

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
DISPOSAL OF AIR FORCE PROPERTY
GALENA AIRPORT, ALASKA**

The attached environmental assessment (EA) analyzes the potential for impacts to the environment as a result of the disposal of Air Force property at Galena Airport, Alaska. The EA was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [U.S.C.] 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500-1580, and Air Force policy and procedures (32 CFR Part 989).

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) summarizes the Proposed Action and alternatives and the results of the evaluation of the demolition of Air Force facilities at Galena airport.

Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

The Proposed Action would include the demolition of more than 50 Air Force structures at Galena Airport over a 2-year period. Some Air Force facilities would not be demolished because they are considered vital to continued operation of the Galena Airport. These facilities would be turned over to the operators of the airport. The Air Force leased property at Galena Airport is approximately 73 acres in size; most of this area would be disturbed during demolition activities. After demolition activities are complete, the area would be reseeded with grasses. All demolition activities would be completed in 2008.

Under the Conveyance Alternative, the Air Force would terminate their lease with the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT & PF) and convey the Air Force facilities to interested Federal, State, and local agencies and groups.

Under the No-Action Alternative the Air Force would retain their lease with the State of Alaska DOT & PF and maintain the Air Force facilities in caretaker status.

Summary of Environmental Consequences

Initial analyses indicated that the Proposed Action or alternatives would not result in either short- or long-term impacts to the following resources: transportation, aesthetics, pesticide usage, radon, medical/biohazardous waste, ordnance, radioactive materials, and noise.

The resources analyzed in more detail are socioeconomics, environmental justice, land use, utilities, hazardous materials management, hazardous waste management, Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) sites, storage tanks, asbestos-containing material (ACM), lead-based paint, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), geology and soils, water resources, air quality, biological resources, and cultural resources.

Closure of the installation would result in approximately 40 Air Force caretaker employee positions being eliminated. It is assumed that most of these employees would relocate from the Galena area and would not contribute to a significant increase in the unemployment rate of Galena. The anticipated reduction in on-site employment would not result in effects to the natural or physical environment.

Activities associated with the disposal of Air Force facilities at Galena Airport would not have a significant impact on any of the resources analyzed in the attached EA. As a result, no disproportionately high and adverse impacts to minority, low-income, or child populations would be expected.

Demolition of Air Force facilities would result in an increase in open space among the facilities that are retained for airport use.

The power plant would be removed; however, the electrical distribution system would remain in place to allow continued electrical service to retained facilities. Other utility infrastructure (i.e., water, sewer, and steam heating) would be demolished. Because these systems would be demolished, the facilities that would be retained would be required to install appropriate heating systems, make arrangements for water service, and treatment of sewage (i.e., installation of septic tanks and leach fields).

Building demolition activities would generate approximately 150,000 cubic yards of solid waste, including wood, drywall, cardboard, metals, concrete, and roofing material. Some building materials would likely be recycled/reused by local residents. Demolition debris that is not recycled would be disposed in an expanded Air Force landfill at former Campion Air Force Station (AFS) or the city of Galena landfill. Buildings with the potential to contain ACM and/or lead-based paint would be sampled prior to demolition activities to ensure proper disposal and abatement of these materials.

Storage, handling, and transportation of hazardous materials and hazardous waste would be conducted in accordance with applicable regulations and established procedures. Minimal quantities of hazardous materials and waste would be stored or generated by the demolition contractor. Any spills or releases of hazardous materials/waste would be cleaned up by the demolition contractor.

Disposal and or use of some Galena properties may be delayed or limited by the extent and type of contamination at ERP sites and by current and future ERP remediation activities. Based on the results of ERP investigations, the Air Force may, where appropriate, place limits on property use. These sites will remain the responsibility of the Air Force until regulator concurrence on no further action decisions have been obtained. The Air Force would retain rights-of-access to the sites to inspect monitoring wells or conduct other remedial activities, as necessary.

