

**Federal Emergency Management Agency
PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment for the MD Anderson Cancer Center Smithville Research Center Wildfire Mitigation Project, Bastrop County, Texas
HMGP-DR-1791-TX PROJECT #291

Interested persons are hereby notified that MD Anderson has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding under Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program provides grants to states and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures that reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a disaster.

FEMA proposes to provide funding to MD Anderson for wildfire mitigation activities at their Smithville Research Center campus located on Park Road 1C, approximately 1.5 miles north of Texas Highway 71 and 4 miles northwest of Smithville, Bastrop County, Texas. Under the Proposed Action alternative, MDACC would (1) enhance and establish four fuels management units (FMUs) consisting of approximately 65 acres around the perimeter of the campus and (2) to protect and harden critical buildings and facility infrastructures. Fuels reduction in the FMUs would include the removal of most dead, decaying, and woody material as well as small-diameter under- and mid-story woody vegetation (primarily yaupon and cedar) to eliminate ladder fuels and reduce the risk of an uncontrolled crown fire.

A draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to assess the potential impacts of the proposed action and alternatives on the human and natural environment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 – 1508), the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 11988, Executive Order 11990, and the implementing regulations of FEMA (44 CFR Parts 9 and 10). The draft EA evaluates alternatives that provide for compliance with applicable environmental laws. The alternatives evaluated include (1) no action; (2) the proposed action described above.

The draft EA is available for review and comment at the Smithville Public Library, 1000 Southeast Martin Luther King Boulevard, Smithville, TX 78957 from 10am-6pm Monday and Wednesday; 10am-7pm Tuesday and Thursday; 10 am-5 pm Friday, and 9am-1pm Saturday from July 30, 2015 to August 28, 2015. An electronic version of the draft EA can be requested from Dorothy Weir, FEMA Region 6, at dorothy.weir@fema.dhs.gov or viewed on FEMA's website at <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents>.

The comment period will end 30 days from the initial notice publication date. Written comments on the draft EA can be mailed, emailed, or faxed to Dorothy Weir, Environmental Specialist, FEMA Region 6, 800 N Loop 288, Denton, TX 76209, Fax: 940-383-7299; dorothy.weir@fema.dhs.gov. If no substantive comments are received, the draft EA will become final and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued for the project. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.