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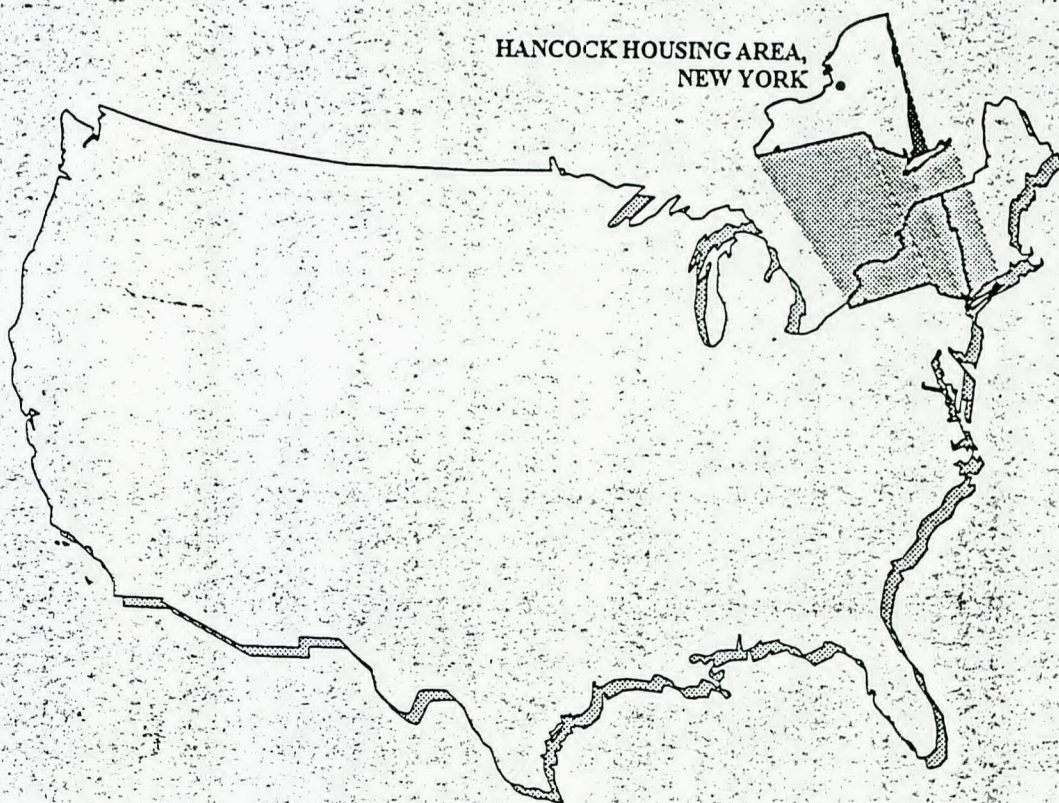






# DRAFT FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

JUNE 1996



DISPOSAL AND REUSE OF  
HANCOCK HOUSING AREA, NEW YORK





DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE

24 JUNE 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PUBLIC  
REFERENCE LIBRARIES

FROM: HQ AFCEE/ECA

3207 North Road

Brooks AFB TX 78235-5363

SUBJECT: Draft Final Environmental Assessment (DFEA) and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (DFONSI) for the Disposal and Reuse of Hancock Housing Area (HHA), Syracuse, NY

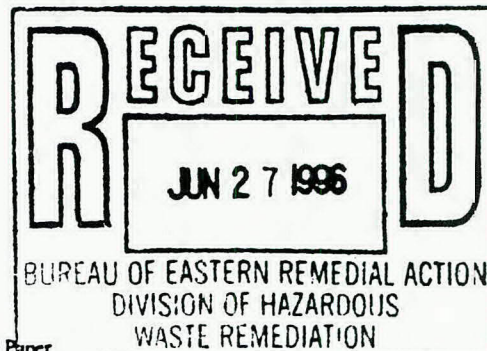
We are pleased to provide you the DFEA and DFONSI for the Disposal and Reuse of HHA, Syracuse, NY. This document is provided in compliance with the regulations of the President's Council on Environmental Quality.

In response to the Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure (Public Law 101-510, Title XXIX), Griffiss AFB in Rome, NY was realigned on September 30, 1995. At this same time, the HHA was vacated as residents were primarily those assigned to Griffiss AFB. This DFEA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act to analyze the potential environmental consequences of disposal of the HHA property.

There will be a 30-day review period to provide individuals and organizations an opportunity to comment on the DFEA and DFONSI. Please submit comments to the following address no later than July 30, 1996:

Mr. Jonathan D. Farthing,  
HQ AFCEE/ECA  
3207 North Road  
Brooks AFB, TX 78235-5363

We would appreciate the Onondaga County Public Library maintaining the attached copies of the DFEA and DFONSI for public review. Please also inform your personnel of its location in case interested citizens inquire about the documents.



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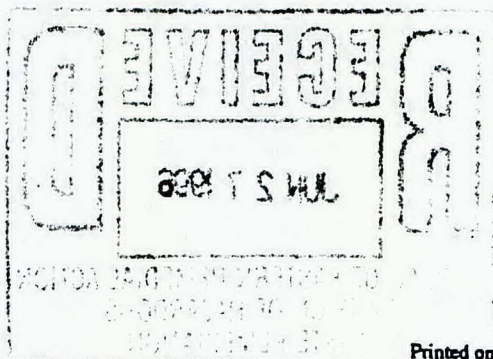
If additional information is needed, or you have any questions, please contact my Project Manager, Mr. Buddy Smith, at (210) 536-6658 or by Fax at (210) 536-3890.



JONATHAN D. FARTHING  
Chief, Environmental Analysis Division  
Environmental Conservation and Planning Directorate

2 Attachments:

1. Distribution List
2. DFEA and DFONSI



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**DRAFT****FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
DISPOSAL AND REUSE OF HANCOCK HOUSING AREA, NEW YORK**

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations on implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), Department of Defense (DOD) Directive 6050.1, and Air Force Instruction (AFI) 32-7061 (32 CFR 989), the U.S. Department of the Air Force has conducted an assessment of the potential environmental consequences of the disposal and reuse of Hancock Housing Area (HHA), New York. The Environmental Assessment (EA) considered all potential impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) summarizes the results of the evaluations of proposed transfer of HHA property to City of Syracuse and the Hancock Field Development Corporation (HFDC). The discussion focuses on activities which have the potential to change both the natural and human environments.

**Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives**

For the purpose of evaluating potential environmental impacts resulting from the disposal and reuse of HHA property, the Air Force has based its Proposed Action on plans developed by the City of Syracuse Department of Aviation and the HFDC.

With the Proposed Action, Parcel A (84.86 acres) of the HHA would be transferred to the City of Syracuse Department of Aviation and Parcel B (1.34 acres) would be transferred to HFDC. The housing structures on Parcel A would be demolished and no new development would occur on most of this parcel. Only the southern 16 acres of Parcel A would be used as the Runway Protection Zone for a new parallel runway (10L-28R) north of the existing east-west runway (10-28), and for a perimeter road. The facilities located on Parcel B would be demolished and Performance Drive would be extended southward to connect to Stewart Drive to provide better access within Hancock Airpark.

With the Alternative Action, the demolition of the structures on Parcel A and B and the construction of a new parallel runway would remain as described for the Proposed Action. In addition, development of high tech, light industrial area may occur on 69 acres of Parcel A sometime after 2011. The industrial development may include an air cargo facility with access to the new runway.

The No-Action Alternative would result in the U.S. Government retaining ownership to all HHA property (Parcels A and B). The property would be placed in caretaker status and would not be reused, with the possible exception of the southern 16 acres of Parcel A. This portion of Parcel A may still be used by the City of Syracuse Department of Aviation for new runway construction by acquiring an avigation easement on the property.

**Summary of Environmental Consequences**

Neither the Proposed Action nor the alternatives would generate any significant environmental impacts except on jurisdictional wetlands. With the Proposed Action, Parcel A of the HHA property would essentially remain undeveloped; only a portion of this parcel would be used as a Runway Protection Zone and for construction of the perimeter road. These reuse activities by the recipient of the property (City of Syracuse) would significantly affect some federal and state jurisdictional wetlands. The City



of Syracuse would be responsible for mitigating adverse impacts to wetlands. The City has already identified these impacts in an EIS prepared in March 1996 for the Land Acquisition and Construction of Runway 10L-28R at Syracuse Hancock International Airport. The city is currently in the process of negotiating adequate mitigation measures with the federal and state regulatory agencies. With the implementation of mutually agreed-upon mitigation measures, the wetlands impacts would also be reduced to non-significant levels. Parcel B would be transferred to HFDC. The proposed construction of a road through Parcel B to connect Performance Drive with Stewart Drive would also have no significant impacts on the natural and human environments.

With the Alternative Action, the possible reuse of Parcel A property for light industrial purposes would generate greater environmental impacts than those identified for the Proposed Action, but all impacts except those for wetlands would remain non-significant. Increased impacts on wetlands can either be avoided or mitigated to non-significant levels through adequate wetlands replacements as negotiated with the federal and state regulatory agencies.

The environmental impacts of the No-Action Alternative would be less than the impacts generated by either the Proposed Action or the Alternative Action. Again, impacts on environmental resources except the wetlands would not be significant. Wetlands impacts would be similar to those identified for the Proposed Action and the City of Syracuse is expected to take adequate mitigation measures which would minimize the impacts and reduce them to non-significant levels.

#### Decision

As a result of the analysis of impacts reported in the Environmental Assessment, it was concluded that implementation of the mutually agreed-upon mitigation measures between the City of Syracuse and federal and state regulatory agencies would reduce the significant impacts on wetlands to non-significant levels. Therefore, a determination has been made that disposal and reuse of the HHA property does not represent a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the environment and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (ESI) is not required.

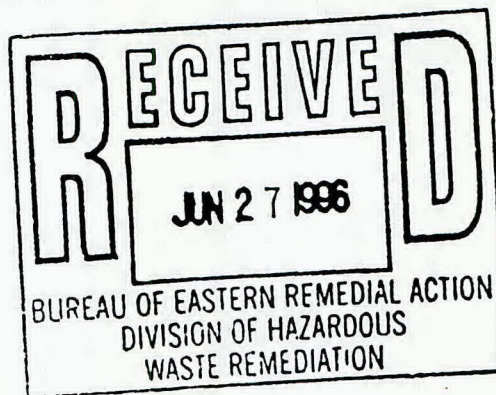
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Signed by

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Date





**DRAFT FINAL**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**DISPOSAL AND REUSE OF  
HANCOCK HOUSING AREA, NEW YORK**

**JUNE 1996**



## COVER SHEET

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR  
DISPOSAL AND REUSE OF HANCOCK HOUSING AREA, NEW YORK

- a. **Responsible Party:** Department of the Air Force.
- b. **Proposed Action:** Disposal and Reuse of Hancock Housing Area, New York.
- c. **Written comments and inquiries regarding this document should be directed to:** Mr. Jonathan D. Farthing, HQ AFCEE/ECA, 3207 North Road, Brooks AFB, TX 78235-5363 (210) 536-3787
- d. **Report Designation:** Environmental Assessment (EA).
- e. **Abstract:** As a result of the realignment of Griffiss AFB in September 1995, the U.S. Air Force plans to dispose of excess and surplus real property and facilities at the Hancock Housing Area (HHA), New York, which served as overflow housing mainly for military families stationed at Griffiss AFB. This EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act to analyze the potential environmental consequences of the disposal and reuse of the HHA property. Although disposal will have few, if any, direct effects, future use by others will create indirect effects. This EA, therefore, includes analysis of the potential impacts that reasonably foreseeable alternative reuses may have on the community setting, land use, transportation, utilities, hazardous substances, geology and soils, water resources, air quality, noise, biological resources, and cultural resources. Impacts are analyzed for the Proposed Action, an Alternative Action, and the No-Action Alternative. With the Proposed Action, most of the HHA property (84.86 acres of the total 86.2 acres) would be transferred to the City of Syracuse Department of Aviation; the remaining 1.34 acres would be transferred to Hancock Field Development Corporation (HFDC). The housing structures and the two support buildings would be demolished and no new development would occur on a major portion of the property. Approximately 16 acres of the property transferred to the City of Syracuse would be utilized as a Runway Protection Zone and for the construction of a perimeter road. The property transferred to HFDC would be used for the construction of a road to provide better access within Hancock Airpark, a development of HFDC. The Alternative Action would allow development of light industrial and commercial uses of the parcel left vacant under the Proposed Action. The No Action Alternative would result in the U.S. Government retaining ownership of all HHA property, but allowing use of 16 acres for the Runway Protection Zone and construction of a perimeter road under an aviation easement.

Potential environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action and the Alternative Action were determined to be not significant except for impacts on jurisdictional wetlands. The City of Syracuse, as the recipient of the HHA property, would have the responsibility to mitigate impacts to wetlands resulting from their proposed reuse (runway construction). The city has already identified these impacts in an EIS prepared in March 1996 and is in the process of negotiating adequate mitigation measures with the federal and state regulatory agencies. With the implementation of mitigation measures, impacts on wetlands would also be reduced to non-significant levels. Thus, the Air Force has determined that the disposal and reuse of HHA property would not have significant adverse impacts on the human and natural environment.



## SUMMARY

### PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

As a result of realignment of Griffiss Air Force Base (AFB) in 1995, the U.S. Air Force plans to dispose of excess and surplus real property and facilities at the Hancock Housing Area (HHA), New York, which, until September 1995, served as overflow housing mainly for military families stationed at Griffiss AFB. The U.S. Air Force is required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in the implementation of disposal and reuse of surplus property. This Environmental Assessment (EA) examines the potential impacts to the environment that may result from the disposal and reuse of HHA property.

### ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

For the purpose of evaluating potential environmental impacts resulting from the disposal and reuse of HHA property, the Air Force has based its Proposed Action on plans developed by the City of Syracuse Department of Aviation and the Hancock Field Development Corporation (HFDC).

With the Proposed Action, Parcel A (84.86 acres) of the HHA would be transferred to the City of Syracuse Department of Aviation and Parcel B (1.34 acres) would be transferred to HFDC (see Chapter 1.0, Figure 1-2). The housing structures on Parcel A would be demolished and no new development would occur on most of this parcel. The southern 16 acres of Parcel A would be used as the Runway Protection Zone for a new parallel runway (10L-28R) north of the existing east-west runway (10-28) and for a perimeter road. The facilities located on Parcel B would be demolished and Performance Drive would be extended southward to connect to Stewart Drive to provide better access within Hancock Airpark.

With the Alternative Action, the demolition of the structures on Parcels A and B and the construction of a new parallel runway north of the existing east-west runway would remain as described for the Proposed Action. In addition, development of a high tech, light industrial area may occur on 69 acres of Parcel A sometime after 2011. The industrial development may include an air cargo facility with access to the new runway.

The No-Action Alternative would result in the U.S. Government retaining ownership of all HHA property (Parcels A and B). The property would be placed in caretaker status and would not be reused, with the possible exception of the southern 16 acres of Parcel A. This portion of Parcel A may still be used by the City of Syracuse Department of Aviation for new runway construction by acquiring an aviation easement on the property.

Other possible alternatives, which included the reuse of existing housing units for residential purposes, were not considered in this EA because they were found to be incompatible with the proposed construction of a new runway at



Syracuse Hancock International Airport. With the reuse of housing units as residences, the city would have to resort to prohibitively costly mitigations to reduce noise impacts on newly occupied residences which currently lie vacant.

## SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This EA describes and addresses the potential environmental impacts that may result from the disposal and reuse of HHA. The objective of this EA is to provide decision-makers with the information and analysis necessary to determine whether to prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Consistent with Air Force Instruction (AFI) 32-7061 and Council on Environmental Quality regulations, the scope of this EA was defined by the potential range of environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the Proposed Action or one of its alternatives.

The following elements of the natural and human environments have been analyzed for the Proposed Action and alternatives; community setting, land use, transportation, utilities, hazardous substances, geology and soils, water resources, air quality, noise, biological resources, and cultural resources. These impacts may occur directly as a result of land transfer or indirectly as a result of reuse actions and changes in the surrounding region. The existing conditions in 1996 are the baseline against which the Proposed Action and alternatives are analyzed.

## SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

A summary comparison of the environmental impacts generated by the Proposed Action and alternatives is presented in Table S-1. Impacts to the environment, which are briefly described in the following paragraphs and Table S-1, are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.0 of this EA.

