

NASA Causeway Bridge Replacement Project
Environmental Assessment

Appendix A
Scoping Responses

American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Disclaimer:

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is committed to ensuring its electronic documents are accessible to all users. There may be some third-party images and maps within this document that are not ADA compliant at this time. Please contact Shari Miller at Shari.A.Miller@nasa.gov for further assistance.



Reply to
Attention of

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
NORFOLK DISTRICT
FORT NORFOLK
803 FRONT STREET
NORFOLK VA 23510-1096**

August 1, 2023

Eastern Virginia Regulatory Section
NAO-2020-01762

Shari Miller
GSFC Environmental Planning Group Lead &
WFF Center NEPA Manager
NASA GSFC Wallops Flight Facility
Wallops Island, VA 23337

Dear Ms. Miller:

This letter is in response to correspondence received from you on July 14, 2023, soliciting agency scoping comments for the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Wallops Island Causeway Bridge Replacement project over Cat Creek at Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility, in Accomack County, Virginia. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other federal and state laws and regulations, NASA, in cooperation with the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), is analyzing potential impacts to the environment resulting from the proposed replacement of the Wallops Island Causeway Bridge over Cat Creek. USACE will participate as a cooperating agency in the preparation and review of the EA. We commend the use of a collaborative process for the review of this project, documenting concurrence of the pertinent Federal agencies at important steps, to provide the local governments and the public with a more dependable framework for planning decisions.

Depending on the construction method, as well as determination of the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA), it is likely the project will impact waters and/or wetlands regulated by the Norfolk District Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 U.S.C. §403) and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §1344). A permit will be required for impacts to these waters not under the purview of the U.S. Coast Guard under Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act.

A preliminary jurisdictional determination for waters of the U.S. (including wetlands) on the property identified as Wallops Island Causeway Bridge, located on a 24.6-acre portion of the Goddard Flight Facility in Accomack County, Virginia was verified by the USACE in letter dated November 2, 2020. The delineation of waters and/or wetlands can be relied upon for no more than five years from the date of the letter (November 2, 2020).

This project will also require a Section 408 review by our Operations Branch as the bridge and its support pilings are within a waterway containing a Federal Project

Navigation Channel. At this time, Operations Branch does not have any comments as review and coordination for Section 408 permission is required, as stated in the submitted document.

Historic Resources: The project may affect historic and cultural resources. As per 36 CFR 800.2(a)(2), the NASA is hereby designated as the lead Federal agency to fulfill the collective federal responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the undertaking. We authorize your agency to conduct Section 106 coordination on our behalf. Any Memorandum of Agreement prepared by your agency under 36 CFR 800.6 should include the following clause in the introductory text:

"Whereas, pursuant to Section 10 and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, a Department of the Army permit will likely be required from the Corps of Engineers for this project, and the Corps has designated NASA as the lead federal agency to fulfill federal responsibilities under Section 10."

Threatened and Endangered Species: Pursuant to 50 CFR 402.07, the Corps authorizes your agency to conduct Section 7 coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as well as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on our behalf as well, concerning potential effects to Federally-listed threatened and endangered species. NASA will be responsible for completing all coordination pursuant to ESA, regardless of whether it occurs during the NEPA process or during the permitting process. In addition, we recommend that all documentation and coordination, including the IPAC determination, be included in the NEPA document.

Essential Fish Habitat: Pursuant to 50 CFR 600.920(b), the Corps authorizes your agency to conduct MSA consultation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries on our behalf as well, concerning potential effects to Essential Fish Habitat. NASA is responsible for completing all coordination pursuant to MSA, regardless of whether it occurs during the NEPA process or during the permit process. In addition, we recommend that all documentation and coordination be included in the NEPA document.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the preparation of the EA. To the extent that workload and scheduling allow, we will participate in stakeholder meetings. However, we request that NASA will consider separate meetings with the Cooperating Agencies as needed to resolve issues.

