

**Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Minneapolis Airports District Office
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
For the Redwood Falls Municipal Airport Safety and Drainage Improvement Project
City of Redwood Falls, Redwood County, Minnesota**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) prepared this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Redwood Falls Municipal Airport safety and drainage improvement project. In accordance with FAA Order 1050.1E, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*, and based on the evaluation in the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated May 2013, there are no significant impacts associated with the proposed project. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be prepared and a FONSI is being issued.

I. Purpose and Need

The Redwood Falls Municipal Airport (Airport) is located in the City of Redwood Falls in Redwood County. The Airport has two runways (12/30 and 5/23). Runway 12/30 is the primary paved runway and is 4,001' long by 100' wide. Runway 5/23 is a turf crosswind runway that is 2,081' long by 200' wide. The current issues (Page 3 of the EA) include:

- **Airspace Obstructions** - The Airport has obstructions that penetrate the Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 77 airspace for all runways. Runways 5 and 23 have displaced thresholds due to obstructions (light poles and trees). The FAA recommends that FAR Part 77 airspace obstructions be resolved or lighted.
- **Land Use Control** - The Airport currently does not have control for the entire FAA Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) or Minnesota Clear Zone (CZ) for Runways 5, 12 and 23. The RPZ and CZ are trapezoidal shaped areas centered on the runway centerline with the purpose of enhancing the protection of people and property on the ground. Both the FAA and Mn/DOT recommend that airports have sufficient property interest in both the RPZ and CZ to ensure compatible land use.
- **Parallel Taxiway** - The parallel taxiway for Runway 12/30 is only partially paved. The majority of the taxiway is turf. The turf surface is not consistently able to accommodate the weight of larger aircraft and is closed during periods of high moisture saturation and during winter months.
- **Drainage** - The Airport is currently divided into three drainage areas (North, South and Northeast). The South Drainage Area (approximately 132 acres) is served by a 12-inch drain tile that is part of the County Ditch 48 system. The drain tile is undersized and in poor condition resulting in limited hydraulic capacity. As a result, there is standing water in areas west of the terminal/hangar area for extended periods.

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve the operational safety and utility of the Airport by meeting FAA and State of Minnesota standards.

II. Alternatives Considered

The EA identified and evaluated all reasonable alternatives (Pages 4-5). After careful analysis and consultation with various resource agencies, the Airport selected the Proposed Action as the preferred alternative. This alternative satisfies the purpose and need for the project while minimizing impacts. The No Action alternative does not meet the purpose and need but is included as a baseline of comparison for environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action.

III. Proposed Action

The Proposed Action (Page 4) includes the following:

- Obstruction Removal - Tree removal (12.7 acres) and the lowering/removal/or lighting of light poles (obstructions) to meet the FAR Part 77 other-than-utility instrument requirements (34:1 approach slope) for Runway 12/30 and visual utility requirements (20:1 approach slope) for Runway 5/23
- Land Use Control – Acquisition, either fee or easement, of land within the RPZ, CZ, obstruction areas, and to the building restriction line (approximately 45.1 acres)
- Parallel Taxiway - Paving the full length parallel taxiway for Runway 12/30
- Drainage Improvements - Construction of a stormwater management system to improve existing drainage in the South Drainage Area and to meet permit requirements associated with the paving of the parallel taxiway

IV. Environmental Consequences and Mitigation

The Final EA discusses the environmental consequences of the Proposed Action starting on Page 7 of the EA. The Proposed Action includes 12.7 acres of tree removal; short term, minor construction impacts; 1.4 acres of additional impervious pavement; and the acquisition, either fee or in easement, of 45.1 acres. Land proposed for acquisition includes property that is part of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), which is a combination of the Federal Conservation Reserve Program and the Minnesota Re-invest in Minnesota (RIM) Program. The perpetual conservation easement on this property ensures that the property remains part of the RIM program even if the Airport acquires the property (the Airport would be responsible for following the restrictions and maintenance of the property).

The Airport shall implement the following mitigation measures as a condition of environmental approval of the proposed development listed in this FONSI:

- Obtain any necessary permits prior to beginning construction.
- Include Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize construction impacts including those recommended by the DNR to reduce the spread of invasive species. Construction documents will identify specific control methods to minimize impacts. The Airport will consider residential areas when identifying haul routes and construction activity hours. Construction will comply with the most current version of the FAA AC 150/5370-2 (*Operational Safety on Airports during Construction*) and AC 150/5370-10 (*Standards for Specifying Construction of Airports*).

- Tree removal within ravine areas will implement the techniques suggested by the DNR during agency coordination, including but not limited to:
 - Only remove trees that currently penetrate or are close to penetrating the FAR Part 77 airspace
 - Leave root systems in place during removal and spray stumps with herbicide to restrict future growth
 - Plant native grasses on the slopes around the stumps to help hold soils in place
- Design any storm water retention/detention ponds in accordance with FAA AC 150/5200-33B (*Hazardous Wildlife Attractants on or near Airports*).
- Acquisition of property shall follow the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.
- During construction, in the event that previously unknown contaminants are discovered or if a reportable spill occurs, work shall cease until the Airport notifies appropriate local, state, and Federal agencies including the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.
- All work shall cease upon the discovery of any cultural resources during construction until the Airport notifies the State Historic Preservation Office and the FAA. The Airport shall protect the area until cultural resource concerns have been appropriately addressed and the Airport shall take action to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, as appropriate.
- If endangered or threatened species (Prairie Bush Clover) are sighted during construction, work shall cease in the immediate area of the species and all sightings shall be reported to the US Fish and Wildlife Services, the Department of Natural Resources, and the FAA. Construction crews will receive a picture of the threatened species before construction activities begin.
- No construction activities, including storage of equipment, will take place in wetland areas or areas favorable to the Prairie Bush Clover.
- Demolition will be in compliance with state and federal regulations, as explained in the November 20, 2012 MPCA letter.

V. Public Review and Comment

Public involvement is a vital component of the NEPA process. The City of Redwood Falls sent an early coordination information package to all property owners within one quarter mile of the airport on July 22, 2011. The Draft EA was circulated for public review on November 1, 2012. Notification of the document was sent to all property owners whose property would be directly affected by the project. Four comments were received and responded to in the Final EA. The Final EA and FONSI will be available for public and agency review.