Neither the Proposed Action nor the alternatives would generate any significant environmental impacts except on jurisdictional wetlands. With the Proposed Action, Parcel A of the HHA property would essentially remain undeveloped as part of the Syracuse Hancock International Airport property. Only a portion of the HHA property would be used as Runway Protection Zone and for construction of a perimeter road. These reuse activities by the recipient of the property would significantly affect some federal and state jurisdictional wetlands. The City of Syracuse would be responsible for mitigating adverse wetland impacts. The city has already identified these impacts in an EIS prepared in March 1996 for the Land Acquisition and Construction of Runway 10L-28R, Syracuse Hancock International Airport. The city is in the process of negotiating adequate mitigation measures with the federal and state regulatory agencies. With the implementation of mutually agreed-upon mitigation measures, the wetland impacts would also be reduced to non-significant levels. Parcel B would be transferred to HFDC. The proposed construction of a road through Parcel B to connect Performance Drive with Stewart Drive would also have no direct significant environmental impacts. Some indirect impacts would be generated as a result of development of



Table S-1

**Summary of Environmental Impacts for the Proposed Action and Alternatives,  
Hancock Housing Area, New York**

Environmental Resources	Proposed Action	Alternative Action	No-Action Alternative
Community Setting	No change in employment or population would occur.	Employment may increase by 500-600 workers after 2011 if development occurs as proposed by HFDC. Impacts would not be significant in the Syracuse Metropolitan area.	A minimal caretaker force of 4 to 5 workers would work at the site and would not generate significant impacts.
Land Use	Proposed Action would be consistent with the Town of Cicero Zoning ordinance.	Development of industrial parcels would be consistent with the Town of Cicero Zoning ordinance.	Land would remain under military use. Town of Cicero would not exercise zoning controls.
Transportation	With land remaining undeveloped, no traffic impacts would occur.	Traffic increases would occur along East Taft Road and Northern Boulevard after the year 2011. Impacts not considered significant.	Traffic increase from caretaker activities would be negligible and not significant.
Utilities	With no new development, impacts on local utility systems would be negligible and not significant.	Development of 12 light industrial parcels after 2011 would not impact local utility systems significantly.	Caretaker activities would have negligible and not significant impacts on local utility systems.
Hazardous Substances	No hazardous materials except some pesticides and herbicides would be used. Impacts would be negligible and not significant.	New industrial development after 2011 may result in use of some hazardous substances. Property tenants are expected to comply with federal and state regulations. Impacts are not anticipated to be significant.	Caretaker activities would generate negligible and not significant impacts through use of minor amounts of paints, pesticides and herbicides.
Geology and Soils	Small amounts of soil erosion may occur on disturbed land from demolition of housing structures. Impact would be temporary and not significant.	Some soil erosion would occur during demolition and again during grading for new construction after 2011. Impacts would be temporary and not significant.	Caretaker activities would not result in soil erosion.
Water Resources	Demolition activity would temporarily cause minor sedimentation. Water quality would not be degraded. No impacts on groundwater would occur. Overall, impacts would not be significant.	Industrial development would result in some temporary sedimentation of surface water. Groundwater would not be impacted. Overall, impacts on water resources would not be significant.	Caretaker activities would not impact surface or groundwater quality.



Table S-1, Page 2 of 2

Environmental Resources	Proposed Action	Alternative Action	No-Action Alternative
Air Quality	Temporary and negligible increase in PM <sub>10</sub> emissions would occur from demolition activity. No violation of air quality standards would occur. Therefore, the impacts are considered to be not significant.	Industrial development would result in increased pollutant emissions, particularly from vehicular traffic. Impacts would be minor and not significant at the regional level.	Caretaker activities would result in negligible and not significant air quality impacts.
Noise	With no new development there would be no sources of noise on site and no impacts would occur. Construction of proposed runway (10L-28R) on Syracuse Hancock International Airport would place more than two thirds of HHA property under 65 dB noise contour. No noise receptors would be located on HHA property; hence, no impacts would occur.	Industrial development would result in new noise sources. These sources would be negligible and not significant compared to aircraft noise from the adjacent airport.	Caretaker activities would not result in new noise sources.
Biological Resources	Temporary disturbance of common species of plants and animals would occur during demolition of housing structure. No threatened or endangered species or sensitive habitats would be directly impacted. Some federal and state jurisdictional wetlands would be indirectly impacted by the construction of proposed runway. These impacts are considered significant. The City of Syracuse, responsible for needed mitigations, is negotiating with federal and state regulatory agencies to identify adequate mitigations.	Minor impacts to revegetated areas would occur during grading for new industrial development. Industrial development on Parcel A of HHA property can avoid use of wetlands by proper planning. The developer of the HHA property or individual tenants would be responsible for negotiating adequate mitigations if wetlands are impacted. Impacts after mitigation would be reduced to non-significant levels.	No direct impacts to biological resources including wetlands would occur. Indirect impacts would be similar to those described for Proposed Action.
Cultural Resources	Demolition of housing structures would not impact any cultural resources. No NRHP-eligible sites have been identified on HHA property and no significant impacts are anticipated.	Subsurface artifacts may be found during grading for industrial sites. Site developers would consult with State Historic Preservation Officer, if such artifacts are discovered. Impacts are not anticipated to be significant.	Caretaker activities would not result in any impacts to cultural resources.

adjacent parcels of land as industrial properties. This development would occur over a number of years as part of the carefully planned development of the Hancock Airpark by HFDC.

Under the Alternative Action, the possible reuse of Parcel A property for light industrial purposes would generate greater environmental impacts than those identified for the Proposed Action. Such a development, if it occurs, would take place 15 to 20 years from now (1996) either as part of the last phase of Hancock Airpark development or as an independent development controlled by the City of Syracuse Department of Aviation. In either case, there is the potential to affect additional jurisdictional wetlands. This impact could either be avoided or could be mitigated through adequate wetlands replacements as negotiated with the federal and state regulatory agencies. Increased impacts on local transportation, utilities, and air quality are not anticipated to be significant.

The environmental impacts of the No-Action Alternative would be less than the impacts generated by either the Proposed Action or the Alternative Action. With this alternative, the HHA property would not be transferred. The existing housing structures on Parcel A would not be demolished and would remain unoccupied. The U.S. Air Force would retain ownership of the property and place it in a caretaker status designed to limit deterioration of buildings and ensure public safety. The City of Syracuse may still be able to construct the new runway by acquiring an aviation easement on 16 acres of Parcel A from the U.S. Government. The runway construction would have the same environmental impacts as those described for the Proposed Action. These impacts are not considered to be significant except on wetlands for which mitigations have been discussed under the Proposed Action.



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## ACRONYMS, UNITS OF MEASUREMENT, AND CHEMICAL ABBREVIATIONS

### ACRONYMS

ACM	Asbestos-Containing Material
AFB	Air Force Base
AFCEE	Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence
AFI	Air Force Instruction
AQCR	Air Quality Control Region
BRAC	Base Closure and Realignment
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DBCRA	Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FPMR	Federal Property Management Regulations
HHA	Hancock Housing Area
HFDC	Hancock Field Development Corporation
IRP	Installation Restoration Program
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NFRAP	No Further Response Action Plan
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NYSDEC	New York Department of Environmental Conservation
ROD	Record of Decision
ROFA	Runway Object Free Area
RPZ	Runway Protection Zone
RSA	Runway Safety Area
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
TSD	Treatment, Storage, and Disposal
USC	United States Code
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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**UNITS OF MEASUREMENT**

dB	decibel
dBA	decibel measured on the A-weighted scale
DNL	day-night average noise level
kV	kilovolt
PM <sub>10</sub>	particulate matter less than or equal to 10 micrometers in diameter
ppm	parts per million
µg/m <sup>3</sup>	micrograms per cubic meter

**CHEMICAL ABBREVIATIONS**

CO	carbon monoxide
CO <sub>2</sub>	carbon dioxide
O <sub>3</sub>	ozone
NO <sub>x</sub>	nitrogen oxides
NO <sub>2</sub>	nitrogen dioxide
Pb	lead
SO <sub>2</sub>	sulfur dioxide



## 1.0 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

### 1.1 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

To fulfill the requirement of reducing defense expenditures, the Air Force plans to dispose of excess and surplus real property and facilities at the Hancock Housing Area (HHA), New York. The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act (DBCRA) requirements relating to disposal of excess and surplus property include:

- Environmental restoration of the property as soon as possible with funds made available for such restoration;
- Consideration of the local community's reuse plan, if available, prior to Air Force disposal of the property; and
- Compliance with specific Federal property disposal laws and regulations.

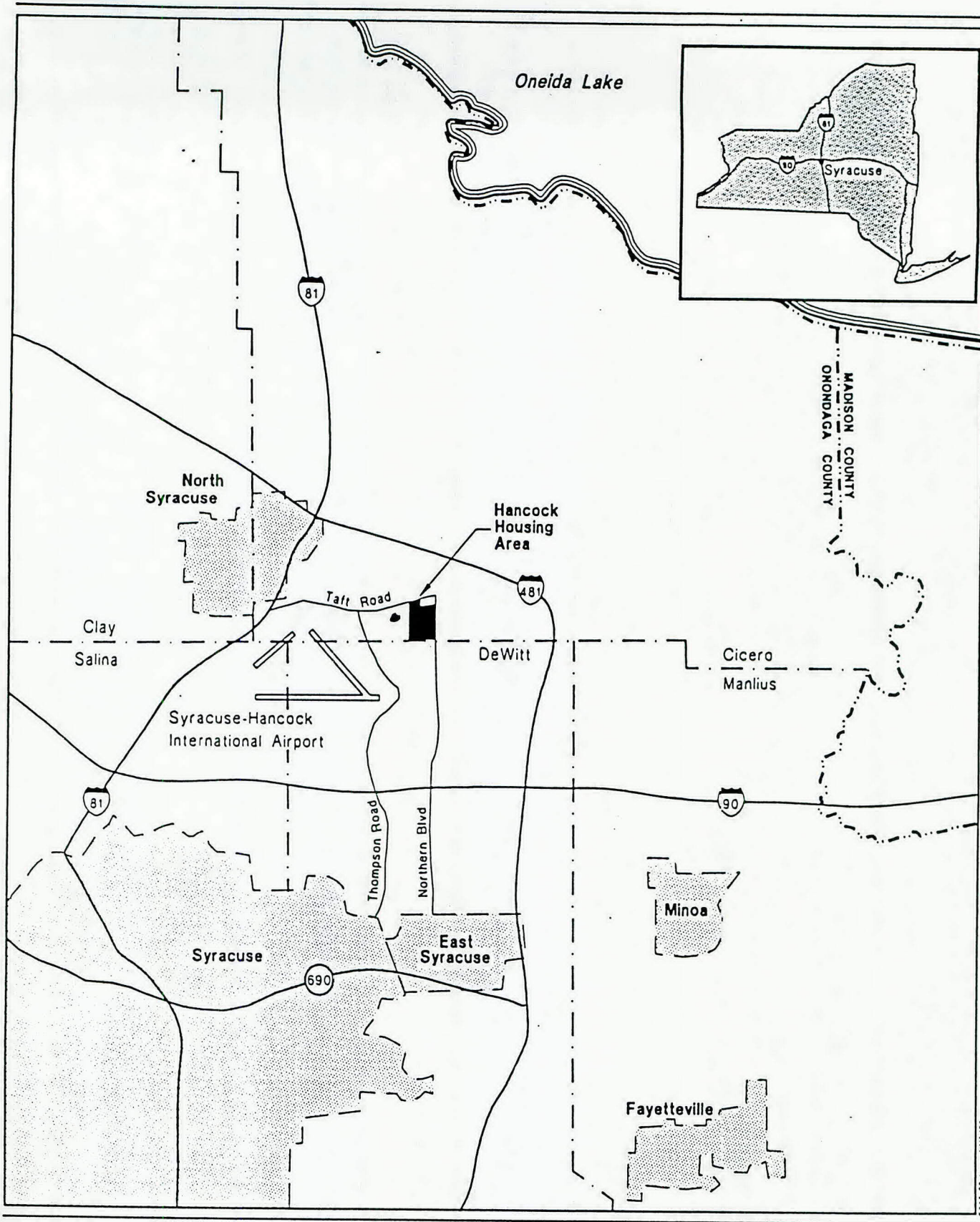
The Air Force action, therefore, is to dispose of the HHA property and facilities which are now considered excess and surplus. Usually, this action would be performed by the Administrator of General Services. However, DBCRA required the Administrator to delegate to the Secretary of Defense the authorities to utilize excess property, dispose of surplus property, convey airport and airport-related property, and determine the availability of excess or surplus real property for wildlife conservation purpose. The Secretary of Defense redelegated these authorities to the respective Services Secretaries.

### 1.2 LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

Hancock Field Air Force Base (AFB) was activated in 1942 as a staging area for B-17 and B-24 bombers for World War II. The HHA was built in 1960 to serve as housing for military families stationed at Hancock Field AFB (Figures 1-1 and 1-2). When the Base was closed in 1984, the housing area was retained by the Air Force. Control of the housing area was transferred to Griffiss AFB to serve as overflow housing for families stationed at Griffiss AFB. With the realignment of Griffiss AFB in 1995, the need for this overflow housing was eliminated and housing area was completely vacated by September 1995.

### 1.3 DECISIONS TO BE MADE AND THE DECISION MAKER

The purpose of this Environmental Assessment (EA) is to provide information for Air Force decisions concerning the disposition of HHA property. The EA provides the decision-maker and the public the information required to understand the potential environmental consequences of disposal and proposed reuse options for the HHA property.

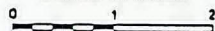


# LEGEND

- County Boundary
- - - Town Boundary
- - - City Boundary
- Project Location



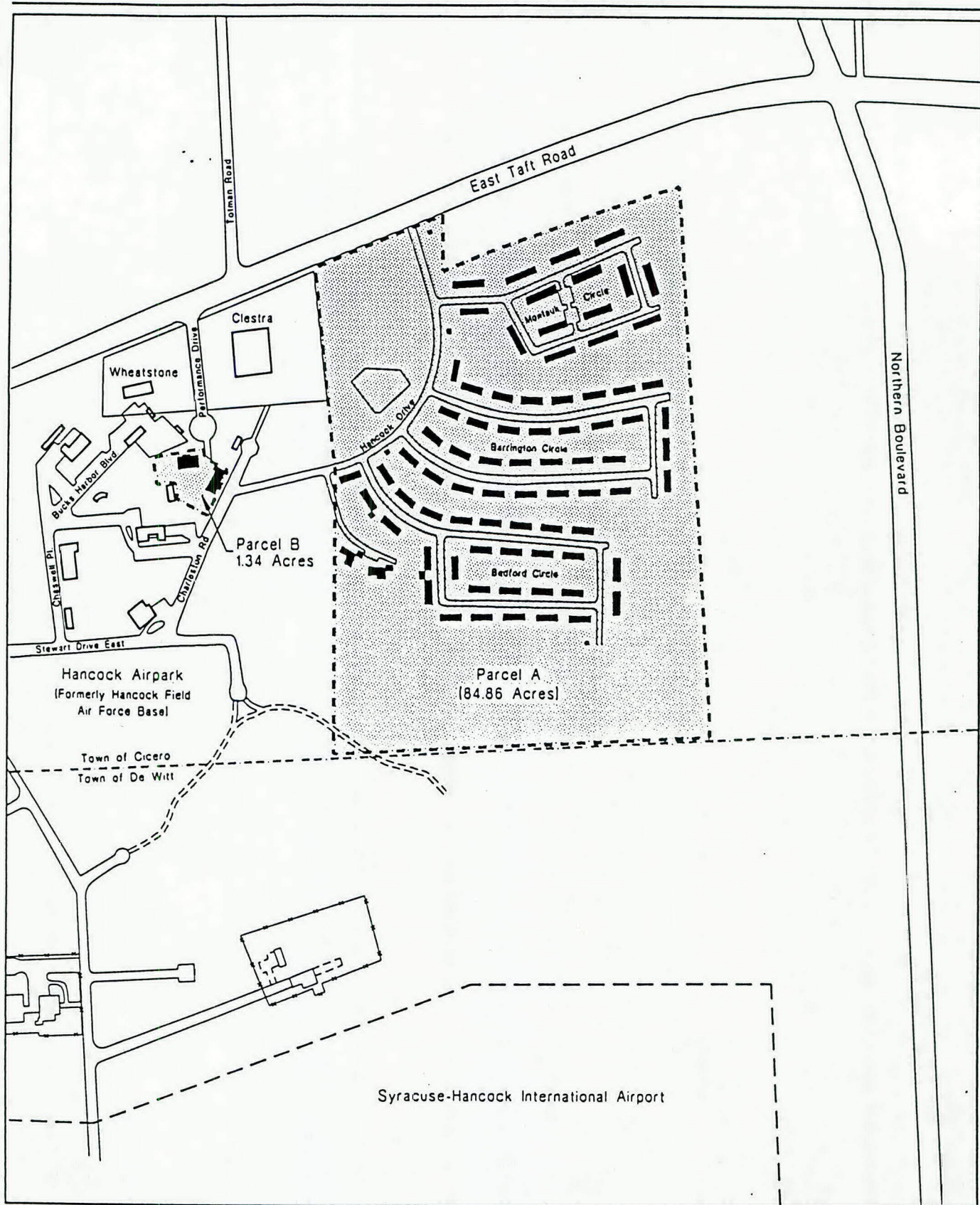
SCALE IN MILES



## Hancock Housing Area, New York General Location

Figure 1-1





#### LEGEND

- Hancock Housing Area Boundary
- Town Boundary
- Airport Boundary
- Air Force Building
- Non-Air Force Building
- Hancock Housing Area Parcels



SCALE IN FEET  
0 200 400

#### Hancock Housing Area, New York Existing Conditions

Figure 1-2



Following completion of this EA, the Air Force will make a determination whether the disposal and reuse of HHA property would generate environmental consequences that would result in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or if an Environmental Impact Statement must be prepared. The Director of the Headquarters Air Force Base Conversion Agency (HQ AFBCA) will determine the following:

- The methods of disposal to be followed by the Air Force; and
- The terms and conditions of disposal.

The methods of disposal granted by the Federal Property and Administration Services Act of 1949 and the Surplus Property Act of 1944 and implemented in the Federal Property Management Regulations (FPMR) are:

- Transfer to another Federal agency;
- Public benefit conveyance to an eligible entity;
- Negotiated sale to a public body for a public purpose;
- Competitive sale by sealed bid or auction; and
- Economic development conveyance.

The potential environmental impacts of the disposal of HHA property using one or all of the above-mentioned procedures is considered in this EA. Potential land uses covering reasonably foreseeable future uses of the property and facilities by others are described in this document.

#### 1.4 SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, and Air Force Instruction (AFI) 32-7061 provide guidance on the types of actions for which an EA must be prepared. An EA is prepared to briefly provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a finding of no significant impact (FONSI). The EA meets the compliance requirements of NEPA when no EIS is necessary.

