout plan approvals, and contract plans and specifications and shall monitor these as necessary to assure that representations made in the EA and FONSI with respect to mitigation of impacts will be carried out. Mitigation plans to be developed will be coordinated with the appropriate jurisdictional agencies.

**Condition regarding cultural resources:** If cultural resources are encountered during construction, work shall cease immediately in the immediate vicinity and the sponsor shall expeditiously contact the FAA (Louisiana/New Mexico Airports Development Office) and the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer. The FAA shall resume



consultation with the Hopi Tribe (as requested) and other Native American tribes as deemed appropriate.

## **VII. DECISION CONSIDERATIONS AND ADDITIONAL FINDINGS**

Throughout the development of the airport, including the proposed improvements described in Part III 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 action in question. In its determination whether to prepare an EIS or process the EA as a FONSI, the FAA weighed the following considerations:

In accordance with 40 CFR § 1507.3 and 1501.4, the Order 5050.4B, represents the agency procedures to supplement the CEQ Regulations for airport development projects.

After examination of the EA, comments from Federal, state, and local agencies, public comments, 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 is not required. In addition, the FAA determined that existing evidence available to the agency clearly points to the proposed project as beneficial in fulfilling the FAA's statutory mission of promoting a safe and efficient nationwide airport system, and further study of the issues in an EIS will result only in "amassing needless detail." As the nation's aviation agency, the FAA has the ultimate technical expertise to develop, evaluate, and select actions and alternatives that would result in safe and efficient use of U.S. airspace as prescribed in 49 U.S.C. §40103(a). In accordance with 49 U.S.C. Section 44502(b), the FAA has determined that the proposed action is reasonable necessary for use in air commerce.

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 proposed project; and (b) to take actions that protect, restore, and enhance the environment. The FAA weighed both the potential positive and negative consequences that this proposed action may have on the quality of the human environment. Further processing of this proposed action in an EIS would needlessly generate additional paperwork and a rehashing of issues, while simultaneously impeding the FAA from carrying out its mission and blocking a primary goal of NEPA -- that of fostering excellent action.

In summary, the FAA opts to use a finding of no significant impact based on its conclusions that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the human environment.

RECOMMENDED  
FOR APPROVAL:

Lacey A. Spragg 6/10/10  
Manager, Louisiana/New Mexico Airports Development Office Date

APPROVED:

D. C. Berry 6/10/10  
Acting Manager, Airports Division Date

## **DECISION AND ORDER**

**Extension of Runway 17/35 and Associated Improvements  
Double Eagle II Airport  
Albuquerque, New Mexico**

April 20, 2010

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 project in relation to aeronautical and environmental factors at and around Double Eagle II Airport. Based upon the above analysis, the FAA has determined that the Proposed Action meets the purpose and need of the proposed project and best implements necessary airfield modifications to meet 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.

Therefore, I direct that the following actions be taken under the authority of 49 U.S.C. 40104, 40113, 40117, 44502, 44701, 46110, 47101, 47105, 47106, 47120, and 47122:

- A. Approve Federal funding as appropriate and available under 49 U.S.C., Chapter 471 for the implementation of Alternative A as described in the EA and FONSI, including mitigation measures as follows:
  - If cultural resources are encountered during construction, work shall cease in the immediate vicinity and the sponsor shall expeditiously contact the FAA (Louisiana/New Mexico Airports Development Office) and the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The FAA shall resume consultation with the Hopi Tribe (as requested) and other Native American tribes as deemed appropriate.
- B. Any such FAA grant approved for implementation of the proposed Alternative A shall be subject to acceptance by the sponsor of the various conditions of approval, particularly those related to the development of mitigation measures identified in the approved EA/FONSI;
- C. Develop and implement under provisions of 49 U.S.C. 40103, air traffic control procedures to reflect the new runway ends appropriate for the safe and expeditious movement of aircraft through navigable airspace
- D. Approve the revised airport layout plan presented to the FAA by the City of Albuquerque showing the development of the runway extension, specifically described in Part IV of this FONSI, and identified in the EA as the preferred alternative, along with related and other supporting development, approval includes determination of safe and efficient utilization of airspace;

E. Relocate appropriate and necessary ground-based navigational and other aviation safety-related equipment.

This decision, as well as subsequent approval of the project for Federal assistance, constitutes an order of the Administrator reviewable in the United States Circuit Court of Appeals in accordance with the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 46110.



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Teri A. Bruner  
Regional Administrator  
Southwest Region

Right of Appeal

This order constitutes final agency action under 49 U.S.C. 46110. Any party to this proceeding having a substantial interest may appeal the order to the courts of appeals of the United States or the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia upon petition, filed within 60 days after entry of this order.

**FINAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**For a Proposed Runway Extension at  
DOUBLE EAGLE II AIRPORT  
Albuquerque, New Mexico**



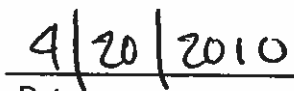
**Prepared for the  
Federal Aviation Administration, Lead Federal Agency  
and the  
National Park Service, Cooperating Agency  
on Behalf of the  
City of Albuquerque Aviation Department**

**By  
COFFMAN ASSOCIATES, INC.**

**January 2010**

This Environmental Assessment becomes a Federal Document when evaluated and signed by the responsible FAA Official.

  
Responsible FAA Official

  
Date