

County of Modoc, California

Notice of Preparation of Draft EIR – Notice of Public Scoping Meeting

Tulelake Municipal Airport Perimeter Fence Project

Date:	August 24, 2017
To:	State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Federal Agencies, Interested Parties, and Organizations
Subject:	Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting for the Tulelake Municipal Airport Perimeter Fence Project near Newell, Modoc County, California
Contact:	Mitch Crosby Modoc County Road Commissioner 202 West 4 th Street, Alturas, CA 96101 (530) 233-6412 mitchcrosby@co.modoc.ca.us
NOP Public Review Period:	45 days, beginning August 24, 2017 and ending at 5 pm, October 10, 2017
Public Scoping Meeting:	Wednesday, September 20, 2017, 6:30 pm, the Honker Youth and Community Center, 810 N. Main Street, Tulelake, CA 96134

Purpose of the Notice

The County of Modoc proposes to construct a perimeter fence at the Tulelake Municipal Airport located adjacent to the community of Newell, Modoc County, California. The purpose of the fence is to enhance overall airport safety by reducing the opportunity for unauthorized entry of people, vehicles, and wildlife into the aircraft operations area. Modoc County is the lead agency and will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

This Notice of Preparation (NOP; 14 CCR 15082) is to inform responsible and trustee agencies and interested parties that the County is preparing a Draft EIR for the proposed project. The County is also seeking your views on the scope and content of the descriptions of the significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures to be explored in the Draft EIR.

Background

Modoc County operates the Tulelake Municipal Airport, under a long-term lease from the City of Tulelake in Siskiyou County. The airport is classified as a basic airport in the United States Department of Transportation, FAA National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS).

The airport is considered necessary to provide safe and efficient facilities as part of an integrated system of airports to meet the needs of civil aviation, national defense, medical emergencies, commercial agricultural services and the postal service.

Project Location

Tulelake Municipal Airport is located on 358 acres one half mile east of the unincorporated community of Newell, Modoc County, California within the Klamath Basin approximately 20 miles south of Klamath Falls, Oregon and 60 miles northwest of Alturas, the Modoc County seat, in northeastern California. The airport serves the northwestern portion of Modoc County, northeastern Siskiyou County and the Klamath Basin in Southern Oregon. The Tulelake Municipal Airport is used by agriculture, business, and recreational, medical and emergency aircraft.

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The majority of Modoc County is mountainous and forested, with areas of large shallow lakes and meadows. Over 65% of the county's total land area is in federal or state ownership. Timber management, watershed management, agriculture, ranching and recreation dominate land uses in the county. The airport is surrounded by agricultural lands with scattered residences. In the vicinity of the airport, land development is concentrated near Newell along State Highway 139.

Project Description

The proposed project, for which the Draft EIR is being prepared, includes construction of about 16,000 linear feet of 8-foot tall fencing near the perimeter of the airport. Portions of the Tulelake Municipal Airport are currently enclosed by a combination of wire fences while other areas have no fencing. The existing fencing does not restrict the general public from inadvertently walking or driving onto the airport operations area, including the runway. A wildlife hazard study of the airport found that mule deer regularly cross the active airfield, increasing the risk of a collision between an aircraft and a deer.

Between 1942 and 1946, the property that became the Tulelake Municipal Airport was used as part of the Tule Lake Segregation Center. The Tule Lake Segregation Center was a World War II-era facility used to incarcerate Japanese-American United States citizens and legal residents under Executive Order 9066. After the Tule Lake Segregation Center closed, the United States government conveyed the property that became the Tulelake Municipal Airport to the City of Tulelake in 1951 for use as an airport.

Because of the prior land use of the Tulelake Municipal Airport, Modoc County and the FAA began coordination with the California State Office of Historic Preservation and other interested parties under the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106.

Modoc County and the Federal Aviation Administration participated in a series of airport stakeholder meetings in 2016 facilitated by the United States Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution to understand and seek resolution of different opinions about the proposed fence project. This EIR and the associated National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106, consultation process will result in a determination as to whether any historic resources are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and will be affected by the proposed project. The consultation process will also describe potential mitigation and protective measures for eligible resources if adverse effects to historic properties resulting from the airport fencing project are identified.

Potential Environmental Effects

The Draft EIR will evaluate potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. The Draft EIR will propose mitigation to avoid and/or reduce impacts deemed potentially significant, identify reasonable alternatives, and compare the environmental impacts of the alternatives to the impacts of the proposed project. Modoc County has elected to proceed directly to preparing a Draft EIR and not prepare an initial study as allowed by the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15063).