This EA examines the potential impacts to the environment that may result from the disposal and reuse of HHA for the following environmental resources; community setting, land use, transportation, utilities, hazardous substances, soils and geology, water resources, air quality, noise, biological resources, and cultural and paleontological resources.

On February 11, 1994, President Clinton signed Executive Order No. 1298, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*. The transfer of HHA property would have no direct effects on minority and low-income populations. With the proposed reuse of the property, there is a potential for the people living in the vicinity of the Syracuse Hancock International Airport to be affected by aircraft noise. The EIS prepared by the City of Syracuse Department of Aviation for the Land Acquisition and Construction of Runway 10L-28R at Syracuse Hancock



International Airport addressed this issue (City of Syracuse, 1996). The city determined that no minority or low-income populations would be disproportionately affected with respect to the entire population that would be exposed to significant levels of aircraft noise as a result of constructing a new runway and the construction of the runway would be in accordance with the objective of Executive Order 12898. This issue, therefore, has not been addressed further in this EA.

## **1.5 APPLICABLE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

Federal permits, licenses, and entitlements that may be required by recipients of HHA property for purpose of redevelopment are presented in Table 1-1.

## **1.6 ORGANIZATION OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

This EA is organized into a number of chapters. Chapter 2.0 includes a description of the Proposed Action and alternatives to the Proposed Action identified for reuse of the HHA property. Chapter 2.0 also provides a comparison of the Proposed Action and alternatives with respect to effects on the local community and the natural environment. Chapter 3.0 includes a description of the affected environment which provides a basis for analyzing the potential impacts of the Proposed Action and Alternatives. The results of the environmental analyses are presented in Chapter 4.0. Chapter 5.0 includes a listing of agencies and persons consulted during the preparation of the EA. It also includes the correspondence related to consultation and coordination. Chapter 6.0 provides a list of the document preparers. Chapter 7.0 contains references.

**Table 1-1**  
**Federal Permits, Licenses, and Entitlements Potentially Required for Reusers or Developers of Hancock Housing Area Property**

Federal Permit, License, or Entitlement	Typical Activity, Facility, or Category of Persons Required to Obtain the Federal Permit, License, or Entitlement	Authority	Regulatory Agency
Title V Permit under the Clean Air Act, as amended by the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments	Any major source (source that emits more than 100 tons per year of criteria pollutants in a nonattainment area for that pollutant or is otherwise defined in Title I of the Clean Air Act as a major source); affected sources as defined in Title IV of the Clean Air Act; sources subject to Section 111 regarding New Source Performance Standards; sources of air toxics regulated under Section 112 of the Clean Air Act; sources required to have new source or modification permits under Parts C or D of Title I of the Clean Air Act; and any other source designated by EPA regulations.	Title V of the Clean Air Act as amended by the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments	EPA; New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit	Discharge of pollutant from any point source into waters of the United States.  Stormwater discharges associated with specified industrial activities or from medium and large municipal separate storm sewer systems.	Section 402 of Clean Water Act (added by Section 405 of the Water Quality Act of 1987); 33 USC § 1342; 40 CFR 122.2b	EPA; New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Section 404 (Dredge and Fill) Permit	Any project activities resulting in the discharge of dredged or fill material into bodies of water, including wetlands, within the United States.	Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, 33 USC § 1344	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in consultation with EPA; New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Industrial Waste Discharge Permit	Discharge of industrial wastewater into a publicly owned treatment works.	Section 54 of the Clean Water Act 33 USC § 1251; 40 CFR 403	EPA; City of Rome
Underground Injection Control Permit	Owners or operators of certain types of underground injection wells.	Section 1424 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 USC § 300h-3; 40 CFR 144	EPA; New York State Department of Environmental Conservation



Federal Permit, License, or Entitlement	Typical Activity, Facility, or Category of Persons Required to Obtain the Federal Permit, License, or Entitlement	Authority	Regulatory Agency
Hazardous Waste Treatment, Storage, or Disposal (TSD) Facility Permit	Owners or operators of a new or existing hazardous waste TSD facility.	Section 3005 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act as amended, 42 USC § 6925; 40 CFR 270	EPA; New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
EPA Manifest Identification Number	Generators or transporters (offsite) of hazardous waste.	40 CFR 262.12 (generators); 40 CFR 263, Subpart B (transporters)	EPA; New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Antiquities Permit	Excavation and/or removal of archaeological resources from public lands or Indian lands and carrying out activities associated with such excavation and/or removal.	Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979, 16 USC § 470cc	U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service
Endangered Species Act Section 10 Permit	Taking endangered or threatened wildlife species; engaging in certain commercial trade of endangered or threatened plant species or removing such species from property subject to federal jurisdiction.	Section 10 of Endangered Species Act, 16 USC § 1539; 50 CFR 17, Subparts C,D,F, and G	U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
Airport Operating Certificate	Operating an airport serving any scheduled or unscheduled passenger operation of air carrier aircraft designed for more than 30 passengers.	Federal Aviation Act of 1958, 49 USC App. § 1432	U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration



## 2.0 ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes a description of the Proposed Action, reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action, and the No-Action alternative. A comparison of potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives is presented in Section 2.5.

The Hancock Housing Area (HHA) consists of two parcels of land totaling 86.20 acres. One parcel, shown as Parcel A, is the 84.86-acre housing tract with 216 housing units in 77 multi-family and 2 single-family structures. Until September 1995, this housing area served mainly as housing for military personnel assigned to Griffiss Air Force Base (AFB) in Rome, New York. Some families of the military persons stationed elsewhere in the region also used this housing complex. Parcel B, located west of Parcel A, is a 1.34-acre light industrial area containing two buildings used as housing support buildings when the housing area was occupied.

The housing area has been vacant since September 1995 and has been declared excess property by the U.S. Air Force. As a matter of general policy, federally held land, when released or transferred, is offered for use by the homeless under the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. A notice of excess and surplus property reviewed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for possible use to assist the homeless was published in the Federal Register on 16 September 1994, but no interest was expressed by any agency or homeless assistance providers. Currently, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is sponsoring the City of Syracuse, who seeks to acquire the property for use as a federally funded aviation facility.

The City of Syracuse Department of Aviation recently evaluated the acquisition of land to provide the site for the eventual construction of a new runway at Syracuse Hancock International Airport (City of Syracuse 1996). The purpose of that evaluation was to document any potential significant environmental consequences associated with acquisition of land needed to accommodate the proposed runway (Runway 10L-28R) at a distance of 3,600 feet (centerline-to-centerline) north and parallel to the existing east-west runway 10-28. One of the significant impacts identified as a result of this evaluation was that two-thirds of HHA would fall within the 65 DNL noise contour if the runway was constructed as planned. This would have required acquisition of the housing area or other costly mitigations to reduce the noise impacts to acceptable levels. With the realignment of Griffiss AFB and the elimination of the need for HHA to be occupied by Griffiss AFB employees, the housing area became vacant by September 1995. This provided the City of Syracuse an opportunity to acquire Parcel A so that the city could exercise needed control on the development of future land uses which could be incompatible with the planned runway. In anticipation of the availability of HHA after September 1995, the City of Syracuse made an application to the U.S. Air Force to obtain title to the entire Parcel A (84.86 acres) through a public airport conveyance.



The Hancock Field Development Corporation (HFDC), created in 1987, is responsible for the management and development of an industrial park (now commonly known as Hancock Airpark) comprised of approximately 200 acres of excess lands of the former Hancock Field AFB. The initial development took place in accordance with a Base Reuse Master Plan completed in 1984 (Hueber Hares Glavin 1984). The Griffiss AFB realignment in 1995 and the preparation of a revised Master Plan for Syracuse Hancock International Airport in 1993 (KPMG Peat Marwick 1993) identified the need for a new master plan for Hancock Airpark. In 1995, HFDC began preparation of a revised master plan for Hancock Airpark (C&S Engineers 1996). This master plan proposed development of 51 lots on the available land, 39 lots on the lands controlled by HFDC and 12 lots on Parcel A of HHA, which the City of Syracuse is planning to acquire from the U.S. Air Force through a public airport conveyance. On 20 July 1995, HFDC, therefore, requested the U.S. Air Force to transfer only Parcel B (1.34 acres) of HHA to HFDC. This would enable HFDC to extend Performance Drive southward and connect it to Stewart Drive thus tying the whole Hancock Airpark together. Since such a development would not be incompatible with the Airport Layout Plan, the City of Syracuse would have no objection to the transfer of this parcel of land to HFDC.

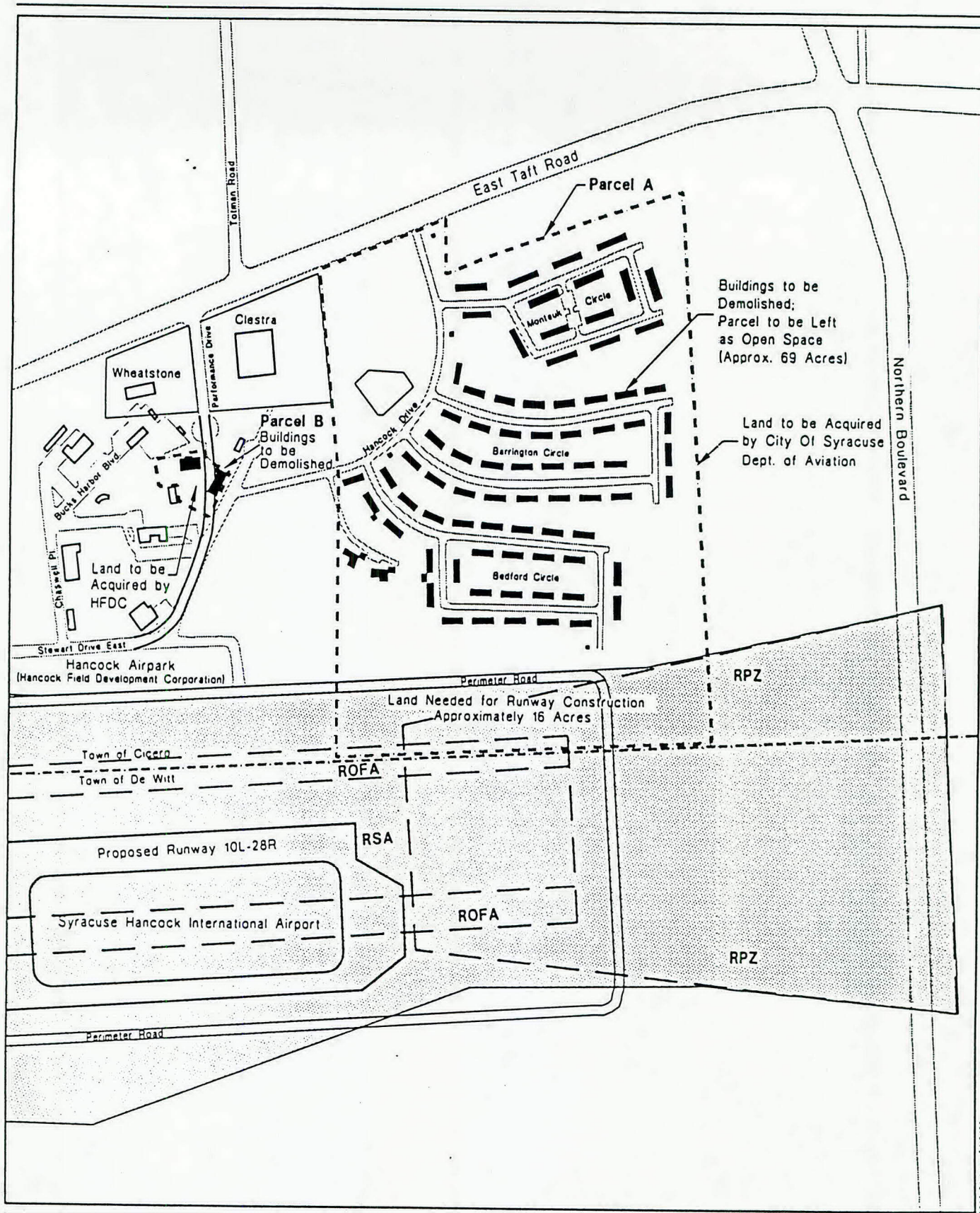
The Proposed Action, Alternative Action, and No-Action Alternative evaluated in this EA are based on the City of Syracuse Department of Aviation plan for constructing a new parallel runway north of the existing east-west runway and the constraints imposed by such a development. This EA evaluates the consequences of the transfer and potential reuse of the two parcels of Hancock Housing Area lands to the City of Syracuse and the HFDC. Since no other proposals were received from any government agency or private developers and no other alternatives were considered reasonable, additional alternatives for reuse of the property have not been analyzed in this EA.

## 2.2 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

With the Proposed Action, the City of Syracuse would acquire the southernmost 16 acres of Parcel A (Figure 2-1) to provide for the construction of a new runway (runway 10L-28R) 3600 feet north and parallel to the existing east-west runway 10-28. The 16-acre parcel would be used as the Runway Protection Zone and for the construction of a perimeter road. The city would also acquire the remaining 69 acres of Parcel A to insure that the long-term future use and development of this land is compatible with the airport. The city proposes to demolish the existing housing structures and leave the land as open space. No development of this parcel is planned as part of the Proposed Action.

In addition, HFDC proposes to acquire Parcel B and plans to demolish the two buildings on the site and extend Performance Drive southward to connect it to Stewart Drive. With this action, HFDC would be able to improve the marketability of land parcels in the Hancock Airpark for planned light industrial development. The land not used for road development would be incorporated into the adjacent parcels to increase their marketability.





# LEGEND

- Hancock Housing Area Boundary
- - - Town Boundary
- == Proposed Road Improvement
- Air Force Building
- Non-Air Force Building
- Land Needed for Proposed Runway
- RPZ - Runway Protection Zone
- ROFA - Runway Object Free Area
- RSA - Runway Safety Area



SCALE IN FEET  
0 200 400

## Hancock Housing Area, New York Proposed Action

Figure 2-1



### 2.3 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE ACTION (AIRPORT RUNWAY AND LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT)

The Alternative Action identified for analysis in this EA assumes that in the long term (after the runway has been extended from 7,500 feet to 9,000 feet sometime after 2011), the City of Syracuse may allow development of the vacant 69-acre parcel for high tech, light industrial uses including possible air cargo operations. For purposes of analysis, it is assumed that the development would be similar to the one described in the Hancock Airpark Master Plan prepared for HFDC (C&S Engineers 1996). This plan anticipates the development of 51 lots of which 12 lots may be developed on the 69-acre parcel directly under the direction of City of Syracuse or through HFDC, if the city so desires. The lots are planned to be 3 to 5 acres and each development is anticipated to employ as many as 50 workers (Figure 2-2).

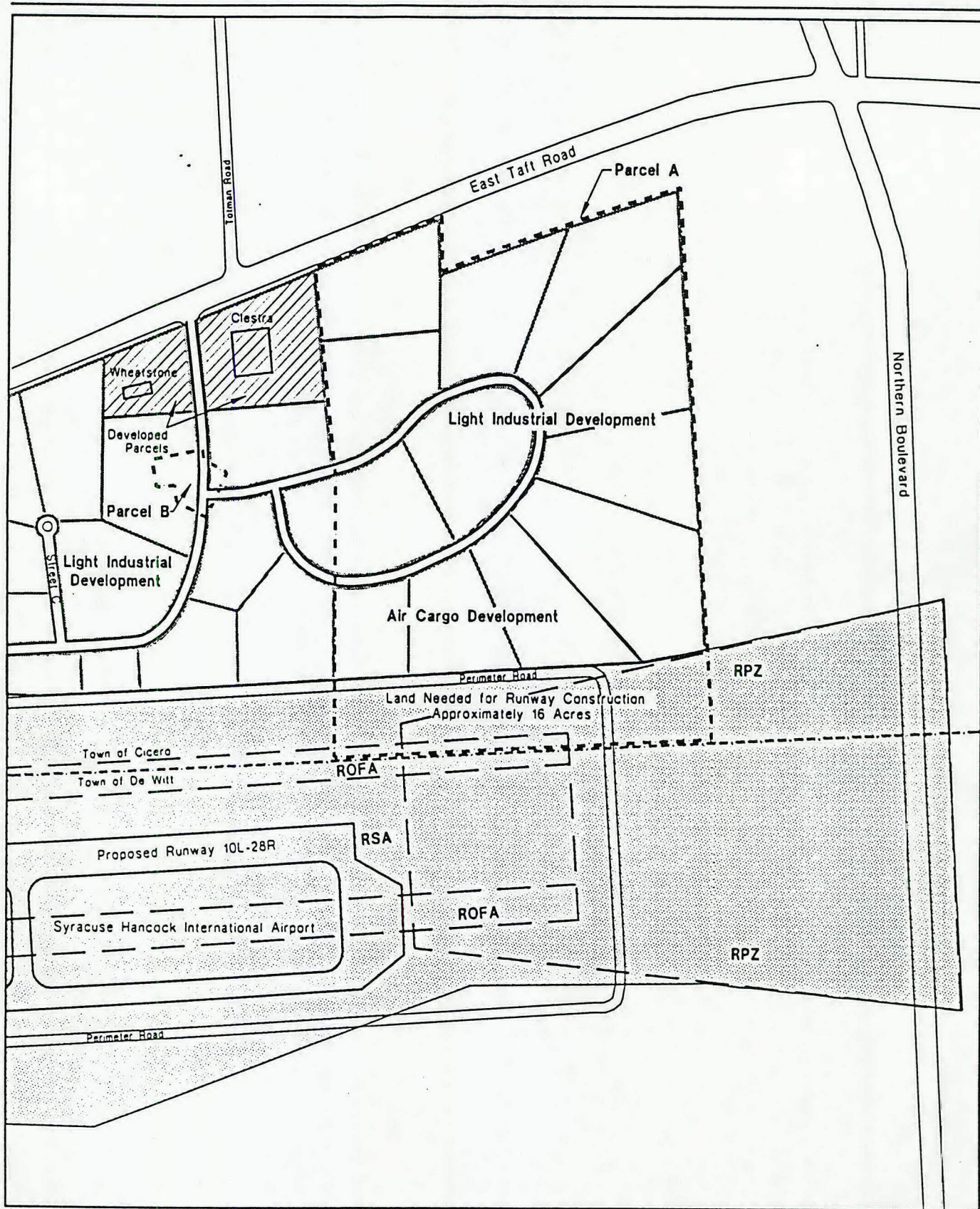
Immediate proximity to the new runway would offer a good potential for developers with a need for direct access to airport facilities. The City of Syracuse may decide to create an air cargo facility with access to the new runway. If developed as conceived in the Hancock Airpark Master Plan (C&S Engineers 1996), the development of the 69-acre parcel could generate 500 to 600 jobs, contributing approximately 30 percent of the total employment potentially generated by the 39 parcels developed in the remaining Hancock Airpark.

