

## **Appendix A**

### **Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)**

#### **Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Hazard Mitigation Safe Room Construction**



**FEMA**

**FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)  
FINAL PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
FOR HAZARD MITIGATION SAFE ROOM CONSTRUCTION**

**BACKGROUND**

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, FEMA's regulations for implementing NEPA at 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 10, and the President's Council on Environmental Quality NEPA implementing regulations at 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, FEMA prepared a draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) to evaluate the potential impacts to the human environment resulting from the construction of residential and non-residential (individual) safe rooms and community safe rooms that are proposed for funding under FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program. Section 203 (PDM) and 404 (HMGP) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5121 et seq., authorize FEMA to provide funding to eligible applicants for eligible, feasible, and cost-effective activities that have the purpose of reducing or eliminating risks to life and property from hazards and their effects. One such activity is the construction and installation of safe rooms to protect populations from extreme wind events. The PEA is incorporated by reference into this FONSI.

The PEA evaluated five alternatives: (1) No Action; (2) Retrofit or Renovation of an Existing or Proposed Facility (Type A: Existing Facilities; Type B: New Facilities or Significant Renovation of Existing Facilities); (3) Safe Room Connected to an Existing Building and Beyond Original Footprint; (4) New Stand-Alone Construction in Previously Disturbed Areas; and (5) New Stand-Alone Construction in Previously Undisturbed Areas.

FEMA will develop tiered Site-Specific Environmental Assessments (SEAs) for those safe room projects requiring evaluation under areas of concern not evaluated in this PEA, having impacts beyond those described in the PEA or otherwise requiring a tiered SEA as identified in Table 1 in the PEA. Notice of the availability of the draft PEA was published in the Federal Register on April 27, 2011, for a 30-day public comment period. No comments were received on the draft PEA.

## **CONDITIONS**

Actions under this PEA and FONSI must meet the following conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions would make the FONSI determination inapplicable for the project and could jeopardize the receipt of FEMA funding.

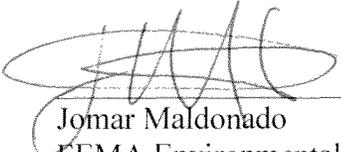
1. Excavated soil and waste materials will be managed and disposed of in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations. If contaminated materials are discovered during construction activities, the work will cease until the appropriate procedures and permits are implemented.
2. The grantee and sub grantee will follow applicable mitigation measures as identified in Section 7 of the PEA to the maximum extent possible.
3. If ground disturbing activities occur during construction, applicant will monitor ground disturbance and if any potential archeological resources are discovered, will immediately cease construction in that area and notify the State and FEMA.
4. The grantee and sub grantee must meet any project-specific conditions developed and agreed upon between FEMA and with environmental planning or historic preservation resource or regulatory agencies during consultation or coordination.
5. This review does not address all federal, state and local requirements. Acceptance of federal funding requires recipient to comply with all federal, state and local laws. Failure to obtain all appropriate federal, state and local environmental permits and clearances may jeopardize federal funding.

## **FINDING**

Based upon the information contained in the Final PEA, the potential impacts resulting from the five alternatives analyzed in the PEA, and in accordance with FEMA's regulations at 44 CFR Part 10 and Executive Orders 11988 (Floodplain Management), 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), and 12898 (Environmental Justice). FEMA finds that the implementation of the proposed action will not have significant impacts to the quality of the human environment.

Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be prepared. This FONSI is based upon proposed safe room projects fitting one of the project types described in the Final PEA and meeting all conditions prescribed for that particular project type.

**APPROVAL**

  
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Jomar Maldonado  
FEMA Environmental Officer

Date JUN 02 2011  
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Date 6/1/11  
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**Section Seven      Mitigation**

FEMA will take the following measures to the extent practicable and applicable to avoid or further minimize impacts to the quality of the human environment. The general mitigation measures outlined in this section may be superseded by higher or more stringent standards required by the particular federal, or territory, tribe, or local government agency issuing a permit, license, or approval for the project.

**7.1      Measures to avoid impacts to the human environment**

1. Avoid sites areas characterized by susceptibility to seismic or volcanic activity, tsunamis, landslides, mudslides, structural instability, excessive erodibility, or steep slopes;
2. Avoid sites in the floodplain;
3. Avoid sites on important farmlands;
4. Avoid sites on or near TCPs;
5. Avoid sites in wetlands;
6. Avoid undertaking projects that adversely affect historic properties;
7. Avoid projects that adversely affect threatened and endangered or special status species or critical habitat.

**7.2      Minimization Measures for ground-disturbing/construction activities**

1. Follow applicable state, territory, tribal, and local permitting requirements for construction;
2. Water down construction site two to three times per day if dust emissions become a problem;
3. Enclose or water down exposed dirt storage piles;
4. Minimize the disturbed area and preserve vegetation to the maximum extent possible;
5. Maintain topsoil whenever possible;
6. Phase construction activities to the extent possible;
7. Control stormwater flowing to and through the project site;
8. Protect slopes by using measures such as erosion control blankets, bonded fiber matrices, turf reinforcement mats, silt fences (for moderate slopes), etc.;
9. Temporarily protect storm drain inlets until site is stabilized;
10. Retain sediment on-site and control dewatering practices by using sediment traps or basins for large areas (> 1 acre) when appropriate;
11. Establish stabilized construction entrances/exits (e.g. large crushed rocks, stone pads, steel wash racks, hose-down systems, pads);
12. Limit construction activities, including operation of heavy machinery, to normal business hours (M-F 7am-5pm);
13. Avoid engaging in construction activities within 200 feet of noise-sensitive receptors such as schools, hospitals, residential areas, nursing homes, etc.
14. Ensure adequate maintenance of equipment, including proper engine maintenance, adequate tire inflation, and proper maintenance of pollution control devices;

15. Ensure equipment at the project site uses the manufacturer's standard noise control devices (i.e., mufflers, baffling, and/or engine enclosures);
16. Reduce construction equipment idling to the maximum extent practicable;
17. Implement plans to eliminate and minimize oil or fuel spills from construction equipment;
18. Minimize the impacts of equipment staging areas;
19. Stabilize slopes promptly through temporary and permanent cover best management practices (BMPs). Following construction all remaining disturbed areas must be re-vegetated with locally acquired sources of native seeds and plants in a manner that returns the site to its pre-construction condition or better. Plantings are done during the optimum season for the species being planted. Any seeding carried out during the re-vegetation program is completed with commercially available seeds certified to be free of noxious weed seeds and other invasive species. If necessary, an irrigation system is installed to ensure establishment of the planted vegetation. The target for new plantings is an 80 percent survival rate at the end of 3 years. Invasive exotic plant species are controlled to the maximum extent practical to accomplish the re-vegetation effort. If the application of a chemical is required to control an invasive exotic plant species, the chemical is applied by a certified pesticide or herbicide applicator per labeled directions and in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
20. When applicable adopt measures to minimize traffic impacts during construction such as providing warning signage, limit the use of public right-of-ways for staging of equipment or materials, use of flagpersons when needed, and coordinate detours if traffic access points will be obstructed.
21. Avoid engaging in construction activities within 660 feet of a bald or golden eagle nest during nesting and fledging, as nesting eagles are quite sensitive to human activities during these times.
22. Establish an inspection and maintenance approach to ensure these measures are working adequately.
23. Avoid archeological sites by shifting ground disturbance in a particular area, when possible.