Potential issues and impacts to the existing environment to be analyzed in the Draft EIR include the following environmental topics:

Aesthetics
Agriculture
Air Quality
Biological Resources
Cultural and Historic Resources
Geology and Soils
Greenhouse Gases
Hazards/Hazardous Materials
Hydrology and Water Quality

Land Use and Planning
Mineral Resources
Noise
Population and Housing
Public Services
Recreation
Transportation and Traffic
Utilities and Service Systems

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The Draft EIR will discuss the cumulative impacts of the proposed project in combination with other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects in the area (14 CCR 15130).

The Draft EIR will describe and evaluate the comparative merits of a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project that could reasonably accomplish most of the basic project objectives and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant impacts (14 CCR 15126.6). The Draft EIR will also analyze the “No Project Alternative” and will identify the environmentally superior alternative. The EIR will briefly describe and explain any alternatives that were eliminated from detailed consideration. The alternatives to be analyzed will be developed during the environmental review process and will consider input received during the public scoping process.

Comments provided in response to the NOP and during the scoping meeting, and ensuing analyses, may identify additional environmental resources to be evaluated.

Public Scoping Meeting

A public scoping meeting will be held by Modoc County at the date and location listed below. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to present information about the proposed project, describe the County’s process and timelines, and solicit input, including written comments, on the scope and content of the Draft EIR.

Wednesday, September 20, 2017; 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm

**The Honker Youth and Community Center
810 N. Main Street
Tulelake, CA 96134**

Interested parties, including public agencies, are encouraged to attend the meeting to learn more about the proposed project and the environmental review process, and to express any concerns about the proposed project and offer suggestions regarding the environmental impacts, including mitigation measures and alternatives.

The public scoping meeting information has also been published in local newspapers and the following website for the environmental review process: <http://www.co.modoc.ca.us/departments/airports>.

Providing Comments

At this time, Modoc County is soliciting comments on the NOP regarding your views on how the project may affect the environment. This information will be considered when preparing the Draft EIR’s discussion of environmental topics, significant effects, mitigation measures, and alternatives. Because of time limits mandated by state law, comments should be provided no later than 5 pm on October 10, 2017 (45-day comment period).

You may submit comments in a variety of ways: (1) by U.S. mail, (2) by electronic mail (email), or (3) by attending a public scoping meeting and submitting written comments at that time. Comments provided by email should include “Tulelake Municipal Airport Perimeter Fence Project” in the subject line, and the name and physical address of the commenter should be contained in the body of the email.

Please send all comments via mail to Modoc County Road Commissioner, 202 West 4th Street, Alturas, CA 96101, OR via email to: mitchcrosby@co.modoc.ca.us, with the subject line: “Tulelake Municipal Airport Perimeter Fence Project”.

All comments on environmental issues received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the Draft EIR.

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Tulelake Municipal Airport Perimeter Fence Project

Location of Documents Available for Public Review

Copies of this NOP are available for review at the locations listed in Table 1.