### 2.4 DESCRIPTION OF THE NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No-Action Alternative would result in the U.S. Government not transferring any land to the City of Syracuse or HFDC for future reuse. The U.S. Government would retain ownership of this property and would place it in a caretaker status which is designed to limit deterioration of buildings and ensure public safety. Caretaker activities would consist of buildings and grounds maintenance and existing utility operations as necessary for the care of buildings. No use of buildings would occur.

The City of Syracuse may still be able to construct the new runway and a perimeter road by acquiring an avigation easement on 16-acres of Parcel A lying within the building restriction zone from the U.S. Government. This would allow the city to keep the unwanted development from occurring in this area. Currently, this parcel of land is vacant and undeveloped. Retention of the 1.34-acre parcel occupied by the two housing support buildings would not allow the HFDC to extend Performance Drive, connecting it with Stewart Drive. The southern portion of Performance Drive is currently configured to be a cul-de-sac because its further extension is blocked by the two housing support buildings. The current landowners on Performance Drive would continue to have only one means of ingress and egress to their properties and would have no direct access to the remainder of the Airpark.





#### LEGEND

- Hancock housing Area Boundary
- - - Town Boundary
- == Potential Road Improvement
- Potential Parcelization for Industrial Development
- Land Needed for Proposed Runway
- ▨ Developed Parcels



SCALE IN FEET  
0 200 400

### Hancock Housing Area, New York Alternative Action (Light Industrial Development)

Figure 2-2



## 2.5 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

Other possible alternatives, which included the reuse of existing housing structures for residential purposes, were not considered in this EA because they were found to be incompatible with the proposed construction of a new runway at Syracuse Hancock International Airport. With the construction of the runway, almost two-thirds of the existing housing units would fall within the 65 dB noise contour and the City of Syracuse would have to resort to prohibitively costly mitigations to reduce the noise impacts on new residents of the HHA or to build the runway at another location. The city conducted a detailed siting analysis and concluded that the proposed location was the most cost-effective.

## 2.6 COMPARISON OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

A summary comparison of the environmental impacts generated by the Proposed Action and alternatives is presented in Table 2-1. Impacts to the environment described briefly in this table are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.0.

Table 2-1

**Summary of Environmental Impacts for the Proposed Action and Alternatives,  
Hancock Housing Area, New York**

Environmental Resources	Proposed Action	Alternative Action	No-Action Alternative
Community Setting	No change in employment or population would occur.	Employment may increase by 500-600 workers after 2011 if development occurs as proposed by HFDC. Impacts would not be significant in the Syracuse Metropolitan area.	A minimal caretaker force of 4 to 5 workers would work at the site and would not generate significant impacts.
Land Use	Proposed Action would be consistent with the Town of Cicero Zoning ordinance.	Development of industrial parcels would be consistent with the Town of Cicero Zoning ordinance.	Land would remain under military use. Town of Cicero would not exercise zoning controls.
Transportation	With land remaining undeveloped, no traffic impacts would occur.	Traffic increases would occur along East Taft Road and Northern Boulevard after the year 2011. Impacts not considered significant.	Traffic increase from caretaker activities would be negligible and not significant.
Utilities	With no new development, impacts on local utility systems would be negligible and not significant.	Development of 12 light industrial parcels after 2011 would not impact local utility systems significantly.	Caretaker activities would have negligible and not significant impacts on local utility systems.
Hazardous Substances	No hazardous materials except some pesticides and herbicides would be used. Impacts would be negligible and not significant.	New industrial development after 2011 may result in use of some hazardous substances. Property tenants are expected to comply with federal and state regulations. Impacts are not anticipated to be significant.	Caretaker activities would generate negligible and not significant impacts through use of minor amounts of paints, pesticides and herbicides.
Geology and Soils	Small amounts of soil erosion may occur on disturbed land from demolition of housing structures. Impact would be temporary and not significant.	Some soil erosion would occur during demolition and again during grading for new construction after 2011. Impacts would be temporary and not significant.	Caretaker activities would not result in soil erosion.
Water Resources	Demolition activity would temporarily cause minor sedimentation. Water quality would not be degraded. No impacts on groundwater would occur. Overall, impacts would not be significant.	Industrial development would result in some temporary sedimentation of surface water. Groundwater would not be impacted. Overall, impacts on water resources would not be significant.	Caretaker activities would not impact surface or groundwater quality.



Table 2-1, Page 2 of 2

Environmental Resources	Proposed Action	Alternative Action	No-Action Alternative
Air Quality	Temporary and negligible increase in PM <sub>10</sub> emissions would occur from demolition activity. No violation of air quality standards would occur. Therefore, the impacts are considered to be not significant.	Industrial development would result in increased pollutant emissions, particularly from vehicular traffic. Impacts would be minor and not significant at the regional level.	Caretaker activities would result in negligible and not significant air quality impacts.
Noise	With no new development there would be no sources of noise on site and no impacts would occur. Construction of proposed runway (10L-28R) on Syracuse Hancock International Airport would place more than two thirds of HHA property under 65 dB noise contour. No noise receptors would be located on HHA property; hence, no impacts would occur.	Industrial development would result in new noise sources. These sources would be negligible and not significant compared to aircraft noise from the adjacent airport.	Caretaker activities would not result in new noise sources.
Biological Resources	Temporary disturbance of common species of plants and animals would occur during demolition of housing structure. No threatened or endangered species or sensitive habitats would be directly impacted. Some federal and state jurisdictional wetlands would be indirectly impacted by the construction of proposed runway. These impacts are considered significant. The City of Syracuse, responsible for needed mitigations, is negotiating with federal and state regulatory agencies to identify adequate mitigations.	Minor impacts to revegetated areas would occur during grading for new industrial development. Industrial development on Parcel A of HHA property can avoid use of wetlands by proper planning. The developer of the HHA property or individual tenants would be responsible for negotiating adequate mitigations if wetlands are impacted. Impacts after mitigation would be reduced to non-significant levels.	No direct impacts to biological resources including wetlands would occur. Indirect impacts would be similar to those described for Proposed Action.
Cultural Resources	Demolition of housing structures would not impact any cultural resources. No NRHP-eligible sites have been identified on HHA property and no significant impacts are anticipated.	Subsurface artifacts may be found during grading for industrial sites. Site developers would consult with State Historic Preservation Officer, if such artifacts are discovered. Impacts are not anticipated to be significant.	Caretaker activities would not result in any impacts to cultural resources.



## 3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes a description of the existing environmental conditions at Hancock Housing Area (HHA), New York. It provides the baseline information that is used to identify and evaluate potential environmental changes resulting from disposal and reuse of the HHA. Although this Environmental Assessment (EA) focuses on the biophysical environment, some nonbiophysical elements (influencing factors) are addressed to the extent that they directly affect the environment. The nonbiophysical elements of population, land use, transportation, and utilities in the local communities and onsite are addressed.

This chapter also includes a description of the storage, use, and management of hazardous materials and waste at the HHA, including asbestos and lead. The current status of the Installation Restoration Program, managed onsite by the Air National Guard, is also described. Finally, the chapter includes a description of the pertinent natural resources of soils and geology, water resources, air quality, noise, biological resources, and cultural and paleontological resources.

### 3.2 LOCAL COMMUNITY

The HHA is located in central New York State in the Town of Cicero in Onondaga County, approximately 5 miles north of the City of Syracuse and adjacent to the Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

Hancock Field Air Force Base (AFB) was activated in 1942 as a staging area for B-17 and B-24 bombers for World War II. The HHA property was purchased by the Air Force in 1958. Two years later, a Capehart housing project was completed on this base property to provide military housing for families stationed at Hancock Field AFB. When the base closed in 1984, this housing area was retained by the Air Force. Control of the housing area passed to Griffiss AFB, located 40 miles east of the site, to serve as overflow housing for military personnel and their dependents stationed at Griffiss AFB. One side of one duplex unit was converted for use as a housing office; all of the other units (215 units in 79 buildings) were used as residences. With the realignment of Griffiss AFB in 1995, the need for housing was eliminated and housing area was vacated by September 1995.

#### 3.2.1 Community Setting

The HHA is within the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which encompasses 60 percent of the population of central New York State. Syracuse, the fifth most populous city in the state, has the largest urban concentration in central New York State. From 1970 to 1990, the population of the Syracuse MSA increased by 4.1 percent, while the population of Onondaga County decreased 0.8 percent during this same period (Table 3-1).



Table 3-1

## Syracuse Region Population Change (1970-90)

Area	1970	1980	1990	Difference (1970-90)
Onondaga County	472,835	463,920	468,973	-0.8%
Syracuse MSA	760,101	771,685	791,141	+4.1%

Source: City of Syracuse 1994.

### 3.2.2 Land Use

The HHA has two parcels with a combined acreage of 86.2 acres. The larger parcel (84.86 acres) has a total of 216 residential units in 79 buildings surrounded by agricultural/forest (wooded), vacant and public/recreational (baseball diamond) land uses (Figure 3-1). West of the housing area across Charleston Road is a 1.34-acre parcel containing two buildings.

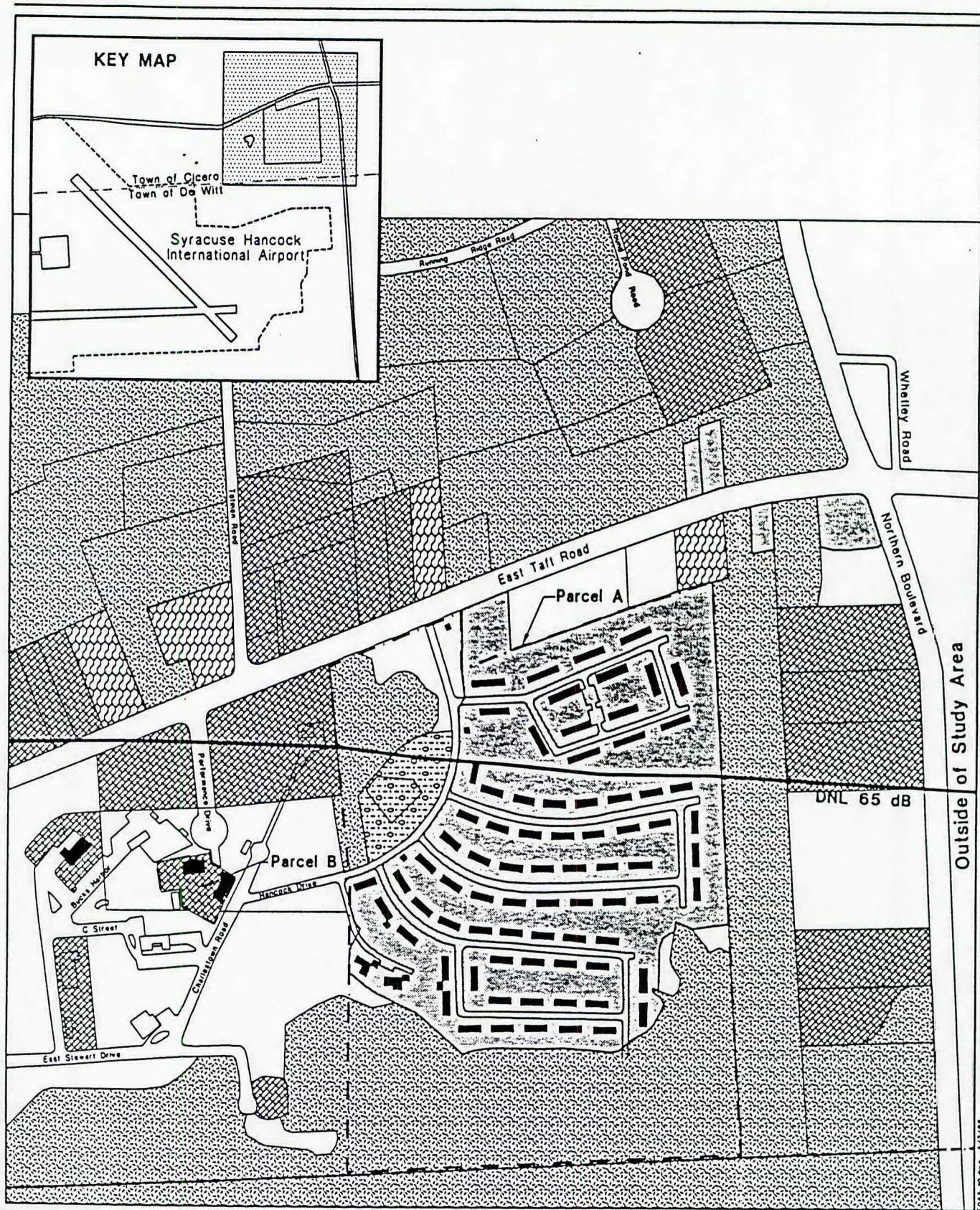
The two parcels of HHA are separated by vacant land of Hancock Airpark, owned by Onondaga County and administrated by the Hancock Field Development Corporation. The adjacent property is currently in, or planned for, Syracuse Hancock International Airport, manufacturing and production, public, and some commercial and residential uses. The Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Cicero has designated the HHA as a general commercial plus district. This zoning allows, among others, such uses as business offices, wholesale distribution services, warehousing, and passenger facilities for airport-related uses. Light industrial uses, laboratories, research and development, and airport uses other than passenger and maintenance facilities are permitted upon the findings of the Town Board that the uses do not create objectionable odors, fumes, dirt, environmental hazard, vibration, glare, or noise beyond the site containing the use. The adjacent property is designated by this town as industrial on the east, general commercial plus on the west, and a mix of general commercial, office park, and highway commercial on the north. The Town of DeWitt has zoned the land to the south industrial. Currently, HHA is located outside of the DNL 65 dB noise contour of Runway 10-28 of Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

The Division of Agricultural Protection and Development Services has indicated there are no county agricultural districts in the vicinity of Hancock Airport (City of Syracuse 1996). The undeveloped woodland to the south of HHA is administrated by the New York Air National Guard and is used as buffer for a military small arms range.

### 3.2.3 Transportation

Regional access to the HHA is provided by two interstate routes: the east-west New York State Thruway (Interstate 90) and the north-south Interstate 81 (see





#### LEGEND

- Hancock Housing Area Boundary
- - - Town Boundary
- Noise Contour with Runway 10L-28R Construction
- Air Force Buildings
- Non-Air Force Buildings

- Vacant Land
- ▨ Agricultural/Forest
- ▧ Commercial
- ▩ Industrial
- ▤ Public/Recreational
- ▦ Residential



SCALE IN FEET  
0 200 400

### Existing Land Use at Hancock Housing Area and Adjacent Parcels

Figure 3-1

Source: Onondago County 1993  
Landscape Aviation, Inc. R.E.



Figure 1-1, Chapter 1). HHA is readily accessible from Interstate 81 off Taft Road just north of the site. State Route 481 provides an additional connection between Interstate 81 and Interstate 90 to the northeast of HHA. Local access is provided by Thompson Road and Northern Boulevard. Thompson Road, a local collector, intersects Taft Road just west of HHA and provides north-south access at the eastern end of the Syracuse Hancock International Airport. Northern Boulevard, another north-south road, connects with Taft Road east of HHA. Traffic on Taft Road, Thompson Road, and Northern Boulevard is free-flowing. Traffic congestion is rare.

#### 3.2.4 Utilities

**Water.** Potable drinking water was supplied to HHA by the Onondaga County Water Authority, which obtains water from Lakes O'neisco, Skaneateles, and Ontario. Two county water mains are located in the East Taft Road right-of-way. The HHA is currently vacant and does not utilize any water.

**Wastewater.** Regional wastewater service was provided by the Onondaga County Department of Drainage and Sanitation. The HHA was served by a 12-inch main running north-south along Thompson Road that connects to the Brooklawn trunk sewer to the south. However, a small pumping station and forced main were needed to pump sewage from HHA up to the main line because the housing area was lower than Thompson Road. The pumping station was located in the industrial area (Building 298) west of the housing area. Currently, no wastewater is generated at the HHA site.

**Electricity.** The HHA was metered and served by a nearby 35 kilovolt (kV) substation maintained by the Niagara-Mohawk Power Corporation. It should be noted that electrical service to HHA was 4,800 volts rather than the standard 4,160 volts. Currently, HHA does not use any electricity.

