

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/
FINDING OF NO PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE (FONPA)
DEMOLITION OF AIR FORCE PLANT 59, Johnson City, New York**

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S. Code [USC] 4321 et seq.), and pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's *Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act* (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508, as of July 1986), and Air Force regulations for the Environmental Impact Analysis Process (32 CFR 989), AFLCMC/WNVC has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives for demolishing Air Force Plant (AFP) 59 located along Main Street/New York State (NYS) Route 17C in Johnson City, New York. This EA is incorporated by reference into this finding.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The United States Air Force (USAF) proposes to demolish AFP 59 and continue a previously initiated transfer to the Broome County Industrial Development Agency (BCIDA) pursuant to a contract for deed/lease based on special legislation, to be used for economic development. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to remove unnecessary liability and management costs for the unused and degraded AFP 59, which was previously declared excess to USAF ownership.

There are two alternatives for this Proposed Action: one Alternative Action and the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action would include demolition of AFP 59 and the area would be restored to a natural vegetated habitat. Ownership of the land would then be transferred from the USAF to the BCIDA for reuse. The Alternative Action would rehabilitate flood damaged buildings at AFP 59, restoring them to continued use. Under the No Action Alternative, the USAF would not demolish AFP 59, restore the land to a natural vegetated habitat, or transfer ownership of the land to BCIDA for reuse.

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Noise: The noise from demolition equipment would be localized, short term, and intermittent during machinery operations. Populations potentially affected by increased noise levels from demolition activities under the Proposed Action would generally include residential communities located to the west, north, and east of the installation. Noise impacts on demolition workers would be in compliance with applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards. Short-term, direct, minor, adverse impacts on the ambient noise environment would be anticipated as a result of the increase in demolition vehicle traffic under the Proposed Action.

Air Quality: Short-term, minor, adverse effects followed by long-term beneficial effects on local air quality would result from implementation of the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action would only generate air pollutant emissions during demolition activities such as grading and filling, and the operation of demolition equipment and generators. Demolition activities would also generate particulate emissions as fugitive dust from ground-disturbing activities and from

the combustion of fuels in demolition equipment. Demolition activities would incorporate best management practices (BMPs) and control measures to minimize fugitive particulate matter emissions. The Urbemis 2007 model was used to estimate air emissions from the expected demolition and construction activities. It was assumed that the project would occur during a one year period in 2014 in two phases, demolition and fine grading. No long-term effects on air quality would result from the Proposed Action.

Land Use and Recreation: Implementation of the Proposed Action would not be expected to have adverse impacts on land use. All demolition activities under the Proposed Action would occur within the boundaries of AFP 59. The Proposed Action would not introduce incompatible land uses at the installation. The Proposed Action would not preclude the viability of continued land uses or occupation of any areas adjacent to the demolition work sites. Ownership of the land would be transferred to BCIDA after demolition activities have ceased.

Geological Resources: Short-term adverse impacts on soils would be expected as a result of the Proposed Action from demolition work consisting of clearing of vegetation, grading, and recontouring. Erosion-and-sediment-control plans would be developed and implemented both during and following site development to contain soil and runoff onsite, and would reduce potential for adverse impacts associated with erosion and sedimentation and transport of sediments in runoff.

Soil productivity would temporarily decline in disturbed areas and would increase in areas where impervious surfaces would be removed and restored back to a natural vegetated habitat. The reduction in impervious surfaces would provide more surface area for stormwater infiltration into the ground and would, thereby, permanently decrease sheet flow runoff into adjacent water bodies. This would minimize the potential for erosion and sediment production as a result of future storm events.

Water Resources: Water resources on AFP 59 are generally limited, but include the 100-year floodplain. The Little Choconut Creek is located to the east and south of the installation and flows adjacent to the boundary of the land. In general, the Proposed Action would not result in any adverse impacts to water resources. As a result of the removal of impervious surfaces and restoring those areas to a natural vegetated habitat, it is expected that the project would have a permanent net benefit on water resources by improving water quality. BMPs installed during the demolition activities of the Proposed Action would ensure that water resources within and in proximity to the installation would not be compromised as a result of storm water runoff.

Coastal Zone Management: There are no Coastal Zone Management areas within proximity to AFP 59. As a result, implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in any impacts to those resources areas.

Biological Resources

Vegetation: Short-term, negligible, adverse impacts on landscaping vegetation would be expected from land-clearing activities under the Proposed Action. A negligible amount of landscaping vegetation and maintained grass would be required to be removed or would be damaged during demolition activities. Temporary staging areas for construction machinery and

temporary parking areas for demolition vehicles would be used during the Proposed Action. It is not anticipated that the Proposed Action would require the removal of trees from or adjacent to the project areas. However, minimal trimming of shrubs or trees could be required prior to commencement of demolition activities to provide space for vehicles in the demolition areas.

