



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Alaska District

Special Public Notice

Regulatory Division (1145)
CEPOA-RD
Post Office Box 6898
JBER, Alaska 99506-0898

Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE: October 19, 2012
EXPIRATION DATE: December 18, 2012
REFERENCE NUMBER: POA-2006-1144
WATERWAY: Chiniak Bay

Interested parties are hereby notified that a Department of the Army permit application has been received for work in waters of the United States as described below and shown on the project drawings located at the Regulatory Division website: www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/SPNNNew.htm. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), as lead Federal agency, has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Kodiak Airport Runway Safety Area (RSA) Improvement Project in cooperation with the Corps of Engineers and other Federal and State Agencies to meet the requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

This Public Notice announces the availability of the DEIS and the review of the application for a DA Permit. If the applicant's preferred alternative remains essentially the same following the review of comments received in response to the DEIS, the Corps would not issue a second Public Notice in the FEIS. The DEIS can be accessed at the FAA website at: www.kodiakairporteis.com.

The proposed activities regulated by the Corps of Engineers are described below. The analysis of the DEIS includes three alternatives for Runway 07/25, and six alternatives for Runway 18/36, including the applicant's proposed alternative for each of the Runways in their application for a DA permit, which are described below, and a no-action alternative.

APPLICANT: Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Post Office Box 196900, Anchorage, Alaska 99519.

AGENT: Vigil-Agrimis, Inc., 2718 NW Marken Street, Bend, Oregon 97701.

LOCATION: The project site is located within Sections 14, 15, 16, & 22, T. 28 S., R. 20 W., Seward Meridian, USGS Quad Maps Kodiak C-2/D-2, Latitude 57.7499° N., Longitude 152.4938° W., Kodiak Island Borough, near Kodiak, Alaska.

SPECIAL AREA DESIGNATION: The project is located within the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

PROJECT PURPOSE: The applicant's stated purpose is to improve the Runway Safety Areas (RSA) of Runway 07/25 and Runway 18/36, at the Kodiak Island Airport Facility.

Public Law 109-115 states that the owner or operator of an airport certificated under 49 U.S.C. 44706 (such as the Kodiak Airport) shall improve the airport's RSAs to comply with the FAA design standards contained in the FAA Advisory Circular 150/5300-13, by the end of 2015.

The designated safety areas for Runway 07/25 and Runway 18/36 at Kodiak Airport do not meet federal standards. Figure 2 (located at the Regulatory Division website: www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/SPPNew.htm) illustrates the existing dimensional criteria for the RSAs, as well as the general airport layout and facilities. These standards are based in large part on the types of aircraft using a runway and, more specifically, the size of those aircraft and speeds at which they approach the runway. The RSA design standard for the Kodiak Airport is based on the Boeing 737-400 aircraft.

This classification of aircraft at the runway ends is a 600-foot undershoot protection and 1,000 feet of overrun protection, with 250 feet of protection along each side of the runway centerline or 500-foot wide. Because the design aircraft could land and takeoff on either runway end, the RSA dimension for each of these runways can more simply be described as a 500-foot wide rectangular area centered upon the runway and extending 1,000 feet beyond each runway end.

The need for the project is to remedy the deficiency of RSAs at the Kodiak Airport. The RSAs around Runway 07/25 and Runway 18/36 at Kodiak Airport do not meet the FAA's standards (see 14 CFR 203 139.309, FAA Advisory Circular 150/5300-13), standards that Kodiak Airport must meet by December 31, 2015 (Pub. L. 109-115, Nov. 30, 2005, 119 Stat. 2401).

PROPOSED WORK:

A total of 339,090 cubic yards of clean fill material would be placed in 17.8 acres of intertidal and subtidal waters of the U.S. and 0.11 acre of wetlands (see Tables 4-5, located at the Regulatory Division website: www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/SPPNew.htm) for runway expansion as follows:

Runway 07/25: The applicant's proposed alternative would enhance the RSA at the east end of the Runway 07/25 (Runway end 25) through an extension into St. Paul Harbor and the use of Engineered Materials Arresting System (EMAS). Fill would be placed off Runway end 25 to create a landmass 600 feet long by 500 feet wide in size. The expanded landmass would meet FAA standards for undershoots by providing 600 feet of RSA. The Airport's existing runway length of 7,542 feet would be maintained. The Runway end 25 EMAS bed would be approximately 170 feet wide and 385 feet in length with a minimum setback of 35 feet from the runway threshold. The site design would also include sufficient area around the perimeter of the EMAS bed footprint to allow emergency vehicle access. Figure 5 illustrates this design. The EMAS would provide a 70-knot stopping capability on the Runway end 25 to serve the runway's design aircraft. The existing RSA would be enhanced for aircraft overruns on Runway end 25 (i.e., for takeoffs to the east), the primary operational flow of the Airport for departures, providing an equivalent level of safety for aircraft overruns as that offered by a traditional graded 1,000-foot RSA. The runway's existing takeoff and landing distances would be maintained for each runway use configuration, and the specified declared distances would be the same as those currently in place at Kodiak Airport.