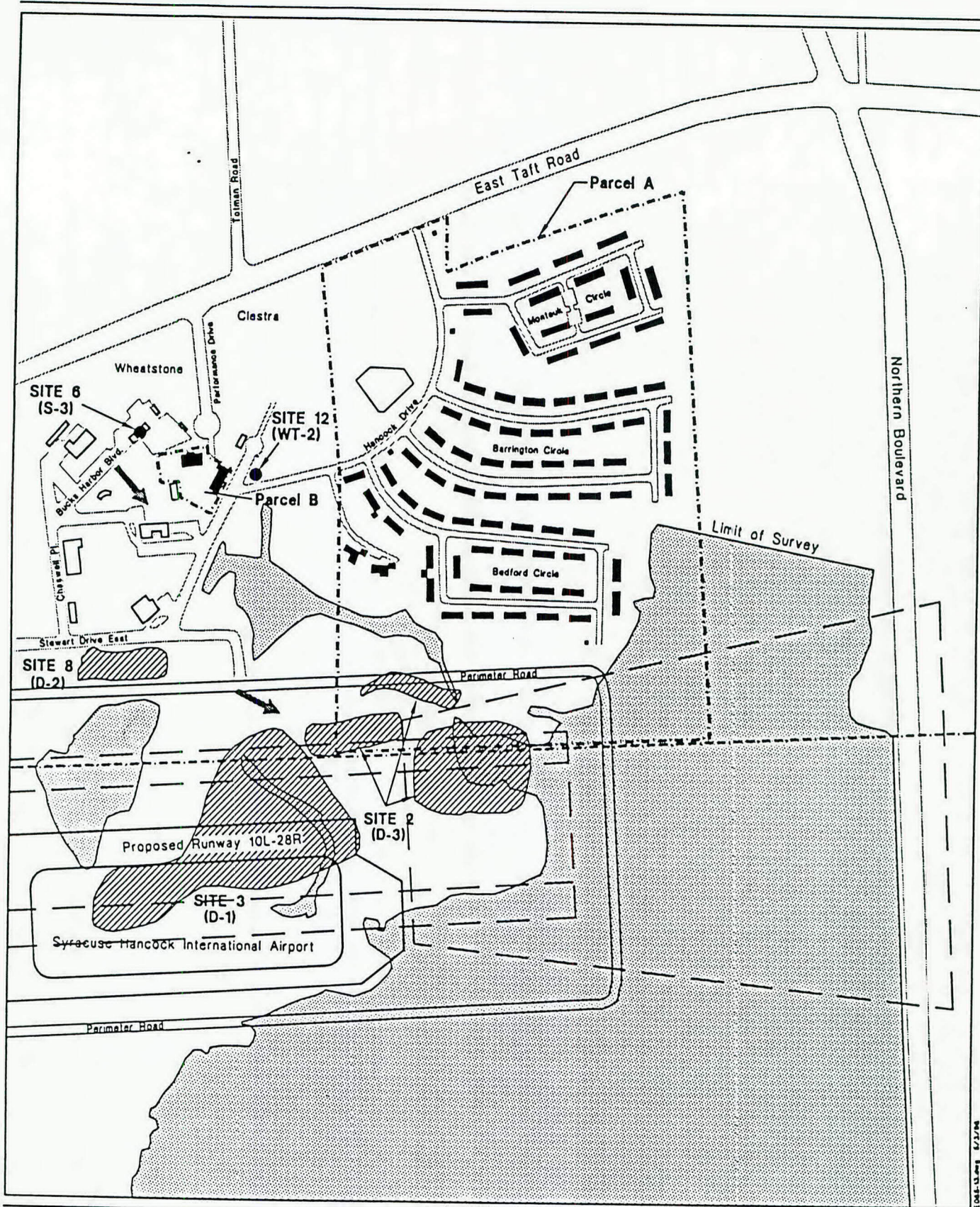
**Natural Gas.** The Niagara-Mohawk Power Corporation provides natural gas service to the region, including HHA. A residential service main comes into HHA along Hancock Drive from Taft Road. Currently, HHA does not use any natural gas.

### 3.3 HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES MANAGEMENT

No records were found regarding the specific storage of hazardous substances and/or petroleum products at the HHA site. Until September 1995, small quantities of hazardous materials (e.g., paints, solvents, and gasoline) were stored in Building 266 to support housing maintenance operations. The building was vacated in September 1995 and all stored hazardous substances were removed.

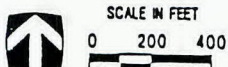
One inactive Installation Restoration Program (IRP) Site (#2) is located within the boundary of HHA (Figure 3-2). This site was used from 1950 to 1979 as a disposal site for general refuse and construction rubble. The New York Air National Guard, which was responsible for the cleanup of the site, prepared a





# LEGEND

- Hancock Housing Area Boundary
- Town Boundary
- Groundwater Flow Direction
- Air Force Building
- Non-Air Force Building
- IRP Site
- ▨ Wetlands



## Hancock Housing Area, New York IRP Sites

Figure 3-2



No Further Response Action Plan (NFRAP) decision document for the site in 1992. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) concurred with the NFRAP decision document in September 1995 (Sager, personal communication, 1996).

Facilities located in the HHA have been inspected or sampled for asbestos-containing materials. Asbestos abatement work was performed in Buildings 265 and 266 to remove friable asbestos. No asbestos was found in the housing units.

A comprehensive lead-based paint survey was conducted for buildings and houses at HHA. Lead-based paint was used in the interior walls of the housing facilities. The walls have been painted over several times and are in good condition.

### 3.4 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

This section describes the affected environment for the following natural resources; soils and geology, water resources, air quality, noise, biological resources, and cultural and paleontological resources.

#### 3.4.1 Geology and Soils

**Geology.** Onondaga County is divided in half by two major physiographic provinces, the Erie-Ontario Lowlands to the north and the Appalachian Uplands to the south (U. S. Department of Agriculture 1993). An escarpment running east-west formed by the Onondaga Limestone separates the two provinces. HHA is located within the Erie-Ontario Lowlands, which has a relatively flat topography that resulted from glacial and alluvial sediments erosion and deposition during the Wisconsin Ice Age. Dominant geomorphological features are not surficially obvious, and swamps and poorly drained areas occur naturally in the areas around the HHA.

Bedrock, from which the soil material in Onondaga County is derived, is mostly limestone, siltstone, and shale that formed from materials deposited at the bottom of the sea during Silurian and Devonian geologic periods (U.S. Department of Agriculture 1977). These sedimentary strata are about 8,000 feet thick overlying crystalline rock.

The Vernon Shale forms the bedrock underlying HHA and the surrounding areas. This bedrock type is characterized as a fractured red and green shale of Upper Silurian Age. The Vernon Shale dips to the south at approximately 50 feet per mile.

HHA lies in Seismic Zone 1 (International Conference of Building Officials 1994), meaning that there is only a slight chance from damaging earthquakes. The zone includes New York west of the Adirondack Mountains. A few small earthquakes have been recorded in the general area; however, there have been no major earthquakes of Richter magnitude 5 or greater.



The pre-Pleistocene rocks of the region are not strongly deformed, but have a general dip to the south-southwest (U.S. Department of Agriculture 1977). The slope ranges from a fraction of a degree to a few degrees. No faults or major folds have been mapped on HHA or in the vicinity. Structures in the general region are ancient. There is no evidence to suggest that there has been any active deformation for many millions of years.

**Soils.** HHA and the adjacent areas are underlain by soil composed of highly permeable loamy fine silt and sand. The material is underlain by a thick layer of gravel in the southwest portion of the site. The soil types within the HHA and adjacent areas and the soils considered to be hydric or potentially hydric are shown on Figure 3-3. The Soil Survey of Onondaga County, New York indicates the surficial soils within the HHA consist primarily of Niagara silt loam (NgA) (U.S. Department of Agriculture 1977). According to the Soil Survey, this type of soil is deep and is a somewhat poorly drained medium-texture soil that is medium to high in content of lime. These soils formed in relatively stone free glacial lake deposits of silt and very fine sand and moderate amounts of clay. Niagara silt loam has the limitations of wetness and poor stability for many nonfarm applications. Niagara silt loam soil is listed as having potential hydric inclusions in New York State, suggesting that groundwater is near the ground surface.

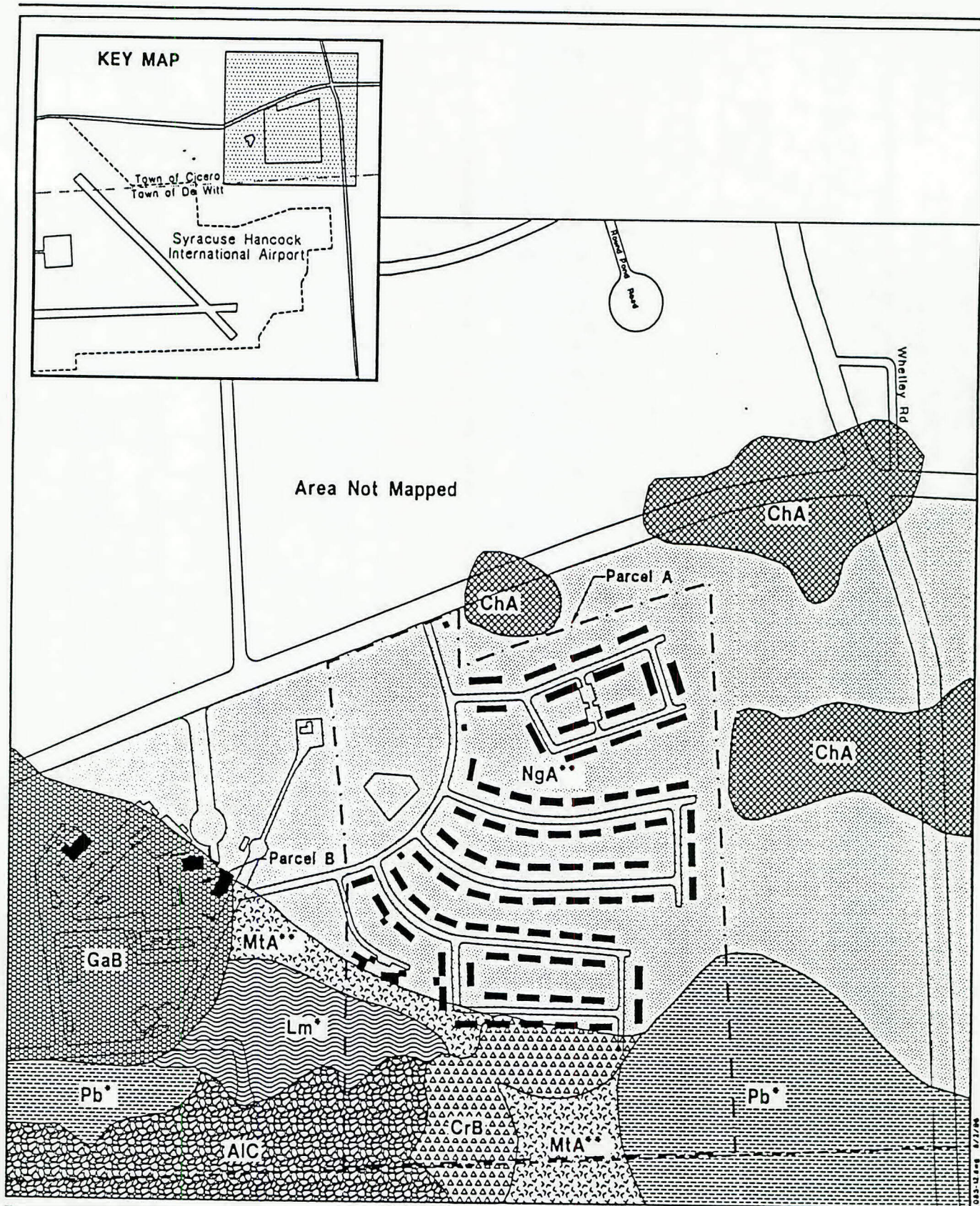
The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has determined all Galen (GcB) soil to be prime farmland. The Niagara soil (NgA) and Minoa (MtA) soil are only considered prime farmland when the soil has been drained. However, because the Minoa soils at HHA are located on and adjacent to a wetland, they would not be considered drained soils and would not meet the requirements for being classified as prime farmland. Approximately 46 acres of Parcel A and all 1.34 acres of Parcel B would be classified as prime farmland.

### 3.4.2 Water Resources

HHA lies within the watershed of the North Branch of Ley Creek. The North Branch of Ley Creek, a Class D stream, flows through the south end of the wetland. In general, the area is poorly drained and has a typical glacially disturbed drainage system. Surface drainage from the housing area is toward the south and east into wetlands. The land surface slopes gently from west to east, with the housing area occupying slightly higher ground than the wetlands. Drainage channels along the east and southwest sides of the HHA carry runoff from HHA into the wetland.

Aquifers beneath HHA and the adjacent areas include a surficial unit and a bedrock aquifer (U.S. Air Force 1990). Between the two aquifers is a glacial till that serves as a confining unit between the two aquifers. The glacial till consists of mixed unstratified, poorly sorted, red clay, sand, gravel, and boulders. The surficial aquifer consists of well sorted sands and gravel overlying the glacial till. The bedrock aquifer occurs in the fractured and jointed Vernon Formation Shale. Groundwater movement and storage occurs in the





# LEGEND

- Hancock Housing Area Boundary
- - - Town Boundary
- Air Force Building
- Non-Air Force Building
- NgA - Niagra Silt Loam\*\*
- Pb - Palms Muck\*
- CrB - Croghan Loamy Fine Sand
- MtA - Minoa Fine Sandy Loam\*\*
- Lm - Lamson Very Fine Sandy Loam\*
- GaB - Galen Very Fine Sandy Loam
- ChA - Collamer Silt Loam
- AIC - Alton Gravelly Fine Sandy Loam
- Hydric Soils
- \*\* Potentially Hydric Soils

## Hancock Housing Area, New York Soils



Figure 3-3



localized fractures and bedding planes. Much of the groundwater stored in the fractured shale occurs under confined conditions.

Depth to groundwater beneath the area ranges from 5 to 10 feet below grade, with local groundwater flow trending primarily in an easterly direction. Groundwater is generally in direct hydraulic communication with the wetland, as indicated by poor drainage south of the HHA, open water and marshy ground in the bottom of an abandoned sand and gravel pit between Watertown Road and Electrical Substation A, the presence of Palms muck and Carlisle muck soils in the wetlands, and seasonally high water tables in adjacent soils (Figure 3-3).

### 3.4.3 Air Quality

Air quality in a given location is described as the concentration of various pollutants in the atmosphere, generally expressed in units of parts per million (ppm) or micrograms per cubic meter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ). The significance of a pollutant concentration is determined by comparing it to federal and/or state ambient air quality standards. These standards represent the maximum allowable atmosphere concentrations that may occur and still protect public health and welfare, with a reasonable margin of safety.

The HHA is located within the Central New York Interstate Air Quality Control Region (AQCR No. 158) (40 CFR 81.127), which encompasses nine counties: Onondaga (the HHA location), Oneida, Cortland, Cayuga, Madison, Oswego, Jefferson, Lewis, and Herkimer. The region is designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as attainment for  $\text{SO}_2$  and  $\text{PM}_{10}$  and as unclassifiable/attainment for CO,  $\text{O}_3$ , and  $\text{NO}_2$  (40 CFR 81.333). Onondaga County was designated as a nonattainment area for carbon monoxide (CO) in January 1992 for violations monitored in 1989. Subsequent to 1989, there have been no violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for CO detected at the monitoring site. In September 1993, Onondaga County was reclassified as a maintenance area. A maintenance area is a previously designated nonattainment area that has been redesignated as attainment subject to developing a maintenance plan under Section 175A of the Clean Air Act. The de minimis emission rates that apply to Onondaga County are listed in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2

Maintenance Area De Minimis Emission Rates	
Pollutant	Emissions (tons per year)
Ozone, $\text{NO}_x$ , $\text{SO}_2$ , or $\text{NO}_2$	100
Carbon monoxide (CO)	100
Suspended particulates ( $\text{PM}_{10}$ )	100
Lead (Pb)	25

Source: 40 CFR 51.853



The HHA was used as the overflow housing area for military personnel and their dependents stationed at Griffiss AFB until its closure in September 1995. Therefore, there are no current sources of air pollution at the site.

#### 3.4.4 Noise

The HHA is adjacent to the Syracuse Hancock International Airport. In 1992, there were about 113 daily operations (arrivals and departures) for air carrier aircraft and about 376 operations for air taxi/commuter, general aviation and military operations. The largest areas exposed to aircraft noise of DNL 65 dB and higher (65+) are east and west of the airport because most operations occur on the east-west Runway 10-28. The area east of the airport is primarily vacant land or manufacturing and production land uses. The area west of the airport is primarily commercial and residential. The HHA is currently not exposed to aircraft noise of DNL 65 dB.

#### 3.4.5 Biological Resources

For discussion purposes, the biological resources are divided into vegetation, wildlife (including aquatic biota), threatened or endangered species, and sensitive habitats, such as wetlands.

**Vegetation.** The HHA is primarily an urban vegetation community of lawns, shrubs, and planted trees. There are also athletic fields and successional old fields. The site is bordered on the east by a strip of hardwood forest. The southern edges of the site contain old field, shrubland, and forest areas that are border zones of large, mostly wooded wetlands to the south and southeast of HHA. These are diverse successional fields and forests containing many moisture loving plants, such as goldenrods (*Solidago* sp.), various grasses, Queen-Anne's-lace (*Daucus carota*), ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*), sedges (*Carex* sp.), horsetails (*Equisetum* sp.) black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), various ferns, rushes (*Juncus* sp.), touch-me-nots (*Impatiens* sp.), and cattails (*Typha* sp.) in the fields and marshes. The shrub layers contain dogwoods (*Cornus* sp.), buckthorns (*Rhamnus* sp.), viburnums (*Viburnum* sp.) raspberry/blackberry (*Rubus* sp.) wild grape (*Vitis* sp.) willows (*Salix* sp.), and poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*). Tree species, whose dominance can vary widely, include birches (*Betula* sp.), red and silver maples and box elder (*Acer* sp.), ash (*Fraxinus* sp.), hickory (*Carya* sp.), willow (*Salix* sp.), and cottonwood and aspen (*Populus* sp.).