You may contact Mrs. Taylor Hollingsworth at Katherine.t.hollingsworth@usace.army.mil or 757-201-7044 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Digitally signed by
KUBE.PETER.R.1228832908 KUBE.PETER.R.1228832908
Date: 2023.08.01 10:59:05 -04'00'

Peter R. Kube
Chief, Eastern Virginia Regulatory Section

cc:

Environmental Protection Agency, Philadelphia

Matthew J. Strickler
Secretary of Natural Resources

Clyde E. Cristman
Director



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

Rochelle Altholz
*Deputy Director of
Administration and Finance*

Russell W. Baxter
*Deputy Director of
Dam Safety & Floodplain
Management and Soil & Water
Conservation*

Nathan Burrell
*Deputy Director of
Government and Community Relations*

Thomas L. Smith
*Deputy Director of
Operations*

September 18, 2020

Ryan Kimberley
Federal Highway Administration
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Sterling, VA 20166

Re: Wallops Island Causeway Bridge Replacement Scoping

Dear Mr. Kimberley:

The Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Natural Heritage (DCR) has searched its Biotics Data System for occurrences of natural heritage resources from the area outlined on the submitted map. Natural heritage resources are defined as the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species, unique or exemplary natural communities, and significant geologic formations.

Biotics documents the presence of natural heritage resources within the project boundary including a 100ft buffer. However, due to the scope of the activity we do not anticipate that this project will adversely impact these natural heritage resources.

In addition, the proposed project may fragment a C1 and C2 Ecological Core as identified in the Virginia Natural Landscape Assessment (<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvisvnl>), one of a suite of tools in Virginia ConservationVision that identify and prioritize lands for conservation and protection.

Ecological Cores are areas of unfragmented natural cover with at least 100 acres of interior that provide habitat for a wide range of species, from interior-dependent forest species to habitat generalists, as well as species that utilize marsh, dune, and beach habitats. Cores also provide benefits in terms of open space, recreation, water quality (including drinking water protection and erosion prevention), and air quality (including carbon sequestration and oxygen production), along with the many associated economic benefits of these functions. The cores are ranked from C1 to C5 (C5 being the least ecologically relevant) using many prioritization criteria, such as the proportions of sensitive habitats of natural heritage resources they contain.

Fragmentation occurs when a large, contiguous block of natural cover is dissected by development, and other forms of permanent conversion, into one or more smaller patches. Habitat fragmentation results in biogeographic changes that disrupt species interactions and ecosystem processes, reducing biodiversity and habitat quality due to limited recolonization, increased predation and egg parasitism, and increased invasion by weedy species.

Therefore minimizing fragmentation is a key mitigation measure that will reduce deleterious effects and preserve the natural patterns and connectivity of habitats that are key components of biodiversity. DCR recommends

600 East Main Street, 24th Floor | Richmond, Virginia 23219 | 804-786-6124

*State Parks • Soil and Water Conservation • Outdoor Recreation Planning
Natural Heritage • Dam Safety and Floodplain Management • Land Conservation*

efforts to minimize edge in remaining fragments, retain natural corridors that allow movement between fragments and designing the intervening landscape to minimize its hostility to native wildlife (natural cover versus lawns). Mapped cores in the project area can be viewed via the Virginia Natural Heritage Data Explorer, available here: <http://vanhde.org/content/map>.

There are no State Natural Area Preserves under DCR's jurisdiction in the project vicinity.

Under a Memorandum of Agreement established between the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) and the DCR, DCR represents VDACS in comments regarding potential impacts on state-listed threatened and endangered plant and insect species. The current activity will not affect any documented state-listed plants or insects.

New and updated information is continually added to Biotics. Please re-submit project information and map for an update on this natural heritage information if the scope of the project changes and/or six months has passed before it is utilized.

The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (VDWR) maintains a database of wildlife locations, including threatened and endangered species, trout streams, and anadromous fish waters that may contain information not documented in this letter. Their database may be accessed from <https://vafwis.dgif.virginia.gov/fwis/> or contact Ernie Aschenbach at 804-367-2733 or Ernie.Aschenbach@dwr.virginia.gov.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 804-225-2429. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,



Tyler Meader
Natural Heritage Locality Liaison

From: [Okorn, Barbara](#)
To: [Kimberly, Ryan \(FHWA\)](#)
Cc: [Spagnolo, Ralph](#); [Rudnick, Barbara](#)
Subject: Wallops Island Causeway Bridge
Date: Friday, September 18, 2020 10:11:58 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Kimberly,

Thank you for your August 5, 2020 letter inviting comments on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) joint effort to develop an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the replacement of the Wallops Island Causeway Bridge at Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility in Accomac County, Virginia. The letter indicates that the EA is being prepared to satisfy obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and will also serve as a means for ensuring compliance with other Federal statutes.

