

Finding of No Significant Impact

Property Transfer to Develop a General Aviation Airport at the East Tennessee Technology Park Heritage Center, Oak Ridge, Tennessee

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) (DOE/EA-2000) for the title transfer of U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) property located at the East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP) Heritage Center to the Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority (MKAA) for the purpose of constructing and operating a general aviation airport. The MKAA submitted a request for transfer of approximately 170 acres of ETTP property in June 2013, DOE responded in August 2013, agreeing to evaluate the transfer. The proposed airport's primary purpose would be the expansion of general aviation services by the MKAA. An ancillary benefit to the airport would be the ability to leverage the extensive assets in place at the ETTP. These assets include land, power, rail, and water, and when combined with an airport would offer the potential to support regional economic development in the form of industrial investment.

The MKAA has determined that the proposed Oak Ridge airport is needed for improvement of air service in the region. The need for an airport requires an endorsement by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) through the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) evaluation process. The proposed Oak Ridge airport received FAA approval for inclusion in the NPIAS in January 2015. By definition, inclusion in the NPIAS signifies the Secretary of Transportation has determined the airport "necessary to provide a safe, efficient, and integrated system of public-use airports adequate to anticipate and meet the needs of civil aeronautics." The FAA evaluated current regional airports (Rockwood, McGee Tyson, and Knoxville Downtown Island) when evaluating the inclusion of the Oak Ridge airport in the NPIAS.

Based on the results of the analysis reported in the EA, DOE has determined that the proposed action, the title transfer of the property, is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. Subsequent to DOE's property transfer action, the FAA would initiate a separate NEPA review in accordance with FAA Orders and requirements once the MKAA Master Plan for the proposed airport is finalized, which would include analysis of potential effects associated with construction and operation of the airport in its final design configuration. Prior to the General Services Administration (GSA) executing the deed for the transfer of this property, GSA, using its own NEPA regulations, may also conduct a NEPA analysis of the GSA's proposed action of property disposal by way of deed. The GSA's analysis would be conducted in light of the NEPA determinations made by both the DOE and FAA. Therefore, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not necessary, and DOE is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY: The EA and FONSI may be viewed at and copies of the documents obtained from:

U.S. Department of Energy
Information Center
Building 1916-T1
1 Science.gov Way
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831
Phone: (865) 241-4780

The EA and FONSI can also be viewed at http://www.oakridge.doe.gov/info_cntr/index.html.