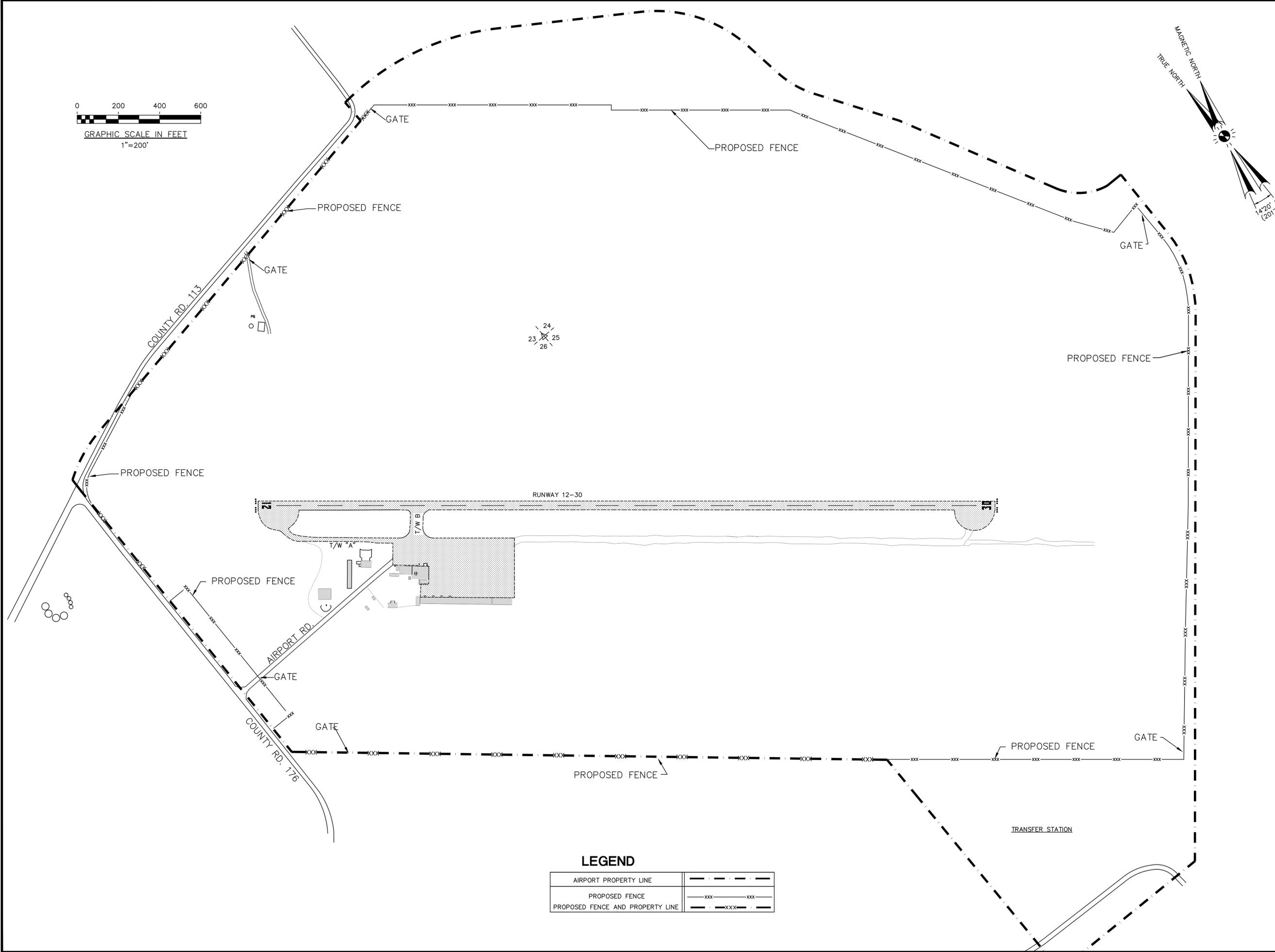
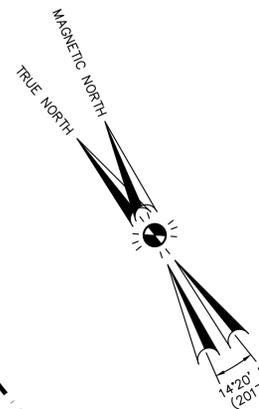
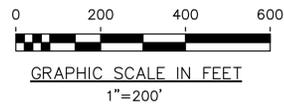
Table 1
Public Repository Sites

Site	Address	Telephone
Modoc County Road Department	202 W. 4 th Street Alturas, CA 96101	530-233-6412
Modoc County Library, Main Branch	212 W. 3 rd Street Alturas, CA 96101	530-233-6326
City of Tulelake , City Hall	591 Main Street Tulelake, CA 96134	530-667 5522
Macy’s Flying Service Tulelake Municipal Airport	530 County Road 176 Newell, CA 96134	530-664-2661

The NOP and all public review documents for this project will also be available for review online at <http://www.co.modoc.ca.us/departments/airports>.

Please contact Mitch Crosby if you have any questions about the environmental review process for the Tulelake Municipal Airport Perimeter Fence Project.

Respectfully,
Mitch Crosby
Modoc County Road Commissioner
202 West 4th Street
Alturas, CA 96101
(530) 233-6412
mitchcrosby@co.modoc.ca.us



LEGEND

AIRPORT PROPERTY LINE	— xxx — xxx —
PROPOSED FENCE	- - - - -
PROPOSED FENCE AND PROPERTY LINE	- - - - - xxx - - - - -

No.	REVISIONS	BY	APR	DATE

TULELAKE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT
CALIFORNIA

PROPOSED PERIMETER FENCE

TULELAKE

DATE	AUG. 16, 2017
DRAWN	TAS
CHECKED	DB
PROJECT No.	--
FILE	
SCALE	1"=200'
SHEET No.	1 OF 1

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