

**US DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
Northwest Mountain Region – Denver Airports District Office  
Finding of No Significant Impact**

**Introduction**

This document serves as the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and provides final agency determinations and approvals for the federal actions necessary to implement the proposed terminal project at the Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO), co-owned by the City of Durango and La Plata County (Airport Sponsor). This FONSI is based on the information and analysis contained in the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA), dated March 2019, which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. This FEA has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines and requirements set forth by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the FAA to implement the environmental review and disclosure provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

**Proposed Federal Action (Chapter 1 of the FEA)**

The Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO) proposes to:

- Expand or construct new:
  - Terminal building;
  - Terminal Apron; and
  - Automobile parking area.
- Utility Improvements
- Realign or construct new terminal loop road
- Other improvements as needed

**Purpose and Need (Chapter 2 of FEA)**

The purpose and need for the Proposed Action is to accommodate existing and future demand. Airport facilities do not and/or will not meet existing and future demand. The existing passenger demand has outgrown the current terminal space. The level of service within terminal areas, including the passenger departure lounge, ticket counters, security screening checkpoints and baggage areas, will continue to degrade as passenger levels increase.

**Alternatives (Chapter 3 of FEA)**

The EA identified and evaluated four alternatives:

- No Action: This alternative would use the existing facilities to meet current and future demand. Passenger level of service would continue to decline under this alternative.
- Alternative 1: This alternative proposes to renovate and expand the existing terminal building. The existing terminal building would be expanded to approximately 80,000 square feet. The existing building would need to be incorporated into the new construction and be completely reconfigured, involving a complete remodel of existing interior and exterior finishes. Due to the age and capacity of building systems, existing systems would be

replaced with new equipment sized to serve the needs of the entire building and meeting latest energy efficiency standards. Complex phasing would be required during construction to maintain functionality for passengers and airlines and minimize impacts to normal operations. However, a decreased level of service will be unavoidable at times. The aircraft parking apron would be reconstructed to remove non-aircraft rated pavement and replace it with aircraft rated pavement to accommodate five aircraft parking positions. Existing automobile parking areas would be expanded by relocating the terminal loop road. The primary utility corridor would be reconstructed and relocated to accommodate the expanded terminal.

- Alternative 2: This alternative proposes to construct a new terminal building on the west side of the Airport, next to the existing terminal building, and seeks to use the existing airfield and landside infrastructure to the greatest extent possible with a new building. The existing terminal building would be demolished after the new building is completed and the site reused for auto parking. High-performance modern systems would be used to capture the benefits of sustainable design principles and reduce operating costs of the new building. Phasing would be needed to minimize impacts to the normal airport operations, primarily because there is very little space available for contractors to stage equipment and materials. The aircraft parking apron would be reconstructed to remove non-aircraft rated pavement and replace it with aircraft rated pavement to accommodate five aircraft parking positions. Existing automobile parking areas would be expanded by relocating the terminal loop road. The primary utility corridor would be reconstructed and relocated to accommodate the new terminal.
- Alternative 3: This alternative involves construction of all new terminal facilities on the east side of the airfield on undeveloped land. Construction of a new terminal, aircraft parking apron, partial parallel taxiway, auto parking, and access roadways to CR 309A would be required. The former terminal location would then be made available for lease or redevelopment for aeronautical purposes given the proximity to the active airfield.

Terminal Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 were carried forward in the draft EA and evaluated for environmental impacts. Additionally, the No Action Terminal Alternative was carried forward and served as the basis of comparison for each alternative's environmental impacts. After careful analysis and consultation with various resource agencies, the Airport Advisory Commission unanimously voted on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to select the combination of Alternative 1 and 2 as the Proposed Action. This alternative satisfies the purpose and need while minimizing impacts.

#### **Environmental Consequences and Mitigation (Chapter 5 of the FEA)**

Environmental impact categories identified in FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B were evaluated in the FEA. No thresholds of significance are expected to be exceeded with the Proposed Action. Most impacts would be minimal and occur during construction. Those categories impacted by the Proposed Action are discussed below. Information on the other categories and the thorough analysis completed can be found in the FEA.



The Proposed Action will result in a slight increase in air emissions during construction but the impacts will be temporary. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be utilized to minimize any temporary impacts.

There are no construction activities proposed in New Mexico meadow jumping mouse (endangered species) occupied habitats. Construction that occurs between May and October near occupied habitat could have potential effects such as short-term avoidance of an area due to noise or human activity. This potential impact however is expected to be minimal as current human activity in the immediate area have been persistent for years. Expansion of the airport facilities within the current property boundaries are not expected to indirectly affect the jumping meadow mouse due to the distance between proposed facilities expansion areas and occupied habitats. The proposed action **may affect, is not likely to adversely affect** the New Mexico meadow jumping mouse.

The small sections of suitable southwestern willow flycatcher habitat identified are not expected to be directly impacted by the Proposed Action. There would be no construction activities in any of these small habitat patches. Consequently, no habitat would be lost as a result of developing the proposed action. Construction activities occurring between May and September could have potential effects to migrating birds if present. These short-term effects could include avoidance of an area. There is the potential that sedimentation or accidental spills or leaks of hazardous materials could indirectly affect the quality of potential habitat and the prey base for southwestern willow flycatchers. Best management practices will be included during construction to reduce the potential for these spills/leaks. The proposed action **may affect, is not likely to adversely affect** the southwestern willow flycatcher.

Five archaeological sites on airport property were determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Proposed Action will not result in any direct/indirect impacts to the sites. The FAA determined that the Proposed Action would have No Adverse Effect on the five sites.

The Proposed Action will increase the amount of impervious surface, which will result in an increase in stormwater runoff. The amount of stormwater runoff will be minimized by the use of onsite detention and Best Management Practices (BMPs).

After review of the FEA, the FAA determined that a FONSI was justified for the proposed airport improvements. As a result, FAA will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this action.

#### **Public and Agency Coordination (Chapter 6 of the FEA)**

Public involvement is a vital component of the NEPA process. DRO held numerous meetings with the public during the development of the Draft EA. The Draft EA was released for public and agency review from November 13, 2018 through December 27, 2018. A Notice of Availability of the Draft EA and public hearing information was published in the Durango Herald on November 12, 2018, December 5 and December 10, 2018. The Draft EA was available online and at DRO and the Durango Public Library. A public hearing was held on December 13, 2018 at the Durango City Hall. A meeting with nearby landowners also took place on December 13, 2018. Two public comments were received at the landowners meeting.

**Environmental Finding and Approval**

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein, the undersigned finds that the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101 of NEPA and other applicable environmental requirements and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

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

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

APRIL 26, 2019

John Bauer, Manager  
Denver Airports District Office Manager