

**Federal Emergency Management Agency
Finding of No Significant Impact
Proposed Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Marine Fire Station #40 Dock
Jacksonville Port Authority, Duval County, FL
Port Security Grant Program: 2008-GB-T8-K019**

BACKGROUND

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Part 10.9, Environmental Considerations; FEMA prepared a Tiered, Site-Specific Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the above proposed project, per Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented per the President's Council on Environmental Quality regulations (CEQ; 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The Jacksonville Port Authority (JPA) applied for fiscal year 2008 project funding assistance from the Department of Homeland Security's FEMA Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) on behalf of the Jacksonville Fire Rescue Department (JFRD). The project purpose is to improve the City of Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department's (JFRD) marine fire protection services for all navigable waterways within Duval County, and particularly at the Saint John's River mouth. JFRD received fiscal year 2006 PSGP funding to purchase a 70-foot emergency response vessel that will use the facility. Additionally, in 2010 JFRD was awarded FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding (1679 DR FL 16R) to elevate and harden the land based fire station that will be built as part of the new marine fire and rescue facility.

This SEA was tiered from and incorporates by reference a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Grant Programs Directorate projects and its "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI) issued in July 2010. FEMA found the PEA addressed all environmental compliance concerns except Executive Order (EO) 11988, Floodplain Management, as implemented per 44 CFR Part 9. Since the proposed dock facility would be in a regulated floodplain, the SEA provides additional analysis on project floodplain effects and informed FEMA's decision on whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a site-specific FONSI.

Two project alternatives were evaluated in the SEA: 1) the No Action Alternative; and 2) the Proposed Action - construction of a new marine rescue dock facility. The Proposed Action herein is consistent with PEA Alternative 2: New Construction. Under the No Action Alternative, JFRD would continue to provide marine emergency response services from two existing facilities. The land-based infrastructure for the new marine fire rescue facility would be built, including the fire station. Emergency response capabilities would continue to be limited by the existing dock infrastructure and potentially result in longer marine response times.

The Proposed Action includes construction of a new dock at the new marine fire rescue facility. The new facility is located along the Saint John's River at 9350 Hecksher Drive in Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida. The proposed project site is a 1.5-acre vacant lot, surrounded by low density residential areas. The Proposed Action includes building a 200-foot long steel and concrete fixed pier, with the deck at 8 feet (NAVD) (the 100-year base flood elevation). Work also includes a fixed dock slip with a boat lift for a 52-foot boat under a steel canopy boat house, two fixed finger dock slips with boat lifts for 27-foot boats under a steel canopy, and one fixed finger dock slip for a 27-foot boat (see Appendix B, site design). The dock infrastructure is designed to meet coastal construction standards, to withstand Category III Hurricane storm surge and wind forces (150 MPH wind and 1.15 importance factor).

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FINDINGS

Consistent with the PEA, the Proposed Action as described in the PSGP grant materials would not significantly adversely impact physical, water, biological, cultural, socioeconomic resources or public safety. FEMA completed the EO 11988 8-step decision-making process per 44 CFR Part 9 to evaluate floodplain effects. Because fire stations are deemed "critical facilities", the Proposed Action was evaluated relative to a 500-year floodplain. Implementing the Proposed Action with design and permit conditions, is expected to avoid or minimize adverse effects on or from the floodplain, thus the draft SEA did not identify any significant adverse floodplain impacts. Also, the Proposed Action would benefit public health and safety in Duval County. The draft SEA was made available for public review on December 16, 2011. FEMA did not receive any substantive adverse comments on the Draft SEA during the 21-day comment period.

The Proposed Action is selected because it will complement the capabilities of the new land-based fire station and the overall facility will improve emergency response capabilities within the service area.

CONDITIONS

Before and during project implementation, JFRD will comply with the following project-specific conditions or adverse impact mitigations measures, in addition to general conditions/mitigation measures outlined in the above referenced PEA (attached):

- Dock facilities must be built per the proposed design (scope of work, materials, methods, etc.), meeting coastal construction standards, to minimize potential flood damage.
- The City must fully comply with all the terms and conditions of its USACE and SJRWMD permits, incorporated by reference.
- Dock installation should be done during non-flood season, as determined by the City floodplain administrator.
- If human remains or intact archaeological deposits are found, work near the "discovery" will stop immediately, and all reasonable measures will be taken to avoid or minimize harm to the "finds". The Applicant will ensure that archaeological discoveries are secured in place, that access to the sensitive area is appropriately restricted, and that all reasonable measures are taken to avoid further disturbance of the "discoveries". The Applicant's contractor will immediately notify the Applicant of such discoveries. The Applicant will notify FEMA within 24 hours of the discovery. Work near the discovery may not resume until after FEMA has satisfactorily completed consultation with SHPO, Tribes, and other consulting parties as needed.

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CONCLUSIONS

Based on findings of the SEA, public involvement, and adherence to the project conditions set forth in this FONSI, FEMA has determined that the Proposed Action qualifies as a major Federal action that would not significantly adversely affect the quality of the natural and human environment, including floodplains, and it does not have the potential for significant adverse cumulative effects. As a result of this FONSI, FEMA will not prepare an EIS (44 CFR Part 10.9) and the Proposed Action as described in the attached SEA may proceed.

APPROVAL



William R. Straw, Ph.D.

Regional Environmental Officer

Date 01/06/12