

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

NOTICE: 00WFF-01

National Environmental Policy Act; Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration

ACTION: Tree Clearing Activities at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility (NASA GSFC's WFF), Wallops Island, Virginia

SUMMARY: NASA proposes to clear trees which, either currently or potentially, obstruct program activities at WFF. Tree clearing activities will improve both operational and safety conditions. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.); the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); NASA policy and procedures (14 CFR Part 1216, Subpart 1216.3); and the Environmental Assessment (EA) for Tree Clearing Activities at WFF (WFF-99-001-RPT), NASA has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to the proposed tree clearing activities at the GSFC's WFF, Wallops Island, Virginia. Based on the analyses and evaluations in the EA, it is concluded that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

DATE: Upon publication of this FONSI, NASA will proceed immediately to implement the proposed action.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL:

Mr. A. V. Diaz
Director of Goddard Space Flight Center

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

NASA reviewed the EA prepared for the tree clearing activities at WFF. It was concluded that this EA represents an accurate and adequate analysis of the scope and level of associated environmental impacts. NASA hereby incorporates the EA by reference in this FONSI. The EA reviewed applicable environmental statutes and regulations for the proposed action and concluded that NASA's tree clearing activities at WFF are in complete compliance.

The EA identifies potential impacts on humans or the environment that may occur during implementation of the proposed actions:

1. Exposure of mineral soils, creating erosion hazard.
2. Pollution of nearby surface water by eroding soil.
3. Impact to wetlands.
4. De Minimis increase in electromagnetic radiation and generation.
5. Disruption of the nesting area of threatened or endangered birds.
6. Disruption of wildlife habitat and native flora.
7. Production of noise.
8. Objection of local residents or employees.

No other issues of potential environmental concern have been identified by NASA.

Alternatives to the proposed action include limitations or modifications to avoid intruding trees, program relocation, and no action. All the alternatives reduce the effectiveness of the programs to unacceptable levels.

Based on the EA for the tree clearing activities at WFF, and review of underlying reference documents, NASA has determined that the environmental impacts associated with the proposed action will not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an EIS is not required.

NASA has received public and agency review and comment on the environmental impacts of the proposed action through:

1. A notice of availability of the draft EA concerning tree clearing activities at WFF was published in the Eastern Shore News on October 13, 1999;
2. Consultations with local, state, and federal agencies; and
3. Direct mailing of the draft EA to interested parties. Any environmental concerns raised during the 30-day public comment on the draft EA were assessed.

A. V. Diaz
Director
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