Generally, the EA should include a discussion of the need for the proposal, the alternatives considered, the environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives, mitigation as appropriate, and a listing of the agencies and persons consulted. Specific recommendations for your consideration in the development of the EA include the following:

- We recommend that alternative locations and methods to limit permanent and temporary disturbance to aquatic resources, and wildlife, be evaluated and presented in the EA in a comparative form. The rationale for selection of the preferred alternative should be clearly stated in the analysis.
- We recommend the EA discuss construction/demolition techniques and how these methods were selected along with direct, indirect, and temporary impacts that are associated with each, and how impacts will be avoided or minimized. In particular, the EA should examine avoiding impacts associated with the siting of staging areas and any other associated disturbance areas. The analysis should also include using proper barriers when installing new bridge abutments to minimize impacts to aquatic resources.
- We suggest that the document thoroughly evaluate potential aquatic resources impacts, including estimated acreage of direct and indirect impacts, including impacts on hydrology, ecological communities, vegetative communities, soils, and functions. Wetlands present on or immediately surrounding the site should be delineated. Including data such as delineation or functional assessment information in the EA is helpful, and photos are recommended to characterize the resources.
- We recommend that the EA provide a detailed description of the habitat resources in the study area and suggest an assessment of benthic and finfish to help identify

avoidance and minimization measures.

- Salt marshes, Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) beds and mudflats are important habitats because they provide critical habitat for marine and estuarine species of flora and fauna. Loss of these habitats could impact important recreational and commercial finfish and shellfish habitat that are critical for the local and national economy. The alternatives studied in the EA should avoid and minimize impacts to these habitats.
- Potential construction impacts should be assessed in detail, including timing, measures taken to protect surface waters, and noise impacts. Also, as construction may introduce or spread invasive species, we recommend the project's potential contribution to the spread of invasive species be evaluated and prevention or mitigation measures addressed in the EA.
- Mitigation measures for adverse environmental impacts should be described. Permanent impacts to aquatic resource may require compensatory mitigation. Where disturbance is indicated to be temporary, restoration of aquatic resources should be discussed.
- We recommend that coordination with the applicable agencies be documented in the EA, including correspondence regarding state and federal threatened and endangered species.
- We recommend time of year restrictions be followed to avoid finfish migration during the spawning season. Fish migrate into tidal and non-tidal headwaters to spawn at certain times of year; especially from January through April.
- We suggest consideration be given to conducting a sediment grain size analysis to determine the amount of sand, silt and clay in the sediment. This information can be used to determine appropriate techniques to reduce sedimentation rates

We look forward to working with you as more information becomes available. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions on the recommended topics above or if we are able to contribute to the analysis. We request that you provide a copy of the EA to EPA when it is available for review.

Sincerely,
Barb

Barbara Okorn
Office of Communities, Tribes, & Environmental Assessment
US EPA, Region III
1650 Arch Street (3RA10)
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-814-3330

From: [Daryl Moore](#)
To: ["Miller, Shari A. \(WFF-2500\)"; Kimberley, Ryan \(FHWA\)](#)
Cc: [Sean Mulligan](#)
Subject: Wallops Island Causeway Bridge Replacement, Accomack County, VA, Scoping Notification
Date: Thursday, September 10, 2020 7:13:32 AM

Shari / Kimberley,

Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority has no comments or concerns on the subject project.

Daryl Moore
VCSFA / MARS
Safety & Environmental Manager
Cell: 540-450-4044

Dear Potential Stakeholder,

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are initiating an Environmental Assessment (EA) that will evaluate potential impacts associated with replacement of the Wallops Island Causeway Bridge over Cat Creek at Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility, in Accomack County, VA.

The attached documents provide additional information about the proposed project and EA. Please review the scoping materials and provide comments on behalf of your department. Feel free to forward this email to others in your office who may be interested. The scoping period is open until September 20, 2020. The attached scoping materials are summarized as follows:

1. Stakeholder Scoping Letter- This letter includes project descriptions, internet links, and information about the EA and scoping process.
2. Attachment A- Satellite image, topographic map, photos of the existing bridge, and a rendering of the proposed bridge
3. Attachment B- Preliminary/proposed engineer plans, including the type, size, and location of the bridge.

