

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) FOR THE ROTARY WING TESTING AND  
EVALUATION HANGAR REPLACEMENT AT NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER (MILCON  
P131)

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)'s regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508) implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 5090.1D, the Department of the Navy (Navy) gives notice that an environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared and an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required for the Navy's replacement of the Rotary Wing Test and Evaluation Hangar at Naval Air Station (NAS) Patuxent River, Maryland.

**Proposed Action:** This EA evaluates the potential environmental impacts associated with the Navy's proposal to construct a new hangar facility (measuring approximately 128,525 square feet [ft<sup>2</sup>]) to support operations currently conducted in Hangar 111 at NAS Patuxent River. The proposed hangar would support Navy and Marine Corps aircraft and would accommodate approximately 241 personnel in offices, 246 aircraft maintenance personnel, and 15 rotary-wing aircraft. This project also includes the demolition of up to 12 existing facilities measuring an approximated total of 5,150 ft<sup>2</sup> within the Flight Test/Tactical Test/NAS Operations Historic District. Of these, 10 would be permanently demolished (measuring an approximated total of 4,900 ft<sup>2</sup>), and 2 buildings (measuring an approximated total 250 ft<sup>2</sup>) would be demolished and replaced by construction elsewhere on the installation as part of a separate MILCON action. Hangar 111 and Building 111A are contributing resources to the Flight Test/Tactical Test/NAS Operations Historic District; the proposed hangar would be constructed within this district.

Alternative 1 (Construction of Proposed Hangar and Supporting Facilities; Preferred Alternative): Under Alternative 1, the Navy would construct a low-rise hangar complex along Cedar Point Road near Hangars 109 and 101. The new facility would include hangar bays, an apron connecting to the taxiway, maintenance shops, crew spaces, storage areas, and office and laboratory space. To facilitate the proposed construction, the Navy would demolish 12 non-historic buildings (measuring an approximated total of 5,150 ft<sup>2</sup>), a parking lot, and a baseball field from the flight line within proposed Project Area. The demolition of these facilities would consolidate and remove excess infrastructure. Further, because the structures to be demolished are located on the flight line, it is likely that these areas would be paved and used as the new hangar's aircraft apron. The functions served in two of the demolished buildings would ultimately be relocated by means of separate actions to other spaces deemed adequate to meet the Navy's existing and future needs.

Alternative 2 (Renovation of Hangar 111 and Addition of Movable Structures): Under Alternative 2, the Navy would renovate Hangar 111 and Building 111A to comply with safety and utilities upgrade requirements and would incorporate the Secretary of the Interior's standards for historic buildings. Additionally, to ensure provision of adequate office and laboratory spaces, movable structures (i.e., portable trailers) would be assembled in proximity to Hangar 111. With these improvements, the Navy's goal to support existing research, development, testing and evaluation (RDT&E) activities would be

met. However, the movable structures would occupy space along the already restricted apron, potentially further constraining the area used for aircraft storage and aircraft maneuverability.

**Purpose and Need:** The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide adequate and properly configured RDT&E hangar space for the development and testing of Navy and Marine Corps rotary-wing and tilt-rotor aircraft and aircraft systems supporting Undersea Warfare, Surface Warfare, Combat Search and Rescue, Naval Special Warfare, Airborne Mine Countermeasures, Logistics, Maritime Supremacy, and Vertical Assault.

The proposed hangar is needed because the existing hangar facility is not configured in a way to meet mission requirements that would support RDT&E actions using modern aircraft. Specific deficiencies of the existing hangar include its lack of hangar and apron space to accommodate safe taxi of incoming and outgoing aircraft, reduced efficiency in use of manpower because more personnel are required for repositioning aircraft into and out of the facility, increased expense and labor to perform basic maintenance and repairs, increased requirement for repairs resulting from accidental aircraft collisions during repositioning, inadequate office and laboratory spaces resulting in geographically dispersed support personnel across the installation, and lack of storage space resulting in the requirement to store and transport equipment at other locations on the installation. The deficiencies in Hangar 111 make it difficult for HX-21 to meet its mission requirements and also result in safety concerns.

**No Action Alternative:** CEQ regulations advocate the inclusion of a No Action Alternative against which potential impacts can be compared. Although the No Action Alternative would not satisfy the purpose of or need for the Proposed Action, it was analyzed in accordance with CEQ regulations.

Under the No Action Alternative, NAS Patuxent River would continue to use Hangar 111, Building 111A, and their support structures as the center for HX-21 Command Staff for the Navy and Marine Corps aircraft. A new hangar facility would not be constructed. The building configuration of Hangar 111 requires additional labor hours for tasks such as moving aircraft and making repairs. As a result, the inefficiencies and operational disadvantages of Hangar 111 make it difficult for HX-21 to meet its mission requirements. Consequently, HX-21 would continue to be unable to meet its responsibilities adequately with respect to the Navy and Marine Corps rotary-wing and tilt-rotor RDT&E mission needs.

