



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SAVANNAH DISTRICT
100 W. OGLETHORPE AVENUE
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401-3604

Planning Branch

PUBLIC NOTICE
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

SUBJECT: Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for a Field Research Facility (FRF) Annex at the U.S. Army Engineering Research and Development Center (ERDC) in Duck, NC.

Notice of the following is hereby given:

a. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, notice is hereby given that the Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) proposes to prepare a Draft EA and Draft FONSI for the FRF Annex at ERDC.

b. Savannah District announces the availability to the public of a Draft EA and Draft FONSI for FRF Annex for ERDC. Downloaded document copies may be obtained from the District website at: <http://www.sas.usace.army.mil/About/Divisions-and-Offices/Planning-Division/Plans-and-Reports/>.

c. Written statements regarding the Draft EA and Draft FONSI for the proposed action will be received at the Savannah District Office until

12 O'CLOCK NOON, 24 July 2020

from those interested in the activity and whose interests may be affected by the proposed action.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed action consists of construction of a 4,008 square foot FRF Annex within the existing nine-acre site enclosed by an eight-foot high fence and is just to the north of the existing buildings. The site is a previously developed site with minimal vegetation. Supporting facilities would include site development, pavement removal, utilities and connections, lighting, lightning protection system, walks, curbs, fire access lanes, information systems, and signage. Facility space requirements were developed from space planning criteria contained in Army Regulation 405-70.

Site work for the project would include the following items: A reconfigured parking lot to accommodate additional parking for new staff, a fire truck access road to provide fast access to the new building in the event of a fire, two new handicapped access parking

spaces close to the new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant access ramp structure, and a new larger septic tank to accommodate both buildings and a larger drain field to provide easy access for maintenance. Relocation of existing underground utility lines would be required. Demolition of an existing septic tank and drain field would occur. Measures in accordance with the Department of Defense (DOD) Minimum Antiterrorism for buildings standards would be provided. Cyber Security Measures would be incorporated into this project.

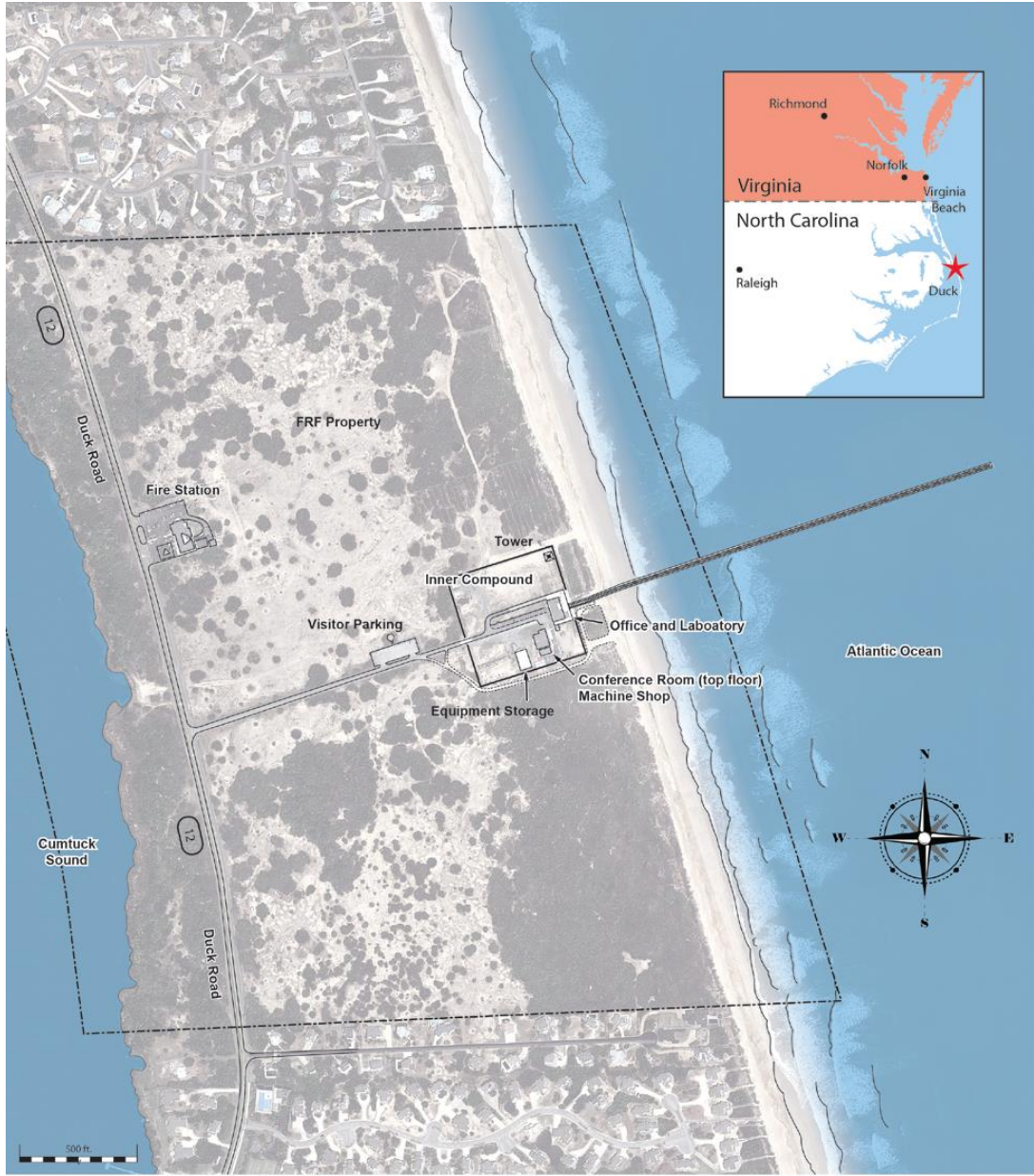
This proposed action would be completed within the existing complex boundaries; however, it would be new construction breaking new ground. Therefore, it requires an EA. There are no issues pending regarding this new construction.