Approximately 257,000 cubic yards of fill would be required to construct the new landmass needed to support the EMAS. The potential environmental impacts related to Runway 07/25 would be associated with the loss of marine habitat from the placement of this fill to construct a 600-foot landmass expansion on Runway end 25 (see Figures 5 and 6 - project drawings located at the Regulatory Division website: www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/SPNNNew.htm).

Runway 18/36: The project will enhance the RSA at the north and south end of Runway 18/36 through a 600-foot long by 500-foot wide landmass extension at the south, beyond Runway end 36 and shifting the runway 240 feet to the south. An EMAS bed, approximately 170 feet wide and 165 feet in length, would be placed beyond Runway end 18 (north) and installed on existing pavement with a minimum setback of 35 feet from the runway threshold. The EMAS bed would provide a 40-knot stopping capability. This meets the minimum standards of the runway's design aircraft requirements. The proposed Runway 18/36 design is shown in Figure 7. The existing runway length of 5,013 feet would not change but the runway end thresholds would be shifted 240 feet south of their current locations. This would provide 360 feet of undershoot protection for landings from the south to Runway end 36 and 240 feet of undershoot protection for landings from the north to Runway end 18. This would provide 40-knot stopping capability for overruns beyond Runway end 18 and would provide 360 feet of overrun protection for landings and takeoffs to the south.

Approximately 462,000 cubic yards of fill would be required to construct the new 600-foot landmass extension to the south beyond Runway end 36, shift the runway 240 feet, and install a 40-knot EMAS beyond the north end of the runway. The potential environmental impacts related to Runway 18/36 improvements would be associated with the immediate consequences of fill placement into St. Paul Harbor and the long-term changes resulting from new landmass in the marine environment. This is the only alternative that was considered that avoids placement of fill north of the runway toward the Buskin River.

APPLICANT PROPOSED MITIGATION: The applicant proposes the following mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts to waters of the United States from activities involving discharges of dredged or fill material.

Avoidance: Planning efforts for Kodiak Airport indicate that standard RSAs may not be practicable using traditional means because of physical constraints and costs. Additionally, the FAA took into consideration the aircraft that regularly operate on the runways. While RSA design standards are dictated by the largest and heaviest aircraft regularly operating on a runway, many of the aircraft using the Kodiak runways are often smaller in size and do not require the same RSA areas. Therefore, the FAA is allowing RSA improvements that do not fully meet FAA standards. This greatly reduces the impacts to the waters of the US that would have resulted from constructing RSA design standards for larger aircraft.

The FAA used the following priorities to determine the minimum RSA enhancement required. Existing runway use is dictated by the runway's existing wind coverage and instrument approach capabilities. Runway use was examined along with the aircraft accident and fatality data correlated to the flight phase (i.e., takeoffs vs. landings) for both commercial service and general aviation aircraft to determine RSA improvement priorities. The RSA enhancement projects at Kodiak Airport are ranked as follows:

Runway 07/25 Priorities

- 1) Runway 07 overrun RSA (Runway end 25 RSA)
- 2) Runway 25 undershoot RSA (Runway end 25 RSA)
- 3) Runway 25 overrun RSA (Runway end 07 RSA)

Runway 18/36 Priorities

- 1) Runway 36 overrun RSA (Runway end 18 RSA)
- 2) Runway 36 undershoot RSA (Runway end 36 RSA)
- 3) Runway 18 overrun RSA (Runway end 36 RSA)
- 4) Runway 18 undershoot RSA (Runway end 18 RSA)

The FAA has developed guidance concerning EMAS and its potential application in lieu of standard RSAs (FAA Order 5200.9). After years of testing and analysis, the FAA has determined that EMAS can be constructed to provide a level of overshoot/overrun safety generally equivalent to a standard RSA. However, for runways such as those at Kodiak Airport with vertical guidance (for example, instrument approach or visual guidance lighting), a standard EMAS installation still requires 600 feet of RSA (including the EMAS) to protect aircraft landing short of the runway. Placement of the EMAS at the Runway 18 end is the only alternative that was considered that avoids placement of fill north of the runway toward the Buskin River.

