

County of Modoc

Notice of Public Scoping to Prepare an Environmental Assessment Tulelake Municipal Airport Perimeter Fence Project

Date: August 24, 2017

The County of Modoc is proposing to construct a perimeter fence at the Tulelake Municipal Airport 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 of the airport. The proposed project includes construction of about 16,000 linear feet of 8-foot tall fencing near the perimeter of the airport property.

As the County anticipates applying for federal grant funding for a portion of the fence construction costs, and that construction has the potential to affect the environment, the County is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) on the project for review and approval by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to meet the requirements of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as amended.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from government agencies and the general public regarding the scope of environmental analysis to be included in the EA. The EA will be prepared in accordance with the procedures described in Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations Parts 1500-1508; FAA Order 1050.1F, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*; and FAA Order 5050.4B, *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions*.

PLEASE SUBMIT PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENTS TO: Modoc County Road Commissioner, 202 West 4th Street, Alturas, CA 96101. Public scoping comments will be accepted until 5:00 PM on October 10, 2017.

Before including your name, address, and telephone number, email or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Modoc County is the operator of Tulelake Municipal Airport under a long-term lease from the City of Tulelake. Tulelake Municipal Airport is a public use, general aviation airport located on 358-acres of land in Modoc County and serves northwestern Modoc County and northeastern Siskiyou County in California and the Klamath Basin in southern Oregon. The airport has a single runway (Runway 12-30; 3,577 feet in length); a partial-parallel taxiway; paved aircraft parking apron; and aircraft hangars. The Tulelake Municipal Airport is classified as a basic airport in the United States Department of Transportation, FAA National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS).

Portions of the Tulelake Municipal Airport are currently enclosed by a combination of cyclone fence and 4-strand barbed wire fence 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 evaluation of the airport found that mule deer are regularly crossing the runway, 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 facility used to incarcerate Japanese-American United States citizens and legal residents under Executive Order 9066. The United States government subsequently apologized for that action in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-303). 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 for airport purposes.

Because of the prior land use of the Tulelake Municipal Airport, Modoc County and the FAA have started 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 FAA held a series of airport stakeholder meetings in 2016 facilitated by the United States Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution to better understand, and hopefully resolve, different opinions about the proposed fence project. This EA and the associated National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106, consultation will make a determination as to whether any historic properties on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places will be affected by the proposed project, and describe potential mitigation and protective measures for such properties if adverse effects to historic properties resulting from the airport fencing project are identified.

The FAA is aware that there are Native American tribes with an interest in this project. The FAA has contacted those tribes and will interact with those tribes on a government-to-government basis, in accordance with all executive orders, laws, regulations, and other memoranda. The tribes will also be invited to participate in the NEPA and National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106, processes.

Respectfully,
Mitch Crosby
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