We greatly appreciate your participation in the scoping process,



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Marine Resources Commission
380 Fenwick Road
Bldg 96
Fort Monroe, VA 23651-1064

Matthew J. Strickler
Secretary of Natural Resources

Steven G. Bowman
Commissioner

September 22, 2020

Federal Highway Administration
Attn: Ryan Kimberley
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Sterling, VA 20166

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment
Wallops Island Causeway Bridge Replacement

Dear Mr. Kimberley:

This will respond to the request for comments regarding the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Wallops Island Causeway Bridge Replacement Project, prepared by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), on behalf of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Specifically, NASA has proposed to replace the existing Wallops Island Causeway Bridge over Cat Creek at Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility in Accomack County, Virginia.

The Wallops Island Causeway Bridge crosses over public shellfish grounds that are open for harvest. VMRC recommends that a survey of shellfish resources be conducted as part of the environmental assessment. Stringent erosion and sediment control measures should also be used during any construction or maintenance on the bridge to protect shellfish in the area. Additionally, VMRC recommends that demolished bridge materials be considered for placement on artificial reefs in the area. The VMRC Artificial Reef Program can be contacted to determine which materials would be acceptable for placement on artificial reefs.

Please be advised that the VMRC pursuant to Chapter 12, 13, & 14 of Title 28.2 of the Code of Virginia administers permits required for submerged lands, tidal wetlands, and beaches and dunes. Any jurisdictional impacts will be reviewed by the VMRC during the Joint Permit Application process. Should the proposed project change, a new review by this agency may be required relative to these jurisdictional areas.

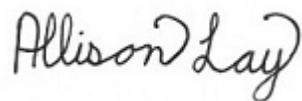
An Agency of the Natural Resources Secretariat
www.mrc.virginia.gov

Telephone (757) 247-2200 (757) 247-2292 V/TDD Information and Emergency Hotline 1-800-541-4646 V/TDD

Federal Highway Administration
September 22, 2020
Page Two

If you have any questions please contact me at (757) 247-2254 or by email at Allison.lay@mrc.virginia.gov. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Allison Lay". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Allison Lay
Environmental Engineer, Habitat Management

AEL
HM



Reply to
Attention of

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
NORFOLK DISTRICT
FORT NORFOLK
803 FRONT STREET
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

September 18, 2020

CENAO-WR-E
Eastern Projects Section

Ryan Kimberley
Federal Highway Administration
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Sterling, VA 20166

Shari Miller
Center NEPA Manager &
Environmental Planning Lead
NASA GSFC Wallops Flight Facility
Wallops Island, VA 23337

Dear Mr. Kimberley and Ms. Miller:

This letter is in response to a letter from Kevin Rose, Environment Team Leader with the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division, dated August 5, 2020 soliciting scoping comments for a study to assess the potential environmental impacts associated with replacing the Wallops Island Causeway Bridge over Cat Creek at Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility, in Accomack County, VA. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other federal and state laws and regulations, NASA, in cooperation with the FHWA, is assessing potential impacts to be documented in an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this project. USACE will participate as a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EA. We recommend the use of a collaborative process for the study of this project, documenting concurrence of the pertinent Federal agencies at important steps, to provide the local governments and the public with a more dependable framework for planning decisions.

Depending on the construction method as well as the LEDPA, it is likely the project will impact waters and/or wetlands regulated by the Norfolk District Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 U.S.C. § 403) and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §1344). A permit will be required for impacts to these waters not under the purview of the US Coast Guard under Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act.

To determine the limits of our jurisdiction, our office will require a wetland delineation be performed for all areas of disturbance including laydown areas.

This project will also require a Section 408 review by our Operations Branch as the bridge and its support pilings are within a waterway containing a Federal Project Navigation Channel. All future correspondence should also be sent to Mike Anderson, (michael.l.anderson@usace.army.mil) our 408 coordinator. Operations Branch has provided the following comments:

“Currently we can identify two primary concerns that need to be addressed by your Review. An RFI or a more thorough technical evaluation of their plans may be required.

