

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

E85 FUELING STATION INSTALLATION

WEST PALM BEACH VAMC

7305 NORTH MILITARY TRAIL

WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33418

Introduction

The U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announces a "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI) for the proposed construction associated with the E85 Fueling Stations at the West Palm Beach VAMC in West Palm Beach, FL. The FONSI has been prepared as a result of an Environmental Assessment (EA) accomplished in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 1508.13. Additional compliance to 38 CFR, Part 26 (Environmental Effects of the Department of Veterans Affairs Actions) is achieved through the issuance of this FONSI. The EA is incorporated by reference.

The project being proposed is a comprehensive E-85 above Ground Storage tank fueling station with a fuel capacity of up to 8,000 gallons. The intent of the project is to serve a need to fuel government vehicles in compliance with Federal legislation including the Environmental Protection Act of 2005 requiring that dual fueled vehicles be operated on alternative fuel unless waived.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project objective is to support the existing VA flex-fuel vehicle (FFV) fleet that is currently underutilized owing to lack of E85 availability, and to reduce the number of DOE waivers that are currently needed by the VA to comply with Section 701 [42 U.S.C. 6374(a)(3)(E)] of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 requiring federal fleets to replace petroleum use with alternative fuels. If FFVs are eventually phased out and replaced with hybrid vehicles, any E85 tank could be used for gasoline (E10) and almost all hybrid vehicles run on gasoline.

Alternatives Considered

The VA undertook a sequential planning and screening process, seeking viable alternatives for the Proposed Action. The EA examined in-depth two alternatives, the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative, defined as follows:

- **Proposed Action:** Under the Proposed Action, an up to 8,000 gallon E85 AST alternative fueling station would be constructed and operated at the West Palm Beach VAMC located in West Palm Beach, FL. The AST would be located on the Medical Center campus. No major improvements to infrastructure would be required to accommodate access for vehicles or fuel delivery trucks. The estimated footprint of the AST, including a concrete pad and sufficient access to the tank, would be approximately 320 square feet (SF) maximum, assuming that a light-weight, double-walled tank is installed. The proximity to existing electrical power, required safety setbacks from buildings and property lines, and the VA Antiterrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) requirements were considered during the site-selection process. Preference was given to locating the E85 fueling station in an area that would require minimal improvements.
- **No Action Alternative:** Under the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would not be implemented and an alternative E85 fueling station is not installed on the West Palm Beach VAMC campus. The No-action Alternative would not support the existing VHA FFV fleets that are currently underutilized owing to lack of E85 availability, nor would it reduce the number of

VA waiver requests to DOE under Section 701 of EPACT 2005. It would also not help the VA to meet the sustainability goals of EO 13514 for federal agencies, which include using vehicles that reduce the agency's total consumption of petroleum products for fleets of motor vehicles by a minimum of 2% annually through the end of fiscal year 2020, compared to the baseline of fiscal year 2005.

The Proposed Action would meet the project objectives and need. The No Action Alternative would not enable the VA to fuel government vehicles in compliance with Federal legislation including the Environmental Protection Act of 2005 requiring that dual fueled vehicles be operated on alternative fuel unless waived. However, the No Action Alternative was assessed in the EA to provide a comparative baseline analysis, as required under the CEQ Regulations (40 CFR 1502.14).

2. Environmental Analysis

Based on the analysis contained in the EA, the VA determined there would be no significant adverse impact, either individually or cumulatively, to the physical, biological, or human environments associated with implementing the Proposed Action. Specifically, the EA's analysis identified less-than-significant adverse impacts to noise levels, aesthetics, air quality, geological resources and soils, groundwater resources and water quality, wetlands, floodplains, and surface water resources, vegetation and land use resources, wildlife resources, and solid and hazardous materials and wastes, due to implementation of the Proposed Action.

The Proposed Action would allow the West Palm Beach VAMC to fuel government vehicles in compliance with Federal legislation including the Environmental Protection Act of 2005 requiring that dual fueled vehicles be operated on alternative fuel unless waived. No environmental justice concerns or health or safety risks to children are anticipated under the Proposed Action.

Under the No Action Alternative, no adverse effects would occur but the existing VA flex-fuel vehicle (FFV) fleet would continue to be underutilized owing to lack of E85 availability. Additionally, the Malcom Randall VA Medical Center would need to continue requesting a large number of DOE waivers that are currently needed for the VA to comply with Section 701 [42 U.S.C. 6374(a)(3)(E)] of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 requiring federal fleets to replace petroleum use with alternative fuels.

The EA also examined the potential cumulative effects of implementing the Proposed Action and given the proposed location of the fueling station, the small footprint required for an AST, and minimal ground disturbance resulting from its installation, it is unlikely that cultural or historical resources would be affected.

Mitigation

The facility has an existing SPCM Plan, but the addition of an up to 5,000 gallon AST would require that it be amended. The amendment would have to be done within six months, and certified by a professional engineer or be self certified if the facility meets the specified criteria for self certification.

3. Regulations

The Proposed Action will not violate the NEPA, the CEQ Regulations, 38 CFR Part 26, or other Federal, State, or local environmental regulations providing all state and federal AST regulations and setbacks are followed and the facility SPCC Plan is amended.

4. Commitment to Implementation


The VA affirms their commitment to implement the Final EA and FONSI in accordance with the NEPA, the CEQ Regulations, and 38 CFR Part 26. Implementation is dependent on funding. The VA will ensure that adequate funds are requested in future years' budget(s) to achieve the goals and objectives set forth in the Final EA and FONSI, and to fund the commitments described above.

5. Finding of No Significant Impact

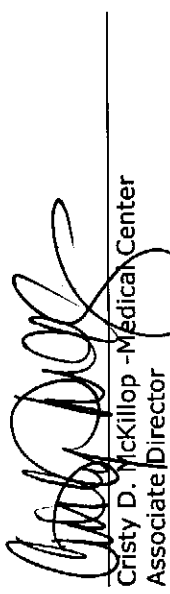
After careful review of the Final EA, I have determined that implementation of the Proposed Action would not generate significant controversy or have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. As such, per the analysis documented in the Final EA, selection of the Proposed Action supports a FONSI.

Therefore, per the NEPA, the CEQ Regulations, and 38 CFR Part 26, I am signing this FONSI. This analysis fulfills the requirements of the NEPA and the CEQ Regulations. An Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

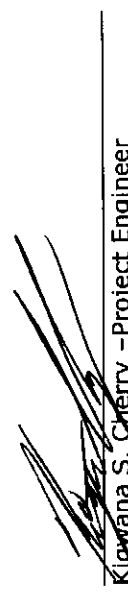
6/24/13
Date


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