Storage tanks and oil/water separators associated with Air Force facilities at Galena Airport would be removed. Any investigations or remedial actions at these tank locations would remain the responsibility of the Air Force. Underground fuel lines from the barge unloading area would be closed in place.

ACM and lead-based paint would likely be encountered during demolition activities. Demolition activities would be subject to applicable federal, state, and local regulations to minimize the potential risk to human health and the environment. ACM and lead-based paint waste generated as a result of demolition activities would be disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations.

Transformers containing oil with concentrations of PCBs less than 50 parts per million and light ballasts of older light fixtures containing PCBs may be present at Air Force facilities at Galena Airport. The demolition contractor would be notified of the potential presence of PCBs in transformers and light ballasts and would be responsible for managing any items containing PCBs, including maintenance, removal, and disposal, in accordance with applicable regulations.

Short-term erosion impacts could occur to soils and water resources as a result of ground disturbance associated with demolition activities. Potential impacts would be minimized by implementing standard construction best management practices (BMPs) such as using protective cover, implementing storm water diversions, and limiting the area and period of time that barren ground is left exposed.

Air emissions from demolition activities would not adversely affect the regional air quality. BMPs would be implemented such as watering exposed surfaces to keep them moist at all times and watering haul roads to reduce dust and particulate emissions.

Non-native vegetation would be disturbed during demolition activities. Impacts to such highly disturbed, human-created habitats are considered to be insignificant. Most of the species known to inhabit the area are common and/or disturbance tolerant. Potential impacts to wildlife include displacement of individuals to adjacent areas and direct mortality to burrowing species (e.g., mice and rats) or individuals that are less mobile. These impacts to common wildlife species are not expected to be significant. If nesting swallows are present, the demolition date should be adjusted until after the chicks have fledged. There are no federal- or state-listed plant or animal species known to inhabit the project study area. The area

around Galena Airport is not designated as critical habitat for any federal or state species of special concern.

It is not expected that ground-disturbing activities would impact subsurface archaeological resources because the entire installation is built on 4 to 20 feet of imported fill. In the unlikely event that archaeological resources are encountered during demolition, the contractor would suspend work in the immediate area and report the discovery to the installation cultural resources manager. The installation cultural resources manager would then notify the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to determine if additional investigation is required.

Twelve buildings identified as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) properties are present at Galena Airport. Consultation has been initiated with the Alaska SHPO regarding potential adverse effects of demolishing or conveying Air Force facilities at Galena Airport that have been determined eligible for listing on the National Register. Appropriate measures as agreed to with the Alaska SHPO would be implemented prior to conducting demolition activities or conveying the facilities.

Cumulative Impacts

Other future actions in the region were evaluated to determine whether cumulative environmental impacts could result due to the implementation of Air Force property disposal actions in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions. Other actions that would occur in the region include the Air Force's continued remediation/monitoring of ERP sites at Galena Airport and the potential expansion of the Campion AFS landfill, to hold an additional 150,000 cubic yards of debris from demolition of Air Force facilities at Galena Airport. Neither of these activities are anticipated to result in cumulative impacts when added to potential impacts of proposed Air Force disposal activities.

Mitigations

The Air Force may, where appropriate, place limits on property use where ERP investigations/remediation is ongoing. The Air Force would retain rights-of-access to ERP sites to inspect monitoring wells or conduct other remedial activities, as necessary. Appropriate construction BMPs would be implemented to avoid potential impacts associated with erosion and air quality. Appropriate measures as agreed to with the Alaska SHPO would be implemented prior to demolishing facilities that are eligible for listing on the National Register.

Decision

As a result of the analysis of impacts in the EA, it was concluded that, with the incorporation of appropriate construction practices identified in the EA and referenced in this FONSI, the proposed activities would not have a significant effect on human health or the natural environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.



Major Timothy Imdike
Environmental Flight Commander, 611 CES/CEV

11 APR 07
Date

Attch: Environmental Assessment