

**Federal Emergency Management Agency
Finding of No Significant Impact
Proposed Sarasota County, Florida Emergency Operations Center
Emergency Operations Center Grant Program
Grant Numbers: 2009-EO-MX-0033 and 2010-EO-MX-0027**

BACKGROUND

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Subpart B, Agency Implementing Procedures, Part 10.9, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ; 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The project purpose is to improve the central command and control facilities responsible for implementing emergency preparedness and management operations during emergency situations in Sarasota County, Florida. An Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Sarasota County applied for FY2009 and FY2010 Emergency Operations Center Grant Program funding to assist with construction of a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that meets current hurricane building code standards. FEMA provides funds under this program to enhance State and local emergency management capabilities.

Two project alternatives were explored in depth in the EA for the EOC construction: 1) No Action and 2) Proposed Action.

The Proposed Action Alternative includes building a new facility that in addition to supporting EOC functions would include a consolidated 911 Call Center, Fire Department Administration Offices, and Enterprise Information Technology Data Center. The new facility will be located within the existing Sarasota County Government Building Complex on Cattlemen Road in Sarasota. Work includes demolishing an existing building and constructing a two-story 30,000 square foot building that will withstand Category 5 hurricane winds. Infrastructure to support the EOC will include 80 additional paved parking spaces, a stormwater retention pond, and an up to 150' free standing communication tower (20 x 20 feet base) with equipment mounted on it. The new facility will also be designed and built to meet minimum certification requirements for US Green Building Coalition (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

Under the No Action Alternative, no new EOC would be built and EOC functions would continue from the existing facility at 1660 Ringling Boulevard in Sarasota, which would only withstand up to a Category 3 hurricane event.

The Proposed Action is selected because of available land at the existing Government Building Complex and the new facility would provide improved and consolidated emergency response capabilities.

The Draft EA was made available for public review and comment in August 2011. FEMA did not receive substantive comments on the Draft EA during the 30 day comment period.

FINDINGS

The Proposed Action as described in the grant materials and EA would not significantly adversely impact physical, water, biological, cultural, socioeconomic resources or public safety. During the construction period, short-term minor localized adverse impacts to soil, downstream surface water, air quality, and from noise are anticipated. All short-term effects will be addressed by using best management practices to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts to the proposed project site and surrounding areas. The action will benefit public health and safety.

CONDITIONS

The County is responsible for getting all applicable local, state, and federal permits before starting any project site work, and is responsible for complying with conditions therein.

The County is responsible for selecting, implementing, monitoring, and maintaining Best Management Practices to control erosion and sedimentation, reduce spills and pollution, and provide habitat protection; consistent with its SFWMD Environmental Resource Permit.

Site soils will be covered and/or wetted during construction as needed to minimize fugitive dust.

Construction will occur during normal daylight hours 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The County is responsible for determining the presence of hazardous materials before demolition work. This may include, but is not limited to, asbestos, lead-based paint, propane cylinders, discarded paints and solvents, cleaning chemicals, containers of pesticides, and items containing chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). The County shall identify, handle, transport, and dispose of hazardous materials and/or toxic waste in accordance to the requirements and to the satisfaction of the governing local, state and federal agencies, including completing required noticing.

If any hazardous materials are found during site work; these shall be characterized, remediated, transported, and disposed as appropriate, and otherwise handled in accordance with the governing local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

If human remains or intact archaeological deposits are uncovered, work in the vicinity of the discovery will stop immediately and all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds will be taken. The applicant will ensure that archaeological discoveries are secured in place, that access to the sensitive area is restricted, and that all reasonable measures are taken to avoid further disturbance of the discoveries. The applicant's contractor will provide immediate notice of such discoveries to the applicant. The applicant will notify FEMA within 24 hours of the discovery. Work in the vicinity of the discovery may not resume until FEMA has completed consultation with SHPO, Tribes, and other consulting parties as necessary.

Any change to the approved project Scope of Work will require re-evaluation for compliance with NEPA and other Laws and Executive Orders.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the EA findings, coordination with agencies, public involvement, and adherence to the project conditions set forth in this FONSI, FEMA has determined that the proposed project qualifies as a major Federal action that would not significantly adversely affect the quality of the natural and human environment, nor does it have the potential for significant adverse cumulative effects. As a result of this FONSI, FEMA will not prepare an EIS (44 CFR Part 10.9) and the Proposed Action as described in the attached EA may proceed.

APPROVAL

William R. Straw

William R. Straw, Ph.D.
Regional Environmental Officer

Date 10/05/11