**Environmental Effects of the Proposed Action:** The following environmental resources, which could be impacted by the Proposed Action, were analyzed in this EA: land use and airspace, traffic and transportation, infrastructure and utilities, air quality, noise, coastal zone management, geology, biological resources, water resources, cultural resources, hazardous materials and wastes, socioeconomics and environmental justice, and human health and safety.

Environmental impacts resulting from the proposed hangar would be primarily dependent on the alternative selected; however, impacts under either alternative would not be considered significant. Environmental impacts would generally be greater for Alternative 1 than for Alternative 2 due to the additional building demolition and vegetation removal required under Alternative 1. The environmental impacts of the Proposed Action are

summarized as follows for each resource area analyzed. Impacts from each alternative are similar unless otherwise noted.

Noise. Temporary, non-significant noise impacts would be expected during construction.

Air Quality. Temporary impacts from construction and operations emissions would be expected but would not be considered significant.

Land Use and Airspace. No significant impacts on land use would be expected. The proposed uses would be more compatible with the surrounding land use; a change in categorization would not be required.

Human Health and Safety. No significant impacts on human health and safety would result from the Proposed Action.

Coastal Zone Management. Additional impervious surfaces would result in increased stormwater runoff; however, all activities would be conducted in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies regarding protection of coastal zone resources. No significant impacts would be expected.

Geology. Non-significant impacts would result from soil disturbance and compaction related to construction and demolition.

Biological Resources. Under Alternative 1, no significant impacts on biological resources would be expected. The project would adhere to state guidelines for environmental site design and sediment/erosion control to minimize potential impacts. Wildlife would flee from proposed construction and demolition activities due to noise; however this would be a minor impact and wildlife would relocate to adjacent or nearby suitable habitat. No impacts on Federal or state-listed threatened or endangered species would be expected. There would be no anticipated impacts on migratory bird populations.

Under Alternative 2, Renovation activities would not be expected to result in vegetation or habitat degradation. Movable structures would be established on a previously paved area and would not require new construction. Noise events associated with renovation activities would result in wildlife temporarily fleeing the area. No impacts on Federal or state-listed threatened or endangered species or migratory bird populations would be expected.

Water Resources. Non-significant impacts on water resources would be expected. Best management practices established in the installation Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan would be implemented to reduce impacts from increased stormwater runoff and on groundwater recharge. Environmental Site Design would be used to maintain predevelopment runoff characteristics. No impacts on wetlands or floodplains would be expected.

Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice. Impacts expected from the Proposed Action would not be significant. Increases in local taxes and sales receipts could stimulate the local economy. Demand for housing and labor would not be outstripped. Minority, low-income, and child populations would not be disproportionately impacted.

Utilities, Infrastructure and Transportation. Under Alternative 1, no significant impacts on utilities, infrastructure, and transportation would be expected. A temporary increase in demand for electricity, water, and solid waste management would be related to construction and demolition activities. New electric lines, water and plumbing lines, natural gas lines, sanitary sewer and wastewater lines, and stormwater infrastructure would be installed and tied to existing systems for the proposed facilities. This new infrastructure would be more efficient than the existing infrastructure associated with Hangar 111. Additionally, non-significant short-term impacts on installation traffic from the permanent removal of a portion of Cedar Point Road would be expected. To accommodate the required volume of traffic through the area, the project would reroute traffic onto Sauflay Road around the new facility to reconnect with Cedar Point Road. Therefore, no long-term impacts on installation traffic would be expected.

Under Alternative 2, renovation activities could raise the installation figure of merit rating of the buildings and would include upgrades to electrical, water, natural gas, sanitary sewer, and wastewater lines to meet current standards within the historical structure. However these impacts would not be significant. Under Alternative 2, no impacts on roadways or traffic levels of service would be expected during the proposed renovations. Minor, adverse impacts would continue from the lack of available parking areas near Hangar 111.

Hazardous Materials and Wastes. Under Alternative 1, non-significant impacts would be expected from minor amounts of hazardous materials and wastes used or generated during construction and demolition.

Under Alternative 2, impacts would be similar to but less than those described for Alternative 1 because no buildings would be demolished under this alternative.

Cultural Resources. No adverse effects on cultural resources would occur from implementing the Proposed Action. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation concurred with this determination on April 5, 2017. The Navy assumed Maryland Historic Trust State Historic Preservation Office concurrence on April 12, 2017.

Cumulative Impacts. No significant cumulative impacts would be expected from the Proposed Action when considered in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions at or near NAS Patuxent River.

**Finding:** Although implementation of either Alternative 1 or Alternative 2 would result in temporary and long-term, direct, and indirect impacts on some environmental resources, these impacts would not be significant. Therefore, it is determined that the analyses in this EA support a FONSI. Accordingly, the requirements of the NEPA (42 United States Code 4321 et seq.), the CEQ regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and the Navy's NEPA implementing regulations (32 CFR Part 775) and other Navy NEPA guidance, have been fulfilled, and preparation of an EIS will not be necessary.

The EA addressing this action is on file and interested parties may obtain a copy from: Mr. Adrian Dascalu,

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Washington