**Wildlife.** The HHA supports the typical urban populations of songbirds and small animals as do the old fields and successional forest to the east and south of the site.

**Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species.** No plant or animal species that are listed as threatened or endangered by the USFWS are present at the HHA (see USFWS letter of May 23, 1996 in Section 5.0 of this EA). A review of Significant Habitat Program and Natural Heritage Program files conducted by NYSDEC did not identify the presence of any known endangered, threatened,



or special concern wildlife species; rare plants; animal or natural community occurrences; or other significant habitats at or adjacent to the HHA site. However, the Cicero State Game Management Area, located approximately 2 miles northeast of the HHA, is used extensively by a variety of waterfowl (New York Air National Guard 1994).

**Sensitive Habitats.** The HHA contains no unique or sensitive habitats except the wetland areas along the southern borders (Figure 3-4). The largest of these wetlands, whose northernmost edges form the southeastern corner of the HHA, is a red maple-hardwood swamp. Approximately 9 acres of this swamp occur within the HHA boundaries. The other wetland area, in the southwestern portion of the HHA, is mostly an artificial drainage area, dominated by reedgrass (*Calamagrostis* sp.), and purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) marsh vegetation in the northern parts and more wooded swamp vegetation to the south.

#### 3.4.6 Cultural and Paleontological Resources

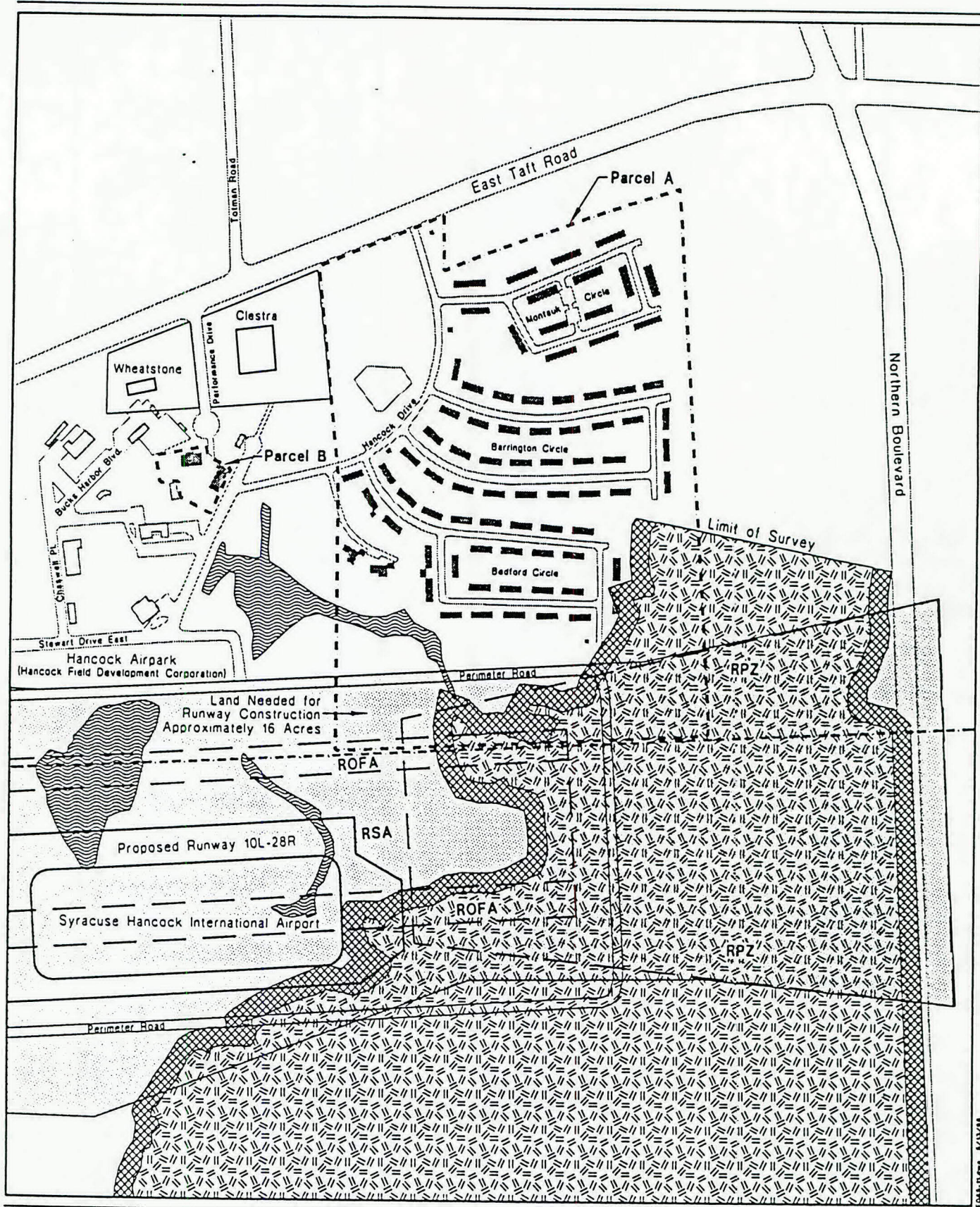
Cultural resources include prehistoric (archaeological) and historic sites, structures, districts, artifacts, or any other physical evidence of human activity considered important to a culture, subculture, or community for scientific, traditional, religious, or any other reason. Paleontological resources are the fossil evidence of past plant and animal life.

**Prehistoric Resources.** The HHA and property surrounding it has been repeatedly disturbed by human activities related to Hancock Field AFB, sand and gravel mining, and Syracuse Hancock International Airport development (City of Syracuse 1994). Previous site investigations have revealed no archaeological resources on the HHA property (U.S. Air Force 1983).

**Historic Resources.** Neither the former Hancock Field AFB property nor the present HHA contain any structures, including residences, which could be considered historic or aesthetic resources (U.S. Air Force 1983).

**Paleontological Resources.** The HHA and property surrounding it has been repeatedly disturbed by human activities related to Hancock Field AFB, sand and gravel mining, and Syracuse Hancock International Airport development (City of Syracuse 1994). Previous site investigations have revealed no paleontological resources on the HHA property (U.S. Air Force 1993).





Hancock Housing Area, New York  
Federal and State Wetlands

Figure 3-4



## 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the potential environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action and alternatives. To provide the context in which potential environmental impacts may occur, discussions of potential changes to the local communities, including population, land use, transportation and public utilities are included in this EA. In addition, issues related to management of hazardous materials and wastes are discussed. Impacts to the physical and natural environment are evaluated for soils and geology, water resources, air quality, noise, biological resources, and cultural and paleontological resources. These impacts may occur as a direct result of disposal and reuse activities or as an indirect result of changes on the adjacent properties, such as, a parallel runway construction at Syracuse Hancock International Airport and industrial development by the Hancock Field Development Corporation (HFDC). Possible mitigation measures to minimize or eliminate the adverse environmental impacts are also presented, where needed.

Cumulative impacts result from "the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time" (Council on Environmental Quality 1978). Cumulative impacts are discussed by resource in this chapter, where applicable.

### 4.2 LOCAL COMMUNITY

#### 4.2.1 Community Setting

Socioeconomic effects are addressed only to the extent that they are interrelated with the biophysical environment. Employment potentially generated by the Alternative Actions or the No-Action Alternative is discussed in this section. No long-term employment is expected to be generated by the Proposed Action on the Hancock Housing Area (HHA) site, except for temporary short-term employment of construction workers during the construction of a perimeter road for the Syracuse-Hancock International Airport.

##### 4.2.1.1 Proposed Action

With the Proposed Action, Parcel A of the HHA would be transferred to the City of Syracuse. The City of Syracuse Aviation Department plans to use the southern 16 acres of this parcel as the Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) and for construction of a perimeter road for the Syracuse Hancock International Airport. The city would demolish the existing housing structures on the remaining 69 acres of Parcel A. The demolition of housing units would temporarily generate employment of approximately 20 workers for a period of 3 to 6 months. Construction of perimeter road and clearing of wetlands for the RPZ



would also generate some temporary employment, but the timing of this activity is not expected to coincide with the demolition activity and no cumulative employment impacts are anticipated. The city plans to construct the new runway in two phases. In the first phase of development, a runway 7,500 feet long and 150 feet wide would be constructed. In the second phase of development, estimated to be some time after 2011, the runway would be extended to an ultimate length of 9,000 feet. Demolition of housing structures on the HHA property may take place soon after the transfer of land to the city some time in the 1996-1997 timeframe. The first phase of runway construction is not expected to start before 1999.

The Proposed Action assumes transfer of Parcel B of the HHA property to the HFDC. The HFDC plans to demolish the two buildings on the site and extend Performance Drive southward, connecting it to Stewart Drive. The demolition of buildings and construction of road would generate temporary construction employment of about 20 workers, possibly coinciding with the demolition of housing structures on Parcel A.

Temporary construction employment (3 to 6 months), as a direct result of the Proposed Action, would not result in any significant changes in local employment. Indirectly, with the construction of the new road connection through Parcel B, a few parcels adjacent to the road may become more attractive for light industrial development planned for this area by HFDC. This could generate permanent employment of 50 to 100 workers in the immediate vicinity of Parcel B. Even this change in employment would not be considered significant.

In summary, the Proposed Action would not result in any significant changes in local employment.

#### **4.2.1.2 Alternative Action**

The Alternative Action considers the potential development of Parcel A of HHA into 12 industrial properties, including the possible development of an air cargo facility that would have direct access to the east end of Runway 10L-28R after it has been extended to its full length of 9,000 feet some time after 2011. If developed as conceived in the Hancock Airpark Master Plan (C&S Engineers 1996), it could employ 500 to 600 workers at its full development. The Hancock Airpark Master Plan anticipates the development of the entire Hancock Field Area in four or five phases. The development at the HHA property is proposed in the last phase of the Airpark development. The addition of 500 to 600 workers after 2011 would not represent a significant change in local employment in the Syracuse Metropolitan Area.

#### **4.2.1.3 No-Action Alternative**

The No-Action Alternative would result in the U.S. Government not transferring any land to the City of Syracuse or HFDC for future reuse. The U.S. Government would place the property in caretaker status to limit



deterioration of buildings and ensure public safety. A minimum caretaker force of four to five workers may be needed to implement the No-Action Alternative. Such a change in local employment would be considered minimal and not significant.

#### **4.2.2 Land Use**

This section discusses the Proposed Action and alternatives relative to land use and zoning to determine the compatibility of reuses with local land use plans and zoning. Land Use compatibility with aircraft noise is addressed in Section 4.4.4, Noise.

##### **4.2.2.1 Proposed Action**

Although the Proposed Action calls for the HHA lands to be transferred to the City of Syracuse and HFDC, the Town of Cicero would have the land use and zoning authority on proposed reuses because the actions would take place within its boundaries. The Town of Cicero has tentatively zoned the HHA site as a general commercial plus district that permits light industrial and commercial uses. The City of Syracuse, however, is proposing only the demolition of existing housing and no new development on the site. There is, therefore, no conflict with the zoning ordinance of the Town of Cicero. Extension of the Performance Drive southward by HFDC would not be in conflict with the zoning ordinance of the Town of Cicero. Land uses planned for the Proposed Action are, therefore, considered in compliance with the local land use plans and zoning and no significant impacts are anticipated.

##### **4.2.2.2 Alternative Action**

Potential industrial development including possible air cargo operations considered under this alternative would be in compliance with the local land use plans and zoning ordinances. No significant impacts are anticipated.

##### **4.2.2.3 No-Action Alternative**

With the HHA remaining in U.S. Air Force caretaker status, the housing structures on Parcel A and the two industrial/office buildings on Parcel B would not be demolished. The Town of Cicero would continue to treat this site as federal property (military use) and would not rezone it for light industrial/commercial uses. No short-term impacts are expected. However, if standing structures are not properly maintained over the long term, they may become public safety concerns and may result in adverse environmental impacts requiring some action on the part of the Air Force and the Town of Cicero. These impacts, however, would not be considered significant.



#### **4.2.3 Transportation**

##### **4.2.3.1 Proposed Action**

With the demolition of housing structures and no new development on Parcel A, the traffic volumes would remain either at the current levels or reduce to almost zero. Currently, the housing units are not occupied and traffic into and out of Parcel A is negligible, mainly for minor supervision and maintenance. Extension of Performance Drive through Parcel B would increase the attractiveness for future industrial development of some of the vacant parcels managed by HFDC. This would result in some traffic increase, but the increase would be within the limits planned by the HFDC over various phases of development of the Hancock Airpark. Traffic impacts inside Hancock Airpark and along East Taft Road, the main access road along the north boundary of the Airpark, would be mitigated as part of the planned development as and when such impacts occur. Direct transportation impacts of the Proposed Action are negligible and not significant. Indirect impacts resulting from the industrial development on adjacent properties are expected to be not significant and mitigable by HFDC. No cumulative impacts are anticipated.

##### **4.2.3.2 Alternative Action**

With the potential industrial development on Parcel A, local traffic on East Taft Road and Northern Boulevard would increase along with an increase in the onsite traffic. This development, if it occurs, would not take place before 2011 and would be part of the planned development of Hancock Airpark. Improvements of East Taft Road, if needed, would be incorporated into the planning of new industrial development phases. Transportation impacts of the Alternative Action are, therefore, not considered to be adverse and/or significant. Cumulative impacts are considered mitigable due to the planned phasing of development.

##### **4.2.3.3 No-Action Alternative**

With the No-Action Alternative, the local traffic generated by the caretaker force at the HHA property would be minimal and not significant. Indirect traffic by the development of parcels adjacent to Hancock Airpark would occur, but appropriate mitigation measures are expected to be undertaken by HFDC and the impacts are not likely to be significant. No cumulative impacts are anticipated.

#### **4.2.4 Utilities**

##### **4.2.4.1 Proposed Action**

With the demolition of housing structures and no new development on Parcel A, the requirements for utilities, such as water, electricity, and natural gas, would be eliminated. Similarly, no wastewater would be generated at the site. The utility systems providing these utilities have already experienced a decline in



demand because of the departure of all military families in September 1995. No new adverse impacts would be generated on Parcel A as a result of the Proposed Action. Extension of Performance Drive southward through Parcel B would have no direct impact on utility systems. Indirect impacts could occur from the industrial development on adjacent properties. Utility systems currently have sufficient capacity to meet any development planned by HFDC and no significant impacts are anticipated.

#### 4.2.4.2 Alternative Action

Potential industrial development on Parcels A and B would require new utility connections. However, this development would take place 15 to 20 years into the future (most likely after 2010). The utilities have sufficient time to plan for anticipated demand by that time. No significant adverse impacts are expected.

#### 4.2.4.3 No-Action Alternative

With the property remaining in caretaker status under U.S. Government and no new development occurring with this alternative, there would be no impact on local utility systems.

### 4.3 HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES MANAGEMENT

This section addresses the potential for environmental impacts caused by hazardous substances management practices associated with the Proposed Action and alternatives.

#### 4.3.1 Proposed Action

With the Proposed Action, housing structures located in Parcel A that contain encapsulated lead-based paint would be demolished and the area would be converted to open space. Demolition activities would be subject to all applicable federal, state, and local regulations to minimize potential risks to human health and the environment, including compliance with requirements of NYCCR Title 6, Part 371 for disposal of waste materials containing lead, and OSHA worker protection regulations. None of the housing units located on Parcel A are known to contain asbestos-containing materials. The two structures located in Parcel B, do not contain lead-based paint and have previously undergone abatement for asbestos. As such, the demolition of the two facilities, would not present significant environmental impacts.

After the demolition of the building structures, the Proposed Action would result in no risk from hazardous materials and waste because no hazardous waste is anticipated to be generated. However, some pesticides may be used on Parcel A or Parcel B as a result of the Proposed Action.

The northern-most portion of Installation Restoration Program (IRP) Site #2 could be disturbed by the construction of a perimeter road. This disturbance can, however, be avoided by rerouting the road to the north, if needed.



Consequently, Site #2 will not be significantly impacted by the Proposed Action. The Air Force prepared a No Further Response Action Plan decision document for this site and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation concurred with the decision document in September 1995.

#### 4.3.2 Alternative Action

With the Alternative Action, the housing structures located on Parcel A that contain encapsulated lead-based paint would be demolished to allow for light industry and air cargo development. Demolition activities would be subject to all applicable federal, state, and local regulations to minimize potential risks to human health and the environment, including compliance with requirements of NYCCR Title 6, Part 371 for disposal of waste materials containing lead, and OSHA worker protection regulations.

Some hazardous material usage is likely for activities associated with light industrial and air cargo development. Hazardous materials used could include solvents, heavy metals, corrosives, fuels, heating oil, ignitables, and pesticides. The property recipients would be responsible for the management of hazardous materials according to applicable regulations. Each industrial tenant would have to comply with the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), Section 311, Title III, which requires that local communities be informed of the use of hazardous materials.

Some hazardous waste is also anticipated to be generated as the proposed light industrial and air cargo development area becomes operational. However, the hazardous materials used and hazardous waste generated in such operations are minimal and are not expected to result in significant impacts.

#### 4.3.3 No-Action Alternative

With the No-Action Alternative, hazardous materials would be used for facility and grounds caretaker maintenance activities. Materials used for these activities would most likely include pesticides, fuels, paints, and corrosives. The Air Force or other retained DOD organization would be responsible for management of hazardous substances in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations to ensure the proper and safe handling and application of all chemicals. It is anticipated that very little, if any, hazardous waste would be generated with the No-Action Alternative. The impacts from hazardous materials use or hazardous waste generated are not expected to be significant.

