

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) (Draft)**

### **Environmental Assessment (EA) for Space Florida's Reconstitution and Enhancement of Space Launch Complex (SLC) 20**

#### **Cape Canaveral Air Force Station (CCAFS), FL**

#### **Introduction**

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was prepared per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S. Code 4321 et seq., implementing Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500-1508, and 32 CFR Part 989, Environmental Impact Analysis Process. This FONSI hereby incorporates by reference and attaches hereto the Environmental Assessment (EA) for Space Florida to develop a multi-user launch capability that includes the refurbishment and enhancement of an existing launch pad, the operation of small- and medium-lift launch vehicles by commercial users such as Firefly Aerospace, Inc., under an agreement with Space Florida, and the transportation of vehicle stages from Exploration Park to SLC-20 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station (CCAFS), Florida. The EA analyzed impacts associated with up to 24 launches per year and modifications to SLC-20 to support those launches. The United State Air Force (USAF) has determined that the EA is current, satisfactorily meets 32 CFR Part 989 requirements, and adequately addresses impacts associated with conducting construction and launch operations.

In accordance with 32 CFR 989.15, the USAF released the draft EA for public review along with a draft FONSI for actions affecting USAF leased and owned property. These documents were made available to the affected public for a 30-day review/comment period commencing **2020**. The affected public was notified by an advertisement placed in a locally viewed newspaper. The documents were made available by placing them in the 45th Space Wing (45 SW) Public Affairs Office, and the Patrick Air Force Base internet site. **[Public comment discussion]**. The draft EA was also coordinated with Federal and State agencies. Coordination with Federal and State agencies along with their responses is documented in the Appendices of the EA.

#### **Proposed Actions Occurring on USAF Leased and Owned Property**

The Proposed Action focuses on the Real Property Agreement (RPA) to transfer the 220 acres (89 ha), to include SLC-20 and transportation routes, from USAF to Space Florida, to develop a multi-user launch capability that includes the refurbishment and enhancement of an existing launch pad, the operation of small- and medium-lift launch vehicles by commercial users such as Firefly Aerospace, Inc., under an agreement with Space Florida, and the transportation of vehicle stages from Exploration Park to SLC-20.

Space Florida proposes to establish a multi-user launch capability at SLC-20. Firefly, one of the potential launch providers, proposes to launch Alpha, a small-lift class launch vehicle, and future Beta, a small- to medium-lift class launch vehicle, from SLC-20. Firefly's Alpha and Beta launch vehicles will be used as representative vehicles for the Proposed Action and are referred to as Concept A and Concept B, respectively. Both representative launch vehicles are expendable and provide satellite delivery services with the future opportunity for lunar surface delivery services. The major elements of the Proposed Action are Concept A and B launch pads and horizontal integration facilities.

Space Florida intends to refurbish, enhance, and use the existing SLC-20 launch pad and access roads, support shop, Horizontal Integration Facility, guard house, and blockhouse. Specific new construction items that would be required for the launch site include power supply; fiber optic cable;

water/wastewater supply, storage, treatment, and fire protection systems; propellant storage facilities; diesel storage tank; Concept B launch pad and lightning protection towers; Concept A Environmental Conditioning System; Launch Communication Equipment and Pad Office; Complex Support Building; Water Pump House; and Customer Support Building.

Proposed operational activities include transportation of small- and medium-lift launch vehicle stages and payloads from Exploration Park, engine testing, and launches.

### **Environmental Consequences**

The EA addressed impacts associated with the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative. Other alternatives were considered but not carried forward for analysis.

Section 4 of the EA analyzes the following resource areas: Land Use / Visual Resources, Noise, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Air Quality, Climate, Hazardous Materials, Waste, and Pollution Measures, Water Resources, Geology and Soils, Transportation, Section 4(f) Properties, Utilities, Health and Safety, Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, and Children's Environmental Health and Safety Risks. No significant impacts on these resources were identified from construction, launch operations or launch. Cumulative impacts on the resource areas are documented in Section 5 of the EA. Cumulative impacts were determined to be negligible with less than significant effects to resources.

To comply with the requirements of the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act and avoid significant adverse impacts to species, Space Florida and its tenants would be required to continue to adhere to all requirements of the past, current and ongoing consultations with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). With these measures, the Proposed Action would not be expected to have a significant impact on biological resources.

Since construction at SLC-20 may affect Federally-listed species and/or their habitat, the USAF was required to consult with the USFWS under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. Space Florida completed a Biological Assessment (BA) for the USAF to meet this requirement. This BA assessed construction and operational activities and the potential impacts to federally listed species. The USAF determined that the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the Florida Scrub-Jay, Eastern Indigo Snake, Wood Stork, Piping Plover and Red Knot. The USFWS concurred with these determinations. Space Florida will be required to ensure their tenants processing facilities are able to accommodate smoke from prescribed burns to ensure the 45 SW can continue long-term management of scrub-jay habitat to meet species recovery goals.

The USAF also determined that the Proposed Action may affect, and is likely to adversely affect the Southeastern Beach Mouse and nesting marine turtles: Leatherback, Loggerhead, Green, Kemps Ridley, and Hawksbill. The USFWS concurred with these determinations. Impacts to nesting marine turtles has been assessed in a previous Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO) and Space Florida and its tenants will be required to adhere to the terms and conditions of that PBO. A Light Management Plan will be submitted to the USAF and USFWS for approval. Adverse impacts to the Southeastern Beach Mouse will be reduced through habitat enhancement on the southeast corner of LC-19. Space Florida will complete the enhancement work and monitor the site. Based on the information provided in the BA and subsequent Biological Opinion (BO), the USFWS determined that the Proposed Action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any Federally-listed species. The BO is contained in Appendix C of the EA.

The 45 SW Cultural Resources Manager evaluated the areas that would be affected by the Proposed Action, and no historical or cultural resource issues were found within the Proposed Action boundaries or surrounding areas with the exception of the Blockhouse. The Blockhouse was determined to be

potentially eligible for listing, but the Proposed Action to use that facility as it was originally intended and to maintain the exterior similar to its original construction was determined to be a beneficial impact. The Florida Department of State Division of Historic Resources office concurs with the Cultural Resources Manager's determination. This documentation is contained in Appendix F of the EA.

Modifications to SLC-20 are not expected to disturb wetlands. All wetlands are outside of the area of construction.

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

In accordance with the CEQ Regulations implementing NEPA (Public Law 91-190, 42 U.S.C. §§4321-4347), as amended, and 32 CFR 989, 15 Jul 1999, and amended 28 Mar 2001, an assessment of the identified environmental effects has been prepared for Space Florida's Proposed Action on CCAFS property. Based on the analysis, neither the Proposed Action nor the No-Action Alternative would result in individual or cumulatively significant impacts to any resources. I find that the action will have no significant impact on the environment; thus, an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted.

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**Date**