

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

Obstruction Removal  
Orcas Island Airport  
Eastsound, Washington  
February, 2017

**Introduction**

This document serves that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed vegetation removal that penetrates the existing and future Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 77 visual approach surface off of Runway 34. This FONSI is based on the information and analysis contained in the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) dated October, 2016 and attached hereto. This FEA has been prepared in accordance with FAA Order 1050.1F, Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures, and FAA Order 5050.4B, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions. The FEA documents the evaluation of environmental impacts associated with actions proposed by the Airport.

**Proposed Actions**

The Orcas Island Airport proposes to remove vegetation (trees and shrubs, including stumps) within the visual (20:1) approach surface except within the wetland conservation easement. With the conservation easement area, tree species that penetrate or have the potential to penetrate the 20:1 surface would be selectively removed, while the stumps would remain in place to minimize impacts. Federal actions to be undertaken by the FAA are as follows:

- Issue an unconditional Airport Layout Plan (ALP) approval for the extension
- Issue Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding for the project

**Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the project is to maintain the current approach surfaces for Runway 34. In accordance with Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 77, Objects Affecting the Navigable Airspace, the airspace and ground surrounding a runway should be free of obstructions to the greatest extent possible. Based upon an obstruction survey completed in February, 2014, it was determined that numerous trees penetrated the 20:1 approach surface for Runway 34. Removal of the proposed vegetation will allow the airport to meet this requirement.

**Alternatives**

Under the No Action Alternative, existing obstructions (vegetation) in the Runway 34 approach would remain and vegetation currently below the surface would like grow to become penetrations. Vegetation within the approach surface would continue to pose a hazard to safe aircraft operations.

The Preferred Alternative calls for the removal of vegetation (trees and shrubs, including stumps) within the visual (20:1) approach surface except within the wetland conservation easement. With the conservation easement area, tree species that penetrate or have the potential to penetrate the 20:1 surface would be selectively removed, while the stumps would remain in place to minimize impacts.

### Environmental Consequences


Chapter Five of the FEA includes an evaluation of the affected environment and the environmental consequences of the project. The preferred alternative is expected to have temporary construction impacts related to noise from equipment use, noise and dust from the transport of equipment and personnel to the site, and water quality impacts from erosion and potential spills. The impacts will be minimized by avoidance and minimization techniques.

### Public and Agency Involvement

The Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) was released for a public comment period that ran from September 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016. A Notice of Availability was published on August 31, 2016 in The Islands' Sounder and ran for one week. Copies of the DEA were available at the Orcas Island Airport and the Orcas Island Public Library. No comments were received. The Notice of Availability is attached to this finding.

### Environmental Finding and Approval

I have carefully and thoroughly considered the facts contained in the attached EA. Based on that information, I find the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives of Section 101(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and other applicable environmental requirements. I also find the proposed Federal action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or include any condition requiring any consultation pursuant to section 102(2) (C) of NEPA. As a result, FAA will not prepare an EIS for this action.

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Date: 2/22/17

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Date: 2/22/17