Wildlife: Short-term, negligible, adverse impacts on wildlife due to disturbances from noise, demolition activities, and heavy equipment use would be expected from the Proposed Action. The areas of disturbance would be relatively small, and demolition projects would be phased over a 12–24 month period; therefore, the Proposed Action would only be expected to disturb individuals rather than populations. Most wildlife species near the project areas would be expected to recover once the construction noise and disturbances have ceased for the day or project period, as these are existing disturbed habitats that experience ongoing human activity. No permanent adverse impacts on wildlife would be expected as a result of the Proposed Action.

Threatened and Endangered Species: There are no federally- or state-listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitats located within or in proximity to AFP 59. As such, implementation of the Proposed Action would not have any adverse impacts on those species.

Wetlands: No impacts on wetlands would occur from the implementation of the Proposed Action because no wetlands occur within the project area. Wetlands located adjacent to the project site would be protected from impact through the implementation of BMPs.

Human Health and Safety: Short-term, minor, adverse impacts on construction contractor safety would be expected during demolition activities; however, long-term beneficial impacts to the health and safety of the adjacent community would occur after construction activities have ceased. Implementing the Proposed Action would slightly increase the short-term risk associated with demolition contractors performing work at the project site during the normal workday because the level of such activity would increase. Contractors would be required to establish and maintain safety programs for their employees. The removal of hazardous materials from AFP 59 would result in long-term, beneficial impacts by reducing exposure to the surrounding community.

Utilities and Infrastructure: Implementation of the Proposed Action is expected to have a net neutral impact on utilities and infrastructure. AFP 59 was historically serviced by electrical, sewer, water, and communications utilities; however, all of those utilities have since been turned off and decommissioned. The outer loop of the fire suppression system is the only portion of the onsite utilities that is still operational at the installation. As a result of the Proposed Action, electrical, sewer, communications, water, and the fire suppression utilities would be removed entirely from the site.

Hazardous Materials and Wastes: Short-term, moderate adverse impacts are expected from during the removal of hazardous materials during demolition. Studies have identified Polychlorinated biphenyls, asbestos, lead-based paint, and mold at AFP 59, as well as contaminated soils which would be excavated and disposed of as part of the Proposed Action. Removing the hazardous material from the site will result in a permanent, net beneficial impact. Hazardous wastes and contaminated materials would be handled under the existing U.S.

Department of Defense (DoD) Resource Conservation and Recovery Act compliant waste management programs. The contractor selected for transporting hazardous wastes offsite to a permitted disposal area would be required to demonstrate that they have properly secured all hazardous wastes and obtain the necessary permits.

Socioeconomic Resources and Environmental Justice: Implementation of the Proposed Action is not expected to result in any adverse impacts to socioeconomic resources or environmental justice of the community. After the flooding that occurred in 2011, the workers employed at AFP 59 were relocated to a permanent location in nearby Endicott, New York, beneficially re-using the old IBM-Endicott plant. Therefore, the workforce has maintained residence and employment within the community. Short-term, minor, beneficial impacts to employment would be realized as a result of the Proposed Action from the creation of temporary demolition jobs. There are no Environmental Justice Zone areas within proximity to AFP 59. Demolition of AFP 59 would not disproportionately affect minority populations or children.

Cultural Resources: As a result of the Proposed Action, Building 2, a National Register-eligible structure, would be demolished. The New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has stated that Building 2 is not suitable for rehabilitation and that demolition of the installation is acceptable as long as a suitable Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which outlines procedures that would be taken to document the historic characteristics of the building are taken. USAF and SHPO have tentatively agreed to the terms and condition of an MOA. The USAF is in the process of finalizing the MOA, including coordination with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), as required by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The USAF will implement the provisions of the MOA prior to demolition of AFP 59.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

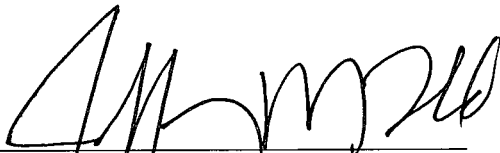
A copy of the draft EA and FONSI/FONPA were available for review and comment from 14 August 2013 through 16 September 2013 at the Johnson City Library (107 Main Street, Johnson City, NY, telephone 607-797-4816). Comments provided by resource agencies are included in Appendix A.

FINDING OF NO PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE

Executive Order (EO) 11988 requires federal agencies to avoid to the extent possible the long and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains and to avoid direct and indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative. Due to AFP 59's current location within existing floodplain boundaries, the project cannot avoid directly impacting floodplains. The USAF finds that there are no practicable alternatives to demolition activities within floodplains for the Proposed Action. The USAF further finds that practicable measures have been taken to minimize harm to floodplains and the Proposed Action would result in a net beneficial impact to floodplains. As a result of the expected beneficial impact to floodplains, compensatory mitigation is not required.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

In accordance with the Council of Environmental Quality regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended and Environmental Impact Analysis Process, 32 CFR 989, the USAF concludes that the demolition of AFP 59 would have no significant impact on the quality of the natural or human environment; thus an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted.



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