

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
CENTRAL REGION

DES MOINES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

DES MOINES, IOWA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/RECORD OF DECISION
AND
SECTION 4(f) DETERMINATION

PROPOSED FEDERAL ACTION: ENVIRONMENTAL APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING IMPROVEMENTS SHOWN ON THE MAY 27, 1998, CONDITIONALLY APPROVED ALP (AIRPORT LAYOUT PLAN) FOR THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS DESCRIBED IN DETAIL IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESMENT:

(1) Acquire approximately 283 acres of property needed for the proposed runway and its approaches; (2) Construct a paved runway, Runway 13R-31L, 5,500 feet by 100 feet, with pavement strength of 75,000 pounds single wheel load. This runway will be designed to have the capability to be upgraded to the full 9,000 foot length as shown on the ALP; (3) Construct parallel taxiways to both sides of the proposed runway 13R-31L; (4) Provide MIRL (Medium Intensity Runway Lighting) along the proposed runway as well as MITL (Medium Intensity Taxiway Lights) along the parallels, connecting and exit taxiways; (5) Install PAPIs (precision Approach Path Indicator Lights) to each runway end; (6) Install Runway End Identification Lights to Runway 31L; (7) Provide for a Category I precision instrument approach to Runway 13R.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR PROJECT: The primary purpose of the Proposed Action for the new Runway 13R-31L is to replace and upgrade the former general aviation Runway 13R-31L, which was permanently closed in the summer of 2001. The runway was closed to allow completion of the Runway 5-23 extension. Closure of the runway also allowed for the expansion of the air cargo facilities. In 1995, the City of Des Moines approved the *Master Plan Update for Des Moines International Airport*. One of the recommendations from the Master Plan was the development of parallel runway 13R- 31L. In January 2001, *Runway 13R-31L Implementation Plan* was completed and focused on the development of parallel Runway 13R-31L at an interim length to replace the abandoned general aviation runway. The proposed 550Q-foot runway length will handle the vast majority of general aviation aircraft in addition to many of the commuter aircraft. The runway separation of 4,300 feet will allow simultaneous instrument approaches to the parallel runways.

An EA (Environmental Assessment) and Section 4(f) Evaluation, which examined all potential environmental impact categories has been prepared by the sponsor under guidance from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). After careful review of the EA and Section 4(f) Evaluation, the FAA has determined that the proposal will have no significant environmental impacts and no further study is necessary.

FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL 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(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), and that it 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.

CONDITIONS:

Social Impacts: The acquisition of residences and farmland is required to conform with the *Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970* (URARPAPA).

Air and Water Quality: The airport will be required to pursue an air quality certificate and a water quality certificate in accordance with the 1982 *Airport Act*. Modifications to the City's *National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit* must be made prior to construction.

Historical. Archaeological Cultural Resources: Should resources be unearthed during construction, all construction activities in the vicinity of the find will cease until a determination can be made as to its/their significance and, if necessary, a data recovery plan be implemented.

Wetlands: A Clean Water Act Section 404 permit is required prior to project implementation to mitigate approximately 16.852 acres of wetlands. Final mitigation will be determined during the permitting process.

Construction: Recommendations established in *Advisory Circular 150/5371-10, Standards for Specifying Construction of Airports, Item P-156l, Temporary Air and Water Pollution, Soil Erosion and Siltation Control* must be incorporated in project design specifications.

SECTION 4(f) DETERMINATION:

One Section 4(f) property, the Great Western Trail, is to be impacted by the proposed action. The Great Western Trail is located within the former Chicago Northwestern Railroad right of way. The trail is 18 miles in length and is owned and maintained Polk County Conservation Board. The trail is part of a trail network that extends throughout the Des Moines metro area. The trail consists of a ten-foot wide asphalt surface located on the former rail bed. Within the study area, the trail extends along Frink Creek.

A number of alternatives were evaluated including avoidance alternatives. The preferred alternative meets the purpose and need, is feasible and prudent and impacts the Section 4(f) property. The other build alternative is feasible and prudent and has the same impact on the Section 4(f) property as the preferred alternative but fails to meet the purpose and need. The no build and other avoidance alternatives failed to meet the purpose and need and are not feasible or prudent alternatives to using the Section 4(f) property. There is no feasible and prudent alternative to avoid the use of Section 4(f) property; therefore, mitigation efforts have been identified to reduce harm resulting from the use.

The Polk County Conservation Board was involved in the evaluation of mitigation alternatives. A number of alternatives were reviewed to determine if they were feasible or prudent alternatives that would avoid or minimize the use of the Section 4(f). The alternatives are shown on Exhibit 5A of the EA. The Polk County Conservation Board preferred alternative would require the disconnection of the existing trail at a location approximately 1,600 feet north of SW McKinley Avenue. The trail would extend within a 66-foot parcel of land to SW 56th Street. At this point, the trail would extend south along the east side of SW 56th Street to a point of intersection with the existing rail north of "old Army Post Road". The trail will be designed in accordance with the American Association of State Highway Transportation Official publication entitled: *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, 1999. A number of design guidelines have been requested by the staff of Polk County including:

1. Maintain trail continuity
2. Preserve the primary function of the trail
3. Sustain, to the maximum extent possible, the value of the trail.

No historic or cultural resources were identified within the proposed project area. Should resources be unearthed during construction, all construction activities in the vicinity of the find will cease until a determination can be made as to its/their significance and, if necessary, a data recovery plan be implemented.

DECISION AND ORDER:

This decision constitutes the Federal approval *for* the actions identified above and any subsequent actions approving a grant of federal funds for the project. This action is taken pursuant to 49 *V.S.C.* Subtitle VII, Parts A and B, and constitutes a final order of the Administrator subject to review by the Courts of Appeals of the United States in accordance with the provisions of 49 *V.S.C.* 46110.

RIGHT OF APPEAL:

Any party to this proceeding having a substantial interest may appeal the order to the Courts of Appeals of the United States upon petition filed within 60 days after entry of this order.

Approved and Dated: July 29, 2003