1. First, we want to make sure the minimum bridge clearance is the same or higher than the existing bridge.
2. Second, we want to ensure that they perform all construction activities in a manner that will maintain safe navigation.”

Historic Resources. The project may affect historic and cultural resources. As per 36 CFR 800.2(a)(2), the FHWA is hereby designated as the lead Federal agency to fulfill the collective federal responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the undertaking. We authorize your agency to conduct Section 106 coordination on our behalf. Any Memorandum of Agreement prepared by your agency under 36 CFR 800.6 should include the following clause in the introductory text:

"Whereas, pursuant to Section 10 and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, a Department of the Army permit will likely be required from the Corps of Engineers for this project, and the Corps has designated FHWA as the lead federal agency to fulfill federal responsibilities under Section 106;"

Threatened and Endangered Species: Pursuant to 50 CFR 402.07, the Corps authorizes your agency to conduct Section 7 coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as well as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on our behalf as well, concerning potential effects to Federally-listed threatened and endangered species. FHWA will be responsible for completing all coordination pursuant to ESA, regardless of whether it occurs during the NEPA process or during the permitting process. In addition, we recommend that all documentation and coordination, including the IPAC determination, be included in the NEPA document.

Essential Fish Habitat. Pursuant to 50 CFR 600.920(b), the Corps authorizes your agency to conduct MSA consultation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries on our behalf as well, concerning potential effects to Essential Fish Habitat. FHWA is responsible for completing all coordination pursuant to MSA, regardless of whether it occurs during the NEPA process or during the permit process. In addition, we recommend that all documentation and coordination be included in the NEPA document.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the preparation of the EA. To the extent that workload and scheduling allow, we will participate in stakeholder meetings. However, we request that NASA will consider separate meetings with the Cooperating Agencies as needed to resolve issues.

You may contact Mr. Brian Denson at brian.c.denson@usace.army.mil or 757-201-7792 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

KUBE.PETER.R.122883
2908

Digitally signed by
KUBE.PETER.R.1228832908
Date: 2020.09.18 11:53:13 -04'00'

Peter. R. Kube
Chief, Eastern Virginia Regulatory Section

cc:

Environmental Protection Agency, Philadelphia

18 September 2020

Ryan Kimberly
Federal Highway Administration
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Stirling, VA 20166

Dear R. Kimberly:

This letter responds to the request for scoping comments for the development of an Environmental Assessment for the Wallops Island Causeway Bridge Replacement over Cat Creek in Accomack County. The preliminary plans involve constructing a replacement causeway supported by precast concrete piles adjacent to the existing structure. Once complete, the old structure will be removed.

There has been no submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) mapped within Cat Creek since our mapping began in 1971. Installation of the proposed precast concrete piles will result in lesser impacts to aquatic fauna as compared with hollow steel piles. Additional direct marine and wetland environmental impacts will be from the footprint of the pilings and indirectly from shading from the deck. Once the old causeway is removed, we recommend that the area be regraded to tie into adjacent marsh contours and planted with appropriate tidal wetlands vegetation. Any construction access and/or disturbance should also be replanted. We recommend the development of a planting plan that includes monitoring and replanting as necessary as well as a *Phragmites australis* control plan.

Cat Creek is designated as public shellfish ground and potential impacts to oysters in the project vicinity will depend on finalized designs and construction methods. Turbidity caused by construction and demolition can impact settlement of oyster spat. These impacts can be reduced through strict erosion and sediment control measures and, if necessary depending on oyster density, a time of year restriction on instream work.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project at this early stage. We can review and provide additional detailed comments once the EA and project designs are complete.

Sincerely,



Emily Hein

Assistant Director for Advisory Services

2023
Natural Resources Conservation
Service Consultation
(updated December 2023)

From: [Bruner, Douglas W. \(WFF-2500\)](#)
To: [Meinen, Kayleen - FPAC-NRCS, VA](#)
Cc: [Lindsey, Matthew R. \(WFF-250.0\)\[Bluestone Environmental Group, Inc\]](#); [Simko, Marianne F. \(WFF-250.0\)\[Bluestone Environmental Group, Inc\]](#); [Saecker, John R. \(WFF-2280\)](#); [Richert, Suzie](#); [Kimberley, Ryan \(FHWA\)](#); [Spotswood, Abby](#); [Simko, Marianne F. \(WFF-250.0\)\[Bluestone Environmental Group, Inc\]](#)
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: Follow-Up Coordination with NRCS for CBREAs New Staging Areas
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 11:37:09 AM
Attachments: [Completed VII NRCS AD-1006 NASA Causeway Bridge Replacement_112223.pdf](#)

Hi Kayleen,

Form AD-1006 with section VII completed is attached.

