

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for Construction of a Remote Fixed Facility (RFF) South Padre Island, Cameron County, Texas

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) has prepared a Final Environmental Assessment (EA) that evaluated the potential environmental impacts resulting from the construction of a remote fixed facility (RFF) communications tower and associated equipment on Coast Guard-owned property at USCG Station South Padre Island in Cameron County, Texas. The USCG has identified the need to modernize and replace its antiquated maritime search and rescue communications system in Texas as part of a nationwide mandate. The new communications system known as "Rescue 21" has repeatedly demonstrated its ability in helping the USCG save lives and will improve maritime safety within surrounding waters. The EA evaluated two project alternatives: a No Action Alternative and a Proposed Action Alternative. Under the Proposed Action, the USCG will construct a 400-foot-tall, self-supported, lattice communications tower and equipment compound.

After careful consideration, it was determined that no significant adverse environmental impacts resulting from the Proposed Action were identified to existing land use, water resources (surface water, groundwater, waters of the United States, wetlands, and floodplains), air quality, noise, biological resources (vegetation, fish and wildlife, state and Federally listed threatened or endangered species and critical habitats), safety, hazardous materials and water, cultural resources, or result in disproportionately high or adverse effects on minority or low-income populations, and the project is necessary to meet the needs of the citizens in the surrounding area of the project location. Therefore, the Coast Guard issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

The Final EA and FONSI have been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321, 4331, 4332), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500–1508), Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Management Directive (MD) 023-01, Environmental Planning Program, and the U.S. Coast Guard's policy guidelines for implementing NEPA, COMDTINST M16475.1D, National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures and Policy for Considering Environmental Impacts. The EA also addresses potential effects of the proposed action relative to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA). This EA also fulfills the requirements of Executive Orders 11514 (Environmental Quality) and 11988 (Floodplain Management).

The Final EA and FONSI can be reviewed beginning in June, 2011 at the Port Isabel Library, 213 Yturria Dr, Port Isabel, TX 78578 or on the USCG Rescue 21 website: <http://www.uscg.mil/acquisition/rescue21/links.asp>. Persons wishing to receive a printed copy of the Final EA should contact Mr. Eugene G. Lockhart, Deputy Program Manager, Rescue 21 Project at the address below.

COMMANDANT (CG-9331)
ATTN: Eugene G. Lockhart
U.S. Coast Guard
2100 2nd Street SW Stop 7701
Washington, DC 20593-7701
E-mail: Eugene G. Lockhart@uscg.mil