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FEMA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
INDIANA TOWNSHIP FIRE STATION RELOCATION AND RECONSTRUCTION
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
INDIANA TOWNSHIP, MARION COUNTY, IOWA
FEMA-1763-DR-IA

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is working with local, state and other federal agencies to coordinate the response to the Mid-West Storms of 2008, a federally declared disaster in Iowa. During the storm event, a tornado touched ground near Knoxville, Iowa within Indiana Township. The tornado completely destroyed the Indiana Township Fire Station. The tornado was classified as an “EF2 tornado,” which is accompanied by wind speeds between 111-135 mph. According to the National Weather Service this type of tornado can cause considerable damage.

FEMA was authorized under Presidential Disaster Declaration, FEMA-DR-1763-IA, to provide federal disaster assistance to Marion County, Iowa, as a result of damages during the incident period beginning May 25, 2008 and ending August 13, 2008. (Section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 USC 5121-5206, as amended (Stafford Act, Public Law 93-288)).

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that FEMA evaluate the potential environmental effects of the agency’s proposed and alternative actions prior to obligating disaster assistance funds. The President’s Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) has developed a series of regulations for implementing the NEPA. These regulations are included in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 1500–1508. The Code of Federal Regulations requires that an Environmental Assessment (EA) include an evaluation of alternative means of addressing damages caused in declared disasters, and a discussion of the potential environmental effects of the proposed Federal Action. An EA provides the evidence and analysis to determine whether a Federal Action will have long-term significant or adverse effects to the human environment and natural resources. An EA prepared by FEMA must be consistent with requirements contained in the Federal Stafford Act and its regulations implementing NEPA at 44 CFR, Part 10. This section of the Federal Code requires that FEMA take environmental considerations into account when authorizing funding or approving actions. This EA was prepared in accordance with both CEQ and FEMA regulations for the NEPA to serve as a vehicle to document compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, and to determine whether the potential

effects of the Proposed Action will require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

The Proposed Action would require the relocation and reconstruction of a new fire station within the Attica residential section of Indiana Township, Iowa. The new fire station would be constructed on a 1.3 acre parcel identified at 1980 County Highway G76. The EA contains an evaluation of the potential impacts associated with relocating and reconstructing the fire station at its new location. This includes a discussion of potential impacts to resource topics such as noise, air quality, land use planning, biological resources, cultural resources, floodplain management, wetlands and waterways, in addition to potential effects on minority and low income populations.

CONDITIONS

The Proposed Action would not result in long-term adverse effects either to the human environment or natural resources. The Indiana Township Fire Station Board of Trustees (the applicant) will be required to coordinate and/or implement the following conditions:

1. Apply and receive a building permit from the Marion County Zoning Department.
2. Apply and receive a septic system permit from the Marion County Department of Environmental Health.
3. Review and coordinate new construction with the Iowa Department of Public Safety Fire Marshall's Office.
4. Monitor for compliance the following discovery clause addressing historic and archaeological finds during construction: In the event that archaeological deposits (soils, features, artifacts), or other remnants of human activity are uncovered, or if archaeological deposits are found during project construction, the project would be halted and the applicant would stop all work immediately in the vicinity of the discovery, and take reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. The applicant would then inform the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) and FEMA of this discovery. Work in sensitive areas would not resume until a qualified archaeologist determines the extent of the discovery and consultations between SHSI and FEMA are complete -- and the applicant has been notified by SHSI and FEMA.

FINDING

FEMA makes the following determinations from the information contained in the EA for the relocation and reconstruction of the Indiana Township Fire Station: The Proposed Action will not result in any long-term adverse impacts related to air quality, noise, land use, traffic and circulation, floodplain management, public safety, biological and cultural resources, in addition to potential effects on minority or low income groups.

The Proposed Action has been reviewed and to the best of our knowledge, does not have the potential for significant cumulative effects when combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in accordance with 44 CFR Part 10.8 (d)(3)(x). As a result of the information and analysis contained in the environmental assessment, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been prepared. An Environmental Impact Statement will not, therefore, be prepared based on the fact that there will be no long-term adverse impacts on the natural or human environment as a result of this project.

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