

US AIR FORCE-CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE (CAFB) INSTALLATION OF PERIMETER FENCE

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Code of Federal Regulations, 32 CFR 989, the U.S. Air Force's Charleston AFB has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this action. The purpose of the EA is to determine the extent of environmental impact that may result from removal, replacement, and installation of perimeter fencing at CAFB and to evaluate whether these impacts, if any, will be significant.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

The US Air Force proposes to remove approximately 19,675 linear feet (LF) of existing 3-strand barbwire perimeter fencing and install approximately 46,500 LF of new 7' high vinyl coated chain link security fence with barbed wire outriggers, installation of four (4) new access points, installation of warning signs every 100' on fence, and all necessary utilities associated with the project.

The current barbwire and 7' high chain link section of existing partial perimeter fence was installed in 2001. The destruction of the World Trade Center by terrorist caused an increased need for perimeter security. The 7' chain link fence with outriggers will enhance security of the airfield and the base proper. The proposed fence activities will occur in the following areas:

- Old northeast/west boundary (replace/install approximately 19,675 LF of fencing)
- Perimeter Road (install approximately 8850 LF of new fencing)
- West of the Hazardous cargo loading area taxiway (install approximately 1250 LF of fencing and 1275 LF of outriggers on an existing section)
- South property line along wetland perimeter of runway 15 and 33 (install approximately 12,500 LF of fencing)

To prevent wetland disturbance, the fence contractor will not be allowed to use heavy equipment and will be required to use metal, hand-driven stakes during fence replacement, and installation in wetland areas. This method of construction will not require a project permit from the COE.

Alternatives considered include:

- a) No Action, i.e., no new fence installation or replacement,
- b) Install new perimeter fencing in all but the wetlands areas, and
- c) Executing the proposed action

Under the No Action Alternative, security will not be improved for the flight line and parts of the base. Because heavy equipment will not be used in the wetland areas, there is no environmental benefit to limiting the scope of the proposed project by selecting Alternative-b. The proposed Alternative-c is the only one that meets the security requirements of the base in addition to providing optimum protection of the environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings presented in the EA, a FONSI to the environment is appropriate if the proposed action is implemented. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required for this project.

The project will be implemented upon approval and after a public review period.

All interested agencies, groups, and persons disagreeing with this decision are invited to submit written comments within 30 days of this notice for consideration by the Charleston Air Force Base Environmental Office. A copy of the EA is available at Charleston AFB Environmental Office and at the Dorchester County Library on Dorchester road. For questions regarding the EA, contact Mr. Harold Deese, Environmental Engineer, (843) 963-2701, e-mail: harold.deese@charleston.af.mil.

SIGNED:

KARL B. YOUNG, Colonel, USAF
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Environmental Protection Committee Chairperson

DATE: _____