Alternative plans were developed as part of the planning process. The alternatives that were considered were as follows:

a. Alternative 1 - Without Project Condition/No Action Alternative:

The No Action Alternative (NAA) would not construct the FRF Annex. If the proposed project would not be constructed, the FRF would continue to operate in an undersized facility that was not designed or constructed to meet the current and expanded military research mission. Ongoing warfighter support and force projection research would be adversely impacted.

b. Alternative 2 – Proposed Project: The Proposed Action Alternative is construction of an Annex with features to provide adequate laboratory and administrative spaces to support the expanded military research mission.



Field Research Facility
 1261 Duck Road
 Duck, North Carolina 27949
www.frf.usace.army.mil (252) 261-6840



Environmental Assessment: The Corps has prepared a Draft EA and found that an Environmental Impact Statement would not be required for this action. The Draft EA is being coordinated concurrently with this Notice to Federal and state natural resource agencies for review and comment.

Terrestrial Resources: With implementation of the proposed action, there would be minimal minor adverse impacts to the geography and landscape topography during the proposed project's construction and site work, but most of the ground has been previously disturbed.

Wildlife: Flora and Fauna: With implementation of the proposed action, there may be minimal disturbance to flora and fauna that have returned to this previously disturbed site while the construction of the proposed project was occurring, but there would not be any long term adverse effects to this resource.

Protected Species: With implementation of the proposed action, the Corps has made a No Effect determination for all listed species. None would occur within the proposed project area because they are marine, or the project area is previously disturbed and surrounded by an eight-foot high fence. Further, there is no listed critical habitat at the project site.

Cultural Resources: All proposed work for this undertaking would be performed within areas that have been previously disturbed by construction of the FRF and amenities, as well as ground disturbance from the previous land use and removal of ordnance. No archaeological investigations are necessary due to the low potential for encountering intact archaeological deposits.

Noise: With implementation of the proposed action, there may be some temporary and minor impacts to noise during construction; however, these would cease when construction is complete.

Essential Fish Habitat: Savannah District determined that the project area is outside the coastal zone and there would be no direct or indirect effects on Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).

Water Quality Certification: Section 401 Water Quality Certifications from the State of North Carolina are not needed for the proposed action because no discharge of effluent or sediment would be disposed of into waters of the U.S. Impacts to water quality would be negligible for either the Proposed Plan or the No Action Alternative.

Coastal Zone Consistency: Savannah District determined that the proposed project would have no direct or indirect effects on the coastal zone. Therefore, the EA constitutes a Negative Determination under the Coastal Zone Management Act.

Clean Air Act: With implementation of the FRF Annex, the Proposed Plan and the No Action Alternative would result in no adverse impacts to air quality.

Consideration of Public Comments: The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Native American Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of the proposed activity. Any comments received would be considered by the Corps in its deliberations. To make a decision, comments would be used to assess impacts to endangered species, wetlands, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments would be used in the preparation of the Final EA and FONSI pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments would also be used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Comment Period: Comment to the Corps on this proposed action should be submitted no later than the end of the comment period shown in this notice, in writing, to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 100 W Oglethorpe Avenue, Savannah, GA 30643 Attn: PM-P - Gose, or by e-mailing the comments to the following address: CESAS-PD@usace.army.mil. Questions concerning this request can be directed to Mrs. Cynthia Gose, Environmental Engineer at (912) 652-6107 or at Cynthia.A.Gose@usace.army.mil.



Jeffrey S. Morris
Acting Chief, Planning Branch
Savannah District