### 4.4 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

#### 4.4.1 Geology and Soils

The potential effects of the Proposed Action and the alternatives on local geology and soils, as well as the potential constraints imposed by geological and soil conditions on activities of the Proposed Action and alternatives, have been analyzed based on a review of published literature.



#### 4.4.1.1 Proposed Action

With the Proposed Action, the Air Force housing structures located on Parcel A would be demolished and no new development would occur. Demolition or removal of existing structures may expose soils. In many cases, however, the soils have already been disturbed. Topsoil may have been removed, or the placement fill material on top of any undisturbed soil may have buried the topsoil. Any ground exposed in demolition or removal could be disturbed to some extent and be susceptible to erosion. Demolishing the housing structures would cause minor changes to the existing topography, which was already modified when the housing structures were constructed. The soil disturbance from demolition of the housing structures would occur on approximately 69 acres. Disturbance would occur where buildings, streets, and parking areas were once located. Because the soil would remain bare in Parcel A, the potential for a temporary increase in soil erosion as a result of stormwater runoff and wind action is anticipated. Soil losses would depend on frequency of storms, wind velocities, and the duration of time the soil is bare, but the impacts are not expected to be significant.

As previously discussed in Section 3.4.1, the Niagara silt loam and the Minoa fine sandy loam soils located within Parcel A have been designated as prime farmland. Portions of the Niagara soils were disturbed when the housing units were constructed. Because this area is to be left as open space after demolition, these soils would not be affected by the Proposed Action and would not require any conversion.

The Proposed Action also assumes the demolition of the two buildings located on Parcel B and the extension of Performance Drive. The topography of the area would be changed somewhat by the implementation of the Proposed Action. The extension of Performance Road would disturb the soil profile and lead to a possible temporary increase in erosion as a result of stormwater runoff and wind action. The Galen very fine sandy loam soils, which have been classified as prime farmland, make up this parcel of land. Conversion of prime farmland, which has not been previously disturbed, would require coordination between HFDC and the local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) district office.

Because HHA lies in an area of infrequent seismic activity, little or no damage is expected from earthquakes. No impacts are anticipated from seismic events. Overall, the impacts on geology and soils are considered negligible and not significant.

#### 4.4.1.2 Alternative Action

With the Alternative Action, the Air Force structures on Parcels A and B would be demolished, Parcel A would be subdivided into industrial properties, and Parcel B would be influenced by the extension of Performance Drive. Effects of the Alternative Action on regional geology and soils would be minimal. Effects on local geology and soils would result primarily from demolition and



construction activities. Demolition and construction activities may expose soils. New construction on the sites of these structures would be unlikely to cause further disturbance unless there is deeper excavation. New construction where soil profiles are intact would disturb soils at the building sites, including the construction laydown areas. This disturbance may include grading, excavation, infilling, or removal of topsoil.

The erosion potential of soils over most of the area to be affected by the Alternative Action is low. Soil losses from erosion are not expected to be significant because they can be kept well within maximum tolerable limits by using standard treatments for controlling erosion.

There are no significant limiting factors in terms of subsidence, slope stability, or shrink-swell potential of soils in the areas. Subsidence is not a factor except in a very limited area of Palms muck located in the southeast corner of the site (Figure 3-3). Because no steep slopes are present where construction is anticipated, no impacts are expected. The shrink-swell potential of all the soils is low. However, the limitations of most of the soils must be considered during construction of the industrial area because of their wetness and the high water table.

Soils classified as prime farmland make up approximately two-thirds of the area of Parcel A. Soils in this area would be disturbed by grading, compacting, and road construction for the proposed light industrial and air cargo development. Portions of this prime farmland have already been disturbed by the construction of the housing units. The remaining prime farmland would have to be converted. With the Alternative Action, as with the Proposed Action, disturbance of prime farmland located on Parcel B would occur from the proposed extension of Performance Drive. Conversion of prime or unique farmland would require coordination between HFDC and the local NRCS district office.

Overall, the impacts on geology and soils are anticipated to be minimal and not significant.

#### 4.4.1.3 No-Action

No impacts to geology and soils of the HHA area and the surrounding region are anticipated with the No-Action Alternative. Because the property would be placed in caretaker status, no disturbance of any geological resources or soils is anticipated.

#### 4.4.2 Water Resources

The following section describes the potential impacts on water resources as a result of the Proposed Action and alternatives. Construction/demolition activities could alter soil profiles and natural drainage, which may temporarily alter water flow patterns.



#### 4.4.2.1 Proposed Action

With the Proposed Action, demolition of the structures located on Parcels A and B could alter soil profiles and natural drainage, which may temporarily alter water flow patterns. Portions of the proposed Runway Protected Zone and perimeter road construction would occur on an existing wetland (See Section 4.4.5).

Sediment entering the North Branch of Ley Creek as a result of erosion from ground exposed during demolition and construction of Performance Drive and perimeter road is not expected because control measures should keep erosion to a minimum.

With the Proposed Action, all water would continue to be supplied to the HHA by the Onondaga County Water Authority. No water would be withdrawn from Ley Creek or other surface waters located on the HHA or the area immediately surrounding it.

There are no flood hazard zones located on Parcel A and B. Therefore, no impacts from flooding are expected.

No groundwater would be withdrawn for use on the HHA with the Proposed Action. No impacts to the groundwater flow system or to groundwater quality resulting from the Proposed Action are anticipated. Overall, the impacts on water resources are anticipated to be negligible and not significant.

#### 4.4.2.2 Alternative Action

With the Alternative Action, as with the Proposed Action, demolition of the structures on Parcels A and B could alter soil profiles and natural drainage, which may temporarily alter water flow patterns. Because soils would be compacted during any future construction (i.e. Industrial Park, Performance Drive, and perimeter road) and overlain by pavement or buildings, impervious surfaces would be created that would cause increased stormwater runoff to local storm sewers and sewage systems. Drainage would be altered to divert water away from facilities and paved areas. Stormwater discharge from nonpoint sources, especially by the proposed industrial area, may contain fuels, oils, and other residual contaminants, which could degrade the quality of surface water. If uncontrolled, runoff from nonpoint sources could cause increased sediment loads in drainage systems and the adjacent stream. However, the amount of land disturbed and the proposed commercial and industrial reuses are not likely to result in significant impacts on water resources.

#### 4.4.2.3 No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative would result in no adverse impacts on the water resources of the HHA. The No-Action Alternative would have positive effects on surface and groundwater quality. With very limited operations and no



increase in population, water demands resulting from caretaker activities would be minimal and could be supplied by existing systems. Impacts would not be considered significant.

#### **4.4.3 Air Quality**

##### **4.4.3.1 Proposed Action**

With the Proposed Action, Parcel A of the HHA would be transferred to the City of Syracuse. The city plans to demolish the existing housing structures on this property and then leave the property undeveloped to avoid development of incompatible uses in close proximity to the proposed runway to the south of this property. During demolition, temporary and minor air quality impacts would occur as a result of fugitive dust ( $PM_{10}$ ) generation. This activity is not expected to result in violation of any federal or state air quality standards. With the land remaining vacant after demolition of housing structures, no air quality impacts would occur at the HHA property.

The transfer of Parcel B to HFDC to allow for the extension of Performance Drive southward, connecting it to Stewart Drive, would have negligible direct air quality impacts during demolition of the two buildings on the site and the construction of the road. Indirect air quality impacts could occur with the development of light industrial uses on adjacent parcels. HFDC or tenants on individual lots would be responsible for obtaining any air quality permits, if needed. Overall, the impacts are not anticipated to be significant.

##### **4.4.3.2 Alternative Action**

With the potential development of Parcel A after 2011, the new uses may result in air pollutant increases both by stationary and mobile sources. The developers of Parcel A or tenants on individual lots would be responsible for obtaining necessary air quality permits or mitigating any violations of federal or state air quality standards. It is, however, highly unlikely that the development of 12 new parcels developed as general commercial properties permitted by local zoning would add significantly to the air pollutants generated by the current and future activities at the adjacent Syracuse Hancock International Airport. Even if some of these parcels are utilized as air cargo facilities, the contribution to regional air quality would not be significant because the new air cargo facilities would replace existing facilities located elsewhere at the airport. The Syracuse Hancock International Airport, of which the air cargo facilities would be a part, is expected to comply with federal and state air quality regulations. Similarly, the direct and indirect impacts generated by the improvements on Parcel B by HFDC would not be significant.

##### **4.4.3.3 No-Action Alternative**

With the HHA property remaining in caretaker status with this alternative, the air quality impacts would be negligible and not significant from maintenance activities at the property.



#### 4.4.4 Noise

##### 4.4.4.1 Proposed Action

With the transfer of property to the City of Syracuse and the demolition of housing structures, there would be no noise sources on Parcel A. Road improvement through Parcel B by HFDC may result in faster industrial development of adjacent properties in the Hancock Airpark, but the light industrial uses planned for the Airpark would not add significantly to the noise generated by the adjacent Syracuse Hancock International Airport. In fact, the City of Syracuse plans to acquire the HHA property because a major portion of this property would fall within the 65 dB noise contour when the proposed runway 10L-28R is constructed. By acquiring the HHA property, the city can control the future development of this property in a way that the new uses are not incompatible with the planned runway and the city would not have to undertake costly mitigations to reduce the noise impacts to acceptable levels.

##### 4.4.4.2 Alternative Action

Development of industrial uses on the HHA property with this alternative would result in some increases in noise levels, mainly from vehicular traffic and possibly from air cargo operations on portions of the property. Impacts from possible air cargo operations would be part of the overall airport operations, which would be conducted in compliance with the FAA guidelines for noise control. In the context of airport operations, impacts from air cargo operations which involve mainly a relocation of air cargo activities from one part of the airport to another, the noise impacts would not be considered significant.

##### 4.4.4.3 No-Action Alternative

With the HHA property remaining in caretaker status with this alternative, there would be no new sources of noise on the property and no impacts would occur.

#### 4.4.5 Biological Resources

##### 4.4.5.1 Proposed Action

Demolition of existing housing structures on Parcel A and road improvement through Parcel B would have negligible impacts on vegetation and wildlife including threatened, endangered, or candidate species. Similarly, no sensitive habitats would be directly affected because all demolition activities would take place on previously disturbed lands. After demolition, Parcel A would be left in a natural state, which would allow the regeneration of native vegetation and wildlife habitat. No threatened or endangered species of plant or animals are listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the State of New York at the HHA site. No impacts are anticipated as a result of the construction of the perimeter road and creation of the RPZ on the HHA property. Except for the impacts on wetlands discussed below, the impacts on biological resources are not considered to be significant.



The southern 16 acres of Parcel A would be used as Runway Object Free Area (ROFA) and the Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) for the proposed runway 10L-28R at Syracuse Hancock International Airport. A perimeter road would also be built on a portion of this 16-acre parcel. Clearance of vegetation both in the ROFA and the RPZ would affect approximately 9 acres of existing federal and state wetlands on the site. Road construction would require filling of approximately 0.5 acres of wetlands. The total wetlands disturbance on the HHA property thus amounts to less than 10 acres or approximately 7 percent of a total of 148 acres of wetlands disturbed by all activities related to proposed runway construction. The City of Syracuse expects 23 acres of federal and state wetlands disturbance by filling and 125 acres by clearing. Even with less than 10 acres of disturbance, impacts to wetlands are considered significant and mitigation measures are deemed necessary.

The City of Syracuse is in the process of submitting permit applications seeking approval to undertake jurisdictional activities in wetlands to both the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation under a joint permit application process. During this process, a comprehensive mitigation plan to document avoidance and minimization of wetlands impacts and a compensatory mitigation plan to replace unavoidable wetlands losses will be prepared. The City of Syracuse has considered avoidance and minimization of wetlands impacts in the development of its alternative runway locations. Flexibility in design modification of the new runway to avoid wetlands is limited by the strict FAA regulations governing the layout, design, and dimensions of runways and various zones which surround them. The city, however, plans to utilize best management practices during the construction phase to minimize potential impacts to adjacent wetlands. The city has also suggested providing compensatory mitigations (e.g., restoration of existing degraded wetlands or creation of man-made wetlands) for the unavoidable impacts at sites agreed upon in consultation with the federal and state regulatory agencies. These mutually agreed-upon mitigation measures between the city and the regulatory agencies are expected to reduce the significant wetlands impacts to non-significant levels.

#### 4.4.5.2 Alternative Action

Development of Parcel A some time after 2011 would result in disturbance of plant and animal life established on the 69-acre portion of Parcel A after demolition of existing housing structures in 1997-1998. This impact would not be considered significant in the regional context of biological resources. The impacts on the southern 16 acres of Parcel A and on Parcel B would be the same as described for the Proposed Action. Some additional wetlands occur in the southeastern section of the 69-acre portion of Parcel A. Impacts to these wetlands can be eliminated or minimized by avoiding this portion of the parcel in future development or by negotiating adequate mitigation measures with the federal and state regulatory agencies.



#### 4.4.5.3 No-Action Alternative

With this alternative, the housing structures on Parcel A would not be demolished and the property would be maintained in caretaker status. Impacts to biological resources would not occur on the 69-acre portion of Parcel A or on Parcel B. The southern 16-acre portion of Parcel A would be developed as described for the Proposed Action, and the impacts would be the same as for the Proposed Action. Impacts are not anticipated to be significant except on wetlands for which the City of Syracuse is already negotiating the necessary mitigation with the regulatory agencies.

#### 4.4.6 Cultural Resources

##### 4.4.6.1 Proposed Action

Previous site investigations have revealed no archaeological, historic, or paleontological resources on the HHA property. The Proposed Action, therefore, is not expected to have any impacts on cultural resources (see letter from New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, dated May 24, 1996, in Section 5.0 of this EA). If any buried artifacts or human remains are identified during construction of the perimeter road, the City of Syracuse would have to implement mitigation measures in consultation with the New York State Historic Preservation Office.

##### 4.4.6.2 Alternative Action

With no identified cultural resources on site, the development of HHA property with this alternative is not expected to have any impacts to cultural resources. If any buried artifacts or human remains are identified during construction on individual lots, the developers of the site would have to implement mitigation measures in consultation with the New York State Historic Preservation Office.

##### 4.4.6.3 No-Action Alternative

With the majority of the site remaining in caretaker status, no impacts to cultural resources are expected. The City of Syracuse would have to implement mitigation measures if impacts are identified as a result of the construction of the perimeter road.



## 5.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The federal, state, and local agencies and private agencies/organizations that were contacted during the course of preparing this Environmental Assessment are listed below. Consultation letters sent to federal, state, and local agencies and their responses follow this page.

### FEDERAL AGENCIES

Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service)  
(Dave Sullivan, Syracuse, New York)

Department of the Air Force, Headquarters 174th Fighter Wing (ANG) (Timothy C. Sager, New York  
Air National Guard)

Air Force Base Conversion Agency (Anna Lemaire, Site Manager and Michael F. McDermott,  
Environmental Engineer; Griffiss Air Force Base, New York)

Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (Leonard P. Corin, Cortland, New York)

Environmental Protection Agency, Region II (Robert W. Hargrove, Chief Environmental Impact Branch,  
New York)

### STATE AGENCIES

New York Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (Julia S. Stokes, Deputy Commissioner  
of Historic Preservation, Albany, New York)

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (Jeffrey McCullough, Bureau of Eastern  
Remedial Action, Division of Hazardous Waste Remediation, Albany, New York)

### LOCAL/REGIONAL AGENCIES

Town of Cicero (Joan Kesel; Town Supervisor, Cicero, New York)

Hancock Field Development Corporation (Dennis Lightfoot, Site Manager, North Syracuse, New York)

Metropolitan Development Association of Syracuse and Central New York (David A. Mankiewicz and  
Katie Reed; Syracuse, New York)

City of Syracuse, Department of Aviation (Charles R. Everett, Jr., Commissioner, and Mary Jo Kiggins,  
Deputy Commissioner; Syracuse, New York)





DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE

HQ AFCEE/ECA  
3207 North Road  
Brooks AFB, Texas 78235-5363

10 MAY 1995

Mr. Robert W. Hargrove  
Chief, Environmental Impact Branch  
U.S. EPA, Region II  
26 Federal Plaza  
New York, NY 10278

Dear Mr. Hargrove

The Headquarters Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence at Brooks AFB, Texas, is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) in support of the disposal and reuse of Hancock Housing Area (HHA) in Syracuse, NY (Figure 1). The HHA was built in 1960 to serve as housing for military families stationed at Hancock Field Air Force Base. When the base was closed in 1984, the control of the housing area was transferred to Griffiss AFB in Rome, NY to serve as overflow housing for families stationed in Rome as well as Syracuse. With the realignment of Griffiss AFB in 1995, it was determined that this overflow housing was no longer required and the housing was completely vacated in September 1995.

The HHA, now available for disposal and reuse, consists of two parcels. The larger parcel, Parcel A on Figure 1, is the housing tract while the smaller parcel, Parcel B on Figure 1, contains two buildings used as housing maintenance support buildings. The City of Syracuse Department of Aviation plans to construct a new runway at Syracuse Hancock International Airport at a distance of 3,600 feet north and parallel to the existing east-west runway 10-28. Three-fourths of Parcel A would fall within the 65 DNL noise contour if the runway was constructed as planned. The City of Syracuse, therefore, made an application to the U.S. Air Force to obtain title to the entire Parcel A through a public airport conveyance. In this way the city could exercise needed control over the development of future land uses which could be incompatible with the planned runway. The Hancock Field Development Corporation (HFDC), responsible for the management and development of an industrial park, Hancock Airpark, on the former Hancock Field AFB, has requested to obtain title from the U.S. Air Force for the entire Parcel B. This would enable HFDC to extend Performance Drive southward and connect it to Stewart Drive, thus tying the whole Hancock Airpark together. The U.S. Air Force is considering these requests as the proposed reuses of the property and will analyze the environmental impacts of these reuses in this EA.