Respectfully,

Douglas W. Bruner, P.G.
Environmental Engineer
Code 250, Medical and Environmental Management Division
NASA Wallops Flight Facility
Building F-160, Rm C-166
Wallops Island, Virginia 23337
douglas.w.bruner@nasa.gov
Office (757) 824-2441
Cell: 651-276-9864

From: Meinen, Kayleen - FPAC-NRCS, VA <Kayleen.Meinen@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 11:10 AM
To: Bruner, Douglas W. (WFF-2500) <douglas.w.bruner@nasa.gov>
Cc: [Lindsey, Matthew R. \(WFF-250.0\)\[Bluestone Environmental Group, Inc\]](#) <matthew.r.lindsey@nasa.gov>; [Simko, Marianne F. \(WFF-250.0\)\[Bluestone Environmental Group, Inc\]](#) <marianne.f.simko@nasa.gov>; [Saecker, John R. \(WFF-2280\)](#) <john.r.saecker@nasa.gov>; [Richert, Suzie](#) <SRichert@wetlands.com>; [Kimberley, Ryan \(FHWA\)](#) <ryan.kimberley@dot.gov>; [Spotswood, Abby](#) <ASpotswood@wetlands.com>; [Simko, Marianne F. \(WFF-250.0\)\[Bluestone Environmental Group, Inc\]](#) <marianne.f.simko@nasa.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Follow-Up Coordination with NRCS for CBREAs New Staging Areas

Good morning Mr. Bruner,

Attached here is the updated AD-1006 form with sections II, IV, and V complete. Please return a copy of the AD-1006 once section VII has been completed for our agency records.

Have a great holiday!

Thank you,

Kayleen Meinen

USDA NRCS

Soil Science Pathways Intern

Area IV Highly Erodible Land Compliance

Area IV FPPA Point of Contact

310 Shea Drive, Chesapeake, VA 23322

kayleen.meinen@usda.gov

nonwork days: Monday, Tuesday

From: Bruner, Douglas W. (WFF-2500) <douglas.w.bruner@nasa.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 11:48 AM

To: Meinen, Kayleen - FPAC-NRCS, VA <Kayleen.Meinen@usda.gov>

Cc: Lindsey, Matthew R. (WFF-250.0)[Bluestone Environmental Group, Inc] <matthew.r.lindsey@nasa.gov>; Simko, Marianne F. (WFF-250.0)[Bluestone Environmental Group, Inc] <marianne.f.simko@nasa.gov>; Saecker, John R. (WFF-2280) <john.r.saecker@nasa.gov>; Richert, Suzie <SRichert@wetlands.com>; Kimberley, Ryan (FHWA) <ryan.kimberley@dot.gov>; Spotswood, Abby <ASpotswood@wetlands.com>; Simko, Marianne F. (WFF-250.0)[Bluestone Environmental Group, Inc] <marianne.f.simko@nasa.gov>

Subject: Follow-Up Coordination with NRCS for CBREAs New Staging Areas

Dear Ms. Meinen,

NASA is reaching out to coordinate with you again on the Causeway Bridge Replacement Project since the proposed staging areas are proposed to be expanded. Please see the attached updated AD-1006 Form, project figures, and Web Soil Survey Farmland Classification Map to reflect the changes in the staging areas for the project. Our last correspondence with you was in late April/early May. The description of the project has not changed; however, approximately 0.57 acres were added to one of the proposed staging areas. Since this area contains prime farmland, we are sending an updated AD-1006 for your review.