b. Minimization: This application is based on the applicant's preferred alternative. The Environmental Impact Statement prepared for the project evaluated several alternatives. These included:

- No Action
- Use of Smaller Aircraft and Other Modes of Travel
- Use of Other Airports
- Alternative Physical Airport Improvements
- RSA Improvement Options

The project footprint was minimized to reduce impacts to waters of the US by proposing non-standard RSAs that would meet FAA standards for the aircraft type using the runway most often and provide a minimum level of improvement for all aircraft types. Based upon the Runway 18/36 usage by a variety of aircraft types in both directions, the FAA has determined that it is practicable to provide overrun and undershoot protection for both ends of Runway 18/36 of at least 240 feet for smaller aircraft. Providing 240 feet of RSA beyond each runway end, would meet FAA standards for the aircraft type using the runway most often and would provide a minimum level of improvement for all aircraft types. The alternatives evaluation process is included in Chapter 2 of the EIS.

The Runway 7/25 design aircraft requires a 1000-foot long RSA. The use of EMAS on the Runway 25 end reduces the length of RSA required by 400 feet (which reduces the fill into marine waters by 6.1 acres). In addition, steep 2:1 slopes would be used to minimize fill width and length. The applicant proposes the conservation measures listed in Table 2 (project drawings located at the Regulatory Division website: www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/SPNNew.htm) to minimize aquatic resource impacts.

c. Compensatory Mitigation: While the US Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries have expressed a preference for on-site water quality improvements instead of fee-in-lieu payment, inquiries to on-site mitigation options have provided minimal feasible options for on-site water improvements. DOT&PF proposed a fee-in-lieu proposed at a 2:1 ratio.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: A permit for the described work will not be issued until a certification or waiver of certification, as required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (Public Law 95-217), has been received from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

PUBLIC HEARING: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, reasons for holding a public hearing.

EVALUATION: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity and its intended use on the public interest. Evaluation of the probable impacts, which the proposed activity may have on the public interest, requires a careful weighing of all the factors that become relevant in each particular case. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. The outcome of the general balancing process would determine whether to authorize a proposal, and if so, the conditions under which it will be allowed to occur. The decision should reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal, must be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. For activities involving 404 discharges, a permit will be denied if the discharge that would be authorized by such permit would not comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's 404(b)(1) guidelines. Subject to the preceding sentence and any other applicable guidelines or criteria (see Sections 320.2 and 320.3), a permit will be granted unless the District Commander determines that it would be contrary to the public interest.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

AUTHORITY: This permit will be issued or denied under the following authorities:

(X) Perform work in or affecting navigable waters of the United States - Section 10 Rivers and Harbors Act 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403).

(X) Discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States - Section 404 Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344). Therefore, our public interest review will consider the guidelines set forth under Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR 230).

If you wish to provide comments on the proposed activities subject to the jurisdiction of the Corps of Engineers, please provide them to the Corps and the FAA within 60 days of the date of this notice at:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Alaska District, Regulatory Division
Attention: Jack Hewitt
Post Office Box 6898
JBER, Alaska 99506-0898

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Alaskan Region, Airports Division, AAL-600
Attention: Leslie Grey
222 West 7th Avenue, M/S #14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513

District Commander
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

Project Drawings are available online at www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/SPNNew.htm.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
DIVISION OF WATER
401 Certification Program
Non-Point Source Water Pollution Control Program

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
WQM/401 CERTIFICATION
555 CORDOVA STREET
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-2617
PHONE: (907) 269-7564/FAX: (907) 334-2415

NOTICE OF APPLICATION
FOR
STATE WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

Any applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct an activity that might result in a discharge into navigable waters, in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 (PL95-217), also must apply for and obtain certification from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation that the discharge will comply with the Clean Water Act, the Alaska Water Quality Standards, and other applicable State laws. By agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Environmental Conservation, application for a Department of the Army permit to discharge dredged or fill material into navigable waters under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act also may serve as application for State Water Quality Certification.

Notice is hereby given that the application for a Department of the Army Permit described in the Corps of Engineers' Public Notice No. POA-2006-1144, Chiniak Bay, serves as application for State Water Quality Certification from the Department of Environmental Conservation.

After reviewing the application, the Department may certify there is reasonable assurance the activity, and any discharge that might result, will comply with the Clean Water Act, the Alaska Water Quality Standards, and other applicable State laws. The Department also may deny or waive certification.

Any person desiring to comment on the project, with respect to Water Quality Certification, may submit written comments to the address above by the expiration date of the Corps of Engineer's Public Notice.