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The EA will be prepared in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act and applicable implementing regulations. This letter is being issued to the appropriate federal, state, and local authorities to solicit comments concerning environmental impacts that should be addressed in this EA.

Thank you for assistance in this matter. Please submit any comments to our Project Manager for this effort, Major Donald Gleason, at the above address not later than 1 June 1996.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Farthing', written over a horizontal line.

JONATHAN D. FARTHING  
Chief, Environmental Analysis Division  
Environmental Conservation and Planning Directorate

Attachment:  
Figure 1, HHA





DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE

HQ AFCEE/ECA  
3207 North Road  
Brooks AFB, Texas 78235-5363

10 MAY 1996

Mr. Leonard P. Corin  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
100 Grange Place, Room 202  
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Mr. Corin

The Headquarters Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence at Brooks AFB, Texas, is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) in support of the disposal and reuse of Hancock Housing Area (HHA) in Syracuse, NY (Figure 1). The HHA was built in 1960 to serve as housing for military families stationed at Hancock Field Air Force Base. When the base was closed in 1984, the control of the housing area was transferred to Griffiss AFB in Rome, NY to serve as overflow housing for families stationed in Rome as well as Syracuse. With the realignment of Griffiss AFB in 1995, it was determined that this overflow housing was no longer required and the housing was completely vacated in September 1995.

The HHA, now available for disposal and reuse, consists of two parcels. The larger parcel, Parcel A on Figure 1, is the housing tract while the smaller parcel, Parcel B on Figure 1, contains two buildings used as housing maintenance support buildings. The City of Syracuse Department of Aviation plans to construct a new runway at Syracuse Hancock International Airport at a distance of 3,600 feet north and parallel to the existing east-west runway 10-28. Three-fourths of Parcel A would fall within the 65 DNL noise contour if the runway was constructed as planned. The City of Syracuse, therefore, made an application to the U.S. Air Force to obtain title to the entire Parcel A through a public airport conveyance. In this way the city could exercise needed control over the development of future land uses which could be incompatible with the planned runway. The Hancock Field Development Corporation (HFDC), responsible for the management and development of an industrial park, Hancock Airpark, on the former Hancock Field AFB, has requested to obtain title from the U.S. Air Force for the entire Parcel B. This would enable HFDC to extend Performance Drive southward and connect it to Stewart Drive, thus tying the whole Hancock Airpark together. The U.S. Air Force is considering these requests as the proposed reuses of the property and will analyze the environmental impacts of these reuses in this EA.





The EA will be prepared in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act and applicable implementing regulations. This letter is being issued to the appropriate federal, state, and local authorities to solicit comments concerning environmental impacts that should be addressed in this EA.

Thank you for assistance in this matter. Please submit any comments to our Project Manager for this effort, Major Donald Gleason, at the above address not later than 1 June 1996.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JDF', is written over a horizontal line.

JONATHAN D. FARTHING  
Chief, Environmental Analysis Division  
Environmental Conservation and Planning Directorate

Attachment:  
Figure 1. HHA





DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE

HQ AFCEE/ECA  
3207 North Road  
Brooks AFB, Texas 78235-5363

10 MAY 1996

Ms. Joan Kesel  
Town Supervisor  
Town of Cicero  
8236 S. Main Street  
Cicero, NY 13039

Dear Ms. Kesel

The Headquarters Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence at Brooks AFB, Texas, is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) in support of the disposal and reuse of Hancock Housing Area (HHA) in Syracuse, NY (Figure 1). The HHA was built in 1960 to serve as housing for military families stationed at Hancock Field Air Force Base. When the base was closed in 1984, the control of the housing area was transferred to Griffiss AFB in Rome, NY to serve as overflow housing for families stationed in Rome as well as Syracuse. With the realignment of Griffiss AFB in 1995, it was determined that this overflow housing was no longer required and the housing was completely vacated in September 1995.

The HHA, now available for disposal and reuse, consists of two parcels. The larger parcel, Parcel A on Figure 1, is the housing tract while the smaller parcel, Parcel B on Figure 1, contains two buildings used as housing maintenance support buildings. The City of Syracuse Department of Aviation plans to construct a new runway at Syracuse Hancock International Airport at a distance of 3,600 feet north and parallel to the existing east-west runway 10-28. Three-fourths of Parcel A would fall within the 65 DNL noise contour if the runway was constructed as planned. The City of Syracuse, therefore, made an application to the U.S. Air Force to obtain title to the entire Parcel A through a public airport conveyance. In this way the city could exercise needed control over the development of future land uses which could be incompatible with the planned runway. The Hancock Field Development Corporation (HFDC), responsible for the management and development of an industrial park, Hancock Airpark, on the former Hancock Field AFB, has requested to obtain title from the U.S. Air Force for the entire Parcel B. This would enable HFDC to extend Performance Drive southward and connect it to Stewart Drive, thus tying the whole Hancock Airpark together. The U.S. Air Force is considering these requests as the proposed reuses of the property and will analyze the environmental impacts of these reuses in this EA.





The EA will be prepared in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act and applicable implementing regulations. This letter is being issued to the appropriate federal, state, and local authorities to solicit comments concerning environmental impacts that should be addressed in this EA.

Thank you for assistance in this matter. Please submit any comments to our Project Manager for this effort, Major Donald Gleason, at the above address not later than 1 June 1996.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan D. Farthing", written over a horizontal line.

JONATHAN D. FARTHING  
Chief, Environmental Analysis Division  
Environmental Conservation and Planning Directorate

Attachment:  
Figure 1, HHA





DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE

HQ AFCEE/ECA  
3207 North Road  
Brooks AFB, Texas 78235-5363

11 MAY 1996

Ms. Julia S. Stokes  
Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation  
New York Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Empire State Plaza  
Agency Building 1  
Albany, NY 12238

Dear Ms. Stokes

The Headquarters Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence at Brooks AFB, Texas, is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) in support of the disposal and reuse of Hancock Housing Area (HHA) in Syracuse, NY (Figure 1). The HHA was built in 1960 to serve as housing for military families stationed at Hancock Field Air Force Base. When the base was closed in 1984, the control of the housing area was transferred to Griffiss AFB in Rome, NY to serve as overflow housing for families stationed in Rome as well as Syracuse. With the realignment of Griffiss AFB in 1995, it was determined that this overflow housing was no longer required and the housing was completely vacated in September 1995.

The HHA, now available for disposal and reuse, consists of two parcels. The larger parcel, Parcel A on Figure 1, is the housing tract while the smaller parcel, Parcel B on Figure 1, contains two buildings used as housing maintenance support buildings. The City of Syracuse Department of Aviation plans to construct a new runway at Syracuse Hancock International Airport at a distance of 3,600 feet north and parallel to the existing east-west runway 10-28. Three-fourths of Parcel A would fall within the 65 DNL noise contour if the runway was constructed as planned. The City of Syracuse, therefore, made an application to the U.S. Air Force to obtain title to the entire Parcel A through a public airport conveyance. In this way the city could exercise needed control over the development of future land uses which could be incompatible with the planned runway. The Hancock Field Development Corporation (HFDC), responsible for the management and development of an industrial park, Hancock Airpark, on the former Hancock Field AFB, has requested to obtain title from the U.S. Air Force for the entire Parcel B. This would enable HFDC to extend Performance Drive southward and connect it to Stewart Drive, thus tying the whole Hancock Airpark together. The U.S. Air Force is considering these requests as the proposed reuses of the property and will analyze the environmental impacts of these reuses in this EA.



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We are also requesting your input on the presence of and effects of this undertaking on any known historic properties in the Hancock Housing Area. After conducting interviews and information gathering, no archaeological sites are known to be present on the property and the facilities present no historical significance per application of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC 470).

Sincerely

Attachment:  
Figure 1, HHLA





# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

3817 Luker Road  
Cortland, New York 13045

May 23, 1996

Mr. Jonathan D. Farthing  
Chief, Environmental Analysis Division  
HQ AFCEE/ECA  
3207 North Road  
Brooks AFB, TX 78235-5363

Attention: Major Donald Gleason

Dear Mr. Farthing:

This responds to your letter of May 10, 1996, requesting information on the presence of endangered or threatened species in the vicinity of the Hancock Housing Area (HHA) at the Hancock Field Air Force Base, Town of Cicero, Onondaga County, New York. The information will be used in the preparation of an Environmental Analysis for disposal of the HHA.

Except for occasional transient individuals, no Federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species under our jurisdiction are known to exist in the project impact area. Therefore, no Biological Assessment or further Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) is required with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). Should project plans change, or if additional information on listed or proposed species becomes available, this determination may be reconsidered. A compilation of Federally listed and proposed endangered and threatened species in New York is enclosed for your information.

The above comments pertaining to endangered species under our jurisdiction are provided pursuant to the Endangered Species Act. This response does not preclude additional Service comments under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act or other legislation.

For additional information on fish and wildlife resources or State-listed species, we suggest you contact:

New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation  
Region 7  
1285 Fisher Avenue  
Cortland, NY 13045-1090  
(607) 753-3095

New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation  
Wildlife Resources Center - Information Serv.  
New York Natural Heritage Program  
700 Troy-Schenectady Road  
Latham, NY 12110-2400  
(518) 783-3932



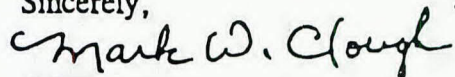
JULY 11 30 20-2071 11-22/0021

The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps of the Cicero and Syracuse East Quadrangles are available and may show wetlands in the project vicinity. However, while the NWI maps are reasonably accurate, they should not be used in lieu of field surveys for determining the presence of wetlands or delineating wetland boundaries for Federal regulatory purposes.

Work in certain waters and wetlands of the United States may require a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). If a permit is required, in reviewing the application pursuant to the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the Service may concur, with or without stipulations, or recommend denial of the permit depending upon the potential adverse impacts on fish and wildlife resources associated with project implementation. The need for a Corps permit may be determined by contacting Mr. Paul Leuchner, Chief, Regulatory Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1776 Niagara Street, Buffalo, NY 14207 (telephone: [716] 879-4321).

If you require additional information please contact Michael Stoll at (607) 753-9334.

Sincerely,



**ACTING FOR**

Sherry W. Morgan  
Field Supervisor

Enclosure

cc: NYSDEC, Cortland, NY (Reg. Services)  
NYSDEC, Latham, NY  
EPA, Chief, Marine & Wetlands Protection Branch, New York, NY  
COE, Buffalo, NY



# FEDERALLY LISTED AND PROPOSED ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES IN NEW YORK

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Distribution</u>
<b>FISHES</b>			
Sturgeon, shortnose*	<i>Acipenser brevirostrum</i>	E	Hudson River & other Atlantic coastal rivers
<b>REPTILES</b>			
Turtle, green*	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	T	Oceanic summer visitor coastal waters
Turtle, hawksbill*	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>	E	Oceanic summer visitor coastal waters
Turtle, leatherback*	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	E	Oceanic summer resident coastal waters
Turtle, loggerhead*	<i>Caretta caretta</i>	T	Oceanic summer resident coastal waters
Turtle, Atlantic ridley*	<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>	E	Oceanic summer resident coastal waters
<b>BIRDS</b>			
Eagle, bald	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	T	Entire state
Falcon, peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	E	Entire state - re- establishment to former breeding range in progress
Plover, piping	<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	E T	Great Lakes Watershed Remainder of coastal New York
Tern, roseate	<i>Sterna dougallii dougallii</i>	E	Southeastern coastal portions of state
<b>MAMMALS</b>			
Bat, Indiana	<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	E	Entire state
Cougar, eastern	<i>Felis concolor cougar</i>	E	Entire state - probably extinct
Whale, blue*	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	E	Oceanic
Whale, finback*	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	E	Oceanic
Whale, humpback*	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	E	Oceanic
Whale, right*	<i>Eubalaena glacialis</i>	E	Oceanic
Whale, sei*	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>	E	Oceanic
Whale, sperm*	<i>Physeter catodon</i>	E	Oceanic
<b>MOLLUSKS</b>			
Snail, Chittenango ovate amber	<i>Succinea chittenangoensis</i>	T	Madison County
Mussel, dwarf wedge	<i>Alasmidonta heterodon</i>	E	Orange County - lower Neversink River

\* Except for sea turtle nesting habitat, principal responsibility for these species is vested with the National Marine Fisheries Service.



**FEDERALLY LISTED AND PROPOSED ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES  
IN NEW YORK (Cont'd)**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Distribution</u>
<b>BUTTERFLIES</b>			
Butterfly, Karner blue	<i>Lycaeides melissa samuelis</i>	E	Albany, Saratoga, Warren, and Schenectady Counties
<b>PLANTS</b>			
Monkshood, northern wild	<i>Aconitum noveboracense</i>	T	Ulster, Sullivan, and Delaware Counties
Pogonia, small whorled	<i>Isotria medeoloides</i>	T	Entire state
Swamp pink	<i>Helonias bullata</i>	T	Staten Island - presumed extirpated
Gerardia, sandplain	<i>Agalinis acuta</i>	E	Nassau and Suffolk Counties
Fern, American hart's-tongue	<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i> var. <i>americana</i>	T	Onondaga and Madison Counties
Orchid, eastern prairie fringed	<i>Platanthera leucophea</i>	T	Not relocated in New York
Bulrush, northeastern	<i>Scirpus ancistrochaetus</i>	E	Not relocated in New York
Roseroot, Leedy's	<i>Sedum integrifolium</i> ssp. <i>Leedyi</i>	T	West shore of Seneca Lake
Amaranth, seabeach	<i>Amaranthus pumilus</i>	T	Atlantic coastal plain beaches
Goldenrod, Houghton's	<i>Solidago houghtonii</i>	T	Genesee County

E=endangered    T=threatened    P=proposed



**Town Council**  
Mark V. Marzullo  
Peter M. Kip, Jr.  
Chester A. Dudzinski, Jr.  
Richard H. Linder

**Supervisor**  
Joan M. Kesel  
(315) 699-1414

**Receiver of Taxes**  
Frances R. Kip  
(315) 699-2756

**Highway Superintendent**  
Richard H. Blackburn  
(315) 699-2745

**Town Clerk**  
Patricia A. Rossi  
(315) 699-8109

**Town Justices**  
Harvey W. Chase  
Carl T. Putzer  
(315) 699-8478  
FAX (315) 699-7017



# TOWN OF CICERO

COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

P.O. BOX 1517, CICERO, NEW YORK 13039-1517 • FAX 315-699-0039

June 7, 1996

VIA FAX  
(210) 536-3890

Hard Copy to Follow

Major Donald Gleason  
Project Manager  
HQ AFCEE/ECA  
3207 North Rd.  
Brooks AFB, Texas, 78235-5363

Major Gleason:

I have tried to reach you several times by phone since April, but always to no avail. My concern, logically, is the attempt of the City of Syracuse to acquire land within the Town of Cicero that is the former Griffis Air Force Base housing property. I understand that the FAA is the ruling body of record. However, I come to you to ask that you not recommend to the FAA to allow this to occur. Why would the city require the entire section when it is not necessary for the set back of the proposed runway?

They have requested and will receive the southern 16 acres to accommodate Runway 10L-28R to meet FAA runway set back requirements. The additional 70 acres they wish to acquire is property within the Town of Cicero and that is where it must remain.

I quote from page 182 of the FEIS for Land Acquisition and Construction of Runway 10L-28R at Syracuse Hancock Airport, "The purpose of the transfer of title is to ensure that if and when the property is ever developed, the uses would be restricted to those that are compatible with the aircraft noise levels and overall Airport operations. It is a separate project and not required as part of the proposed project to construct Runway 10L-28R."

Do you, nor the FAA, nor the City of Syracuse, believe that the Town of Cicero would not do the same?



Page 2

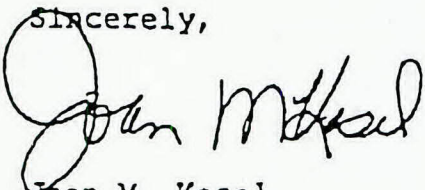
Major Donald Gleason  
June 7, 1996

As you stated in written communications received here on May 10, 1996, "The Hancock Field Development Corporation (HFDC), responsible for the management and development of an industrial park, Hancock Airpark, on the former Hancock Field AFB, has requested to obtain title from the U.S. Air Force for the entire Parcel B. This would enable HFDC to extend Performance Drive southward and connect it to Stewart Drive, thus tying the whole Hancock Airpark together.

I believe it would be in the best interest of the 30,000 residents of the Town of Cicero to have the 70 acres remain within our township. This is our property and working with, and through, the Hancock Field Development Corporation, we will move to the creation of employment and the generation of a much needed new tax base in our municipality.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Joan M. Kesel  
Supervisor

JMK/kk

cc: Town Board  
Dave Mankiewicz, HFDC  
Tony Rivizzigno



5/30/96



Bernadette Castro  
Commissioner

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau  
Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189

518-237-8643

May 22, 1996

Jonathan D. Farthing  
Dept. of The Air Force  
HQ AFCEE/ECA  
3207 North Road  
Brook AFB, Texas 77435-5363

Dear Mr. Farthing:

RE: Air Force  
Hancock Housing Area Disposal  
Cicero, Onondaga County  
96PR1091

Thank you for requesting the comments of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). We have reviewed the project in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Based upon this review, it is the SHPO's opinion that your project will have No Effect upon cultural resources eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

If further correspondence is required regarding this project, please be sure to refer to the OPRHP Project Review (PR) number noted above.

Sincerely,

Ruth L. Pierpont  
Director, Historic Preservation  
Field Services Bureau

RLP:cm



## 6.0 LIST OF PREPARERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

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