



**U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Baltimore District**

Public Notice

**In Reply to Application Number
CENAB-OP-RMS (SM DPW&T/REGIONAL AIRPORT) 2015-60581**

PN 15-56

Comment Period: September 17, 2015 to October 17, 2015

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PUBLIC NOTICE IS TO SOLICIT COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING THE WORK DESCRIBED BELOW. NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE AS TO WHETHER OR NOT A PERMIT WILL BE ISSUED AT THIS TIME.

This District has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to **Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33. U.S.C. 1344)** as described below:

APPLICANT: Mr. George Erichsen, Director
St. Mary's County Department of Public Works and Transportation
P.O. Box 508
44825 St. Andrews Church Road
California, Maryland 20619

WATERWAY AND LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED WORK: The project is located in non-tidal Waters of the U.S., including unnamed tributaries and wetlands which drain to the St. Mary's River, from the existing airport site located in California, St. Mary's County, Maryland.

PROJECT WORK DESCRIPTION: To expand the airport runways and relocate existing Lawrence Hayden Road (both to the west); maintain positive drainage; and address stormwater management practices by filling and grading approximately 70,375 square feet (1.62 acres) of forested wetlands and 130,160 (2.99 acres) square feet totaling 200,535 square feet (4.60 acres) of non-tidal wetlands.

All work will be completed in accordance with the enclosed plan(s). If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Mr. Steven Harman at 410-962-6082 or U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, Maryland 21203-1715.

There are no alternative locations for the proposed project as it is an expansion of the existing airport with Federal Aviation Administration funding (FAA). On June 28 2006, a Finding of No significant Impact (FONSI) was completed for the proposed improvement project at the airport. The Purpose and Need stated in the FONSI is to meet FAA design standards and accommodate the existing and project aviation demand of the airport. To allow the airport to accommodate a wider variety of modern aircraft, the existing Runway 11/2 must be strengthen and extended. Proposed obstruction removal from 54 acres includes grading of terrain, removal/topping trees and similar natural growth objects, as well as buildings with the projected airspace of Runway 11/29 and the elimination of obstructions to the Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 77, *Objects Affection*

Navigable Airspace surfaces.

The applicant proposes to compensate for the loss of the non-tidal wetlands by creating approximately 270,910 square feet (6.22 acres) of non-tidal wetland consisting of 140,750 square feet (3.23 acres) of forested wetlands and 130,160 square feet (2.99 acres) of emergent wetlands at three off-site locations: Taylor Farm, the METCOM property and Hayden Farm Property. Federal Aviation Administration regulations prohibit mitigation from being met on-site and off-site locations less than a five mile radius extending from the airport in all directions.

To purpose of the project is to expand the existing airport to accommodate larger aircraft in support of the aviation demand within the regional aviation service area and in accordance with the County's Airport Master Plan.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonable may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economic, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, and consideration of property ownership and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments provided will become part of the public record for this action. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. Written comments concerning the work described above related to the factors listed above or other pertinent factors must be received by the District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, Maryland 21203-1715 within the comment period specified above.

The applicant is required to obtain a water quality certification in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act from the **Maryland Department of the Environment**. Any written comments concerning the work described above which relate to water quality certification must be received by the Wetlands and Waterways Program, Maryland Department of the Environment, Montgomery Park Business Center, 1800 Washington

Boulevard, Suite 430, Baltimore, Maryland 21230-1708 within the comment period as specified above to receive consideration. The Section 401 certifying agency has a statutory limit of one year from the date of this public notice to make its decision.

Where applicable, the applicant has certified in this application that the proposed activity complies with and will be conducted in a manner consistent with the approved Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program. By this public notice, we are requesting the State concurrence or objection to the applicant's consistency statement. It should be noted that the CZM Program has a statutory limit of 6 months to make its consistency determination.

The applicant must obtain any State or local government permits which may be required.

A preliminary review of this application indicates that the proposed work will not affect Federal listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat, pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, as amended. As the evaluation of this application continues, additional information may become available which could modify this preliminary determination.

Review of the latest published version of the National Register of Historic Places indicates that no registered properties listed as eligible for inclusion, therein, are located at the site of the proposed work. Currently unknown archeological, scientific, prehistoric, or historical data may be lost or destroyed by the work to be accomplished under the request permit.

The evaluation of the impact of this project on the public interest will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Any person who has an interest which may be adversely affected by the issuance of this permit may request a public hearing. The request, which must be in writing, must be received by the District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, Maryland 21203-1715, within the comment period as specified above to receive consideration. Also it must clearly set forth the interest which may be adversely affected by this activity and the manner in which the interest may be adversely affected.

It is requested that you communicate this information concerning the proposed work to any persons know by you to be interested and not being known to this office, who did not receive a copy of this notice.

FOR THE DISTRICT ENGINEER:

Kathy B. Anderson
Chief, Maryland Section Southern