

FINAL FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
914TH AIR REFUELING WING KC-135 AIRCRAFT FUEL HYDRANT SYSTEM

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508), Department of Defense Directive 6050.1, and Air Force Regulation 32 CFR Part 989, the 914th Air Refueling Wing has prepared a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) to identify and evaluate potential effects of construction and operation of a fuel storage and hydrant fueling system (the Proposed Action) to support the KC-135 mission at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (NFARS), New York. The subject SEA is incorporated by reference into this finding and attached.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the action is to provide a workable fueling solution for the KC-135 mission at NFARS. This includes providing for a hydrant fueling system with sufficient fuel storage, as well as the demolition and removal of existing fueling infrastructure that is no longer functional.

The action is needed to support the KC-135 mission at NFARS. Currently, the lack of suitable fueling infrastructure requires the KC-135 aircraft to be re-fueled by individual refueling trucks which is both time and labor intensive. The current condition adversely impacts the efficiency and capability of the KC-135 mission at NFARS. (SEA Section 1.2)

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The Proposed Action would consist of two distinct phases where Phase I includes construction and operation of a new 10,000-barrel (BBL) aboveground storage tank (AST), associated fueling infrastructure and appurtenances, demolition of aboveground portions of the East POL Yard, and abandonment of the transfer line between the East POL Yard and the West POL Yard. Phase II includes demolition of the underground infrastructure at the East POL Yard and a remedial investigation of potential contamination at the East POL Yard to include restoration efforts, if determined necessary. (SEA Section 2.1)

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS

No actions other than the Proposed Action and No Action alternatives were carried forward for additional analysis. (SEA Sections 2.1 and 2.2)

DESCRIPTION OF THE NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative, the new storage tank, hydrant fueling system, and associated infrastructure would not be implemented. The KC-135 aircraft would continue to be fueled by individual re-fueling trucks, and this would continue to limit the effectiveness and capability of the KC-135 mission at NFARS. As a result, the No Action Alternative does not fulfill the project purpose and need. It is included in this analysis to provide a baseline against which the beneficial and adverse impacts of the other alternatives can be compared and to satisfy NEPA requirements. (SEA Section 2.2)

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD

Multiple configurations of repair and/or replacement of the existing fueling infrastructure (e.g., bulk storage tanks at the East POL Yard, fuel transfer pipeline, and hydrant fueling system, etc.) have been considered. Specifically, an alternative of replacing transfer and hydrant lines, replacing refueling pits on the apron, and repairing two existing bulk fuel storage tanks was originally considered. However, previous investigations have determined that significant repairs and full replacement of major components would be required to satisfy the requirements. An additional specific alternative considered adding a new bulk storage tank at the East POL Yard. However, during excavation at the East POL Yard in 2020 (associated with a separate project), soil and groundwater contamination was discovered. Therefore, the repair/replace alternative, including related design iterations, is not carried forward for detailed evaluation within this SEA and, therefore, after thorough consideration, are removed from further NEPA study; however, investigation of contamination and remediation, if necessary, would be carried forward under Phase II of the Proposed Action. (SEA Section 2.3)

ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Implementation of the Proposed Action or the No-Action Alternative would result in no significant adverse effects on environmental resource components (**Table 1**). During construction of the new storage tank and demolition of existing facilities, the Proposed Action would result in insignificant adverse effects on soils, site topography, surface waters and wetlands, groundwater, vegetation and wildlife, visual resources, ground transportation, safety and occupational health, utilities, noise, air quality, and hazardous materials and solid waste generation, and would have a beneficial effect on the socioeconomic environment. Operation of the proposed facilities would result in insignificant adverse impacts to site topography, surface water and wetlands, vegetation and wildlife, and visual resources.

PUBLIC NOTICE

A notice inviting the public to review and comment upon the Draft Final SEA and Draft Final FONSI was published on July 1, 2021 and July 2, 2021 in the Niagara Gazette. Additionally, all agencies contacted during the Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning (IICEP) coordination phase received an email requesting review and comment on the Draft Final SEA with a review period of 30 days (**Table 4-2** in the SEA). Comments received during the 30 day review period (July 1 – August 1, 2021) are addressed in the Final SEA. All agency consultation is complete.

MITIGATION

All resource categories evaluated in this SEA resulted in a finding of insignificant or no impact; therefore, mitigation measures are not necessary. Compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations and requirements would occur, as necessary. Measures such as avoidance, limitation of action, restoration, protection and maintenance, replacement/compensation, and adaptive management strategies may be utilized, as appropriate, during the implementation of the Proposed Action to further protect resources. However, no specific mitigation measures are necessary in order to reduce the effects of the Proposed Action to insignificant levels.

Table 1: Comparison of Resource Effects Regarding the Proposed Action

Impact Category	Proposed Action Degree of Impact			No Action Alternative Degree of			EA Section Where Details Are Discussed
	Significant	Insignificant	No Impact	Significant	Insignificant	No Impact	
Land Use			X			X	Section 3.1.1
Geology			X			X	Section 3.1.2
Soils		X				X	Section 3.1.3
Topography		X				X	Section 3.1.4
Surface Water and Wetlands		X				X	Section 3.1.5
Groundwater		X				X	Section 3.1.6
Floodplains			X			X	Section 3.1.7
Coastal Zone Resources			X			X	Section 3.1.8
Vegetation and Wildlife		X				X	Section 3.1.9
Federally Listed Threatened or Endangered Species			X			X	Section 3.1.10
State-listed Threatened or Endangered Species			X			X	Section 3.1.11
Cultural Resources			X			X	Section 3.1.12
Visual Resources		X				X	Section 3.1.13
Airspace			X			X	Section 3.1.14
Socioeconomics		X				X	Section 3.1.15
Ground Transportation		X				X	Section 3.1.16
Safety and Occupational Health		X				X	Section 3.1.17
Environmental Justice			X			X	Section 3.1.18
Protection of Children			X			X	Section 3.1.19
Utilities		X				X	Section 3.1.20
Noise		X				X	Section 3.1.21
Air Quality		X				X	Section 3.2.1
Hazardous Materials and Solid Waste		X				X	Section 3.2.2

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT - The Proposed Action entails the construction and operation of a new fuel storage and hydrant fueling system, the abandonment and demolition of various existing fuel system components, and remedial investigation of potential contamination associated with existing fueling infrastructures to include restoration efforts, if determined necessary. Based upon my review of the facts and analyses contained in the SEA, which is hereby incorporated by reference, I conclude that the Proposed Action will not have a significant impact on the natural or human environment. An environmental impact statement is not required for this action. This analysis fulfills the requirements of the NEPA, the President's Council on Environmental Quality, and 32 CFR Part 989.

Carl J. Magnusson, Col, USAF
Commander
914 ARW/CC
Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station

Date