Respectfully,

Douglas W. Bruner, P.G.
Environmental Engineer
Code 250, Medical and Environmental Management Division
NASA Wallops Flight Facility
Building F-160, Rm C-166
Wallops Island, Virginia 23337

douglas.w.bruner@nasa.gov

Office (757) 824-2441

Cell: 651-276-9864

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FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING

PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency)		Date Of Land Evaluation Request 11/03/2023			
Name of Project Causeway Bridge Replacement Project		Federal Agency Involved National Aeronautics and Space Ad			
Proposed Land Use Road and Staging Areas		County and State Accomack County, Virginia			
PART II (To be completed by NRCS)		Date NRCS 11/14/2023 <small>est Received</small>		Person Completing Form: Kayleen Meinen	
Does the site contain Prime, Unique, Statewide or Local Important Farmland? <i>(If no, the FPPA does not apply - do not complete additional parts of this form)</i>		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		Acres Irrigated 0 Average Farm Size 321 acres	
Major Crop(s) corn		Farmable Land In Govt. Jurisdiction Acres: 78.8 % 304,500 acres		Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: 46.6 % 179,875 acres	
Name of Land Evaluation System Used Accomack County LESA		Name of State or Local Site Assessment System None		Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS 11/22/2023	
PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)		Alternative Site Rating			
		Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly		0			
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly		3.09			
C. Total Acres In Site		27.69			
PART IV (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information					
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland		3.1			
B. Total Acres Statewide Important or Local Important Farmland		0			
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted		0			
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value		47			
PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Criterion Relative Value of Farmland To Be Converted (Scale of 0 to 100 Points)		75			
PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency) Site Assessment Criteria <i>(Criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5 b. For Corridor project use form NRCS-CPA-106)</i>		Maximum Points	Site A	Site B	Site C
1. Area In Non-urban Use		(15)	15		
2. Perimeter In Non-urban Use		(10)	10		
3. Percent Of Site Being Farmed		(20)	0		
4. Protection Provided By State and Local Government		(20)	0		
5. Distance From Urban Built-up Area		(15)	10		
6. Distance To Urban Support Services		(15)	10		
7. Size Of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average		(10)	0		
8. Creation Of Non-farmable Farmland		(10)	0		
9. Availability Of Farm Support Services		(5)	0		
10. On-Farm Investments		(20)	0		
11. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services		(10)	0		
12. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use		(10)	0		
TOTAL SITE ASSESSMENT POINTS		160	45		
PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)		100	75		
Total Site Assessment (From Part VI above or local site assessment)		160	45		
TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)		260	120		
Site Selected: A		Date Of Selection 11/22/23		Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Reason For Selection: As stated in CFR § 658.4(c)(2) "Sites receiving a total score of less than 160 need not be given further consideration for protection and no additional sites need to be evaluated." Therefore, with a total combined score of 120, NASA intends to use the proposed sites as staging areas for the project.					
Name of Federal agency representative completing this form: Douglas W. Bruner				Date: 11/22/2023	

STEPS IN THE PROCESSING THE FARMLAND AND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

- Step 1 - Federal agencies (or Federally funded projects) involved in proposed projects that may convert farmland, as defined in the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) to nonagricultural uses, will initially complete Parts I and III of the form. For Corridor type projects, the Federal agency shall use form NRCS-CPA-106 in place of form AD-1006. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) process may also be accessed by visiting the FPPA website, <http://fppa.nrcs.usda.gov/lesa/>.
- Step 2 - Originator (Federal Agency) will send one original copy of the form together with appropriate scaled maps indicating location(s) of project site(s), to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) local Field Office or USDA Service Center and retain a copy for their files. (NRCS has offices in most counties in the U.S. The USDA Office Information Locator may be found at http://offices.usda.gov/scripts/ndISAPI.dll/oip_public/USA_map, or the offices can usually be found in the Phone Book under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture. A list of field offices is available from the NRCS State Conservationist and State Office in each State.)
- Step 3 - NRCS will, within 10 working days after receipt of the completed form, make a determination as to whether the site(s) of the proposed project contains prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland. (When a site visit or land evaluation system design is needed, NRCS will respond within 30 working days.
- Step 4 - For sites where farmland covered by the FPPA will be converted by the proposed project, NRCS will complete Parts II, IV and V of the form.
- Step 5 - NRCS will return the original copy of the form to the Federal agency involved in the project, and retain a file copy for NRCS records.
- Step 6 - The Federal agency involved in the proposed project will complete Parts VI and VII of the form and return the form with the final selected site to the servicing NRCS office.
- Step 7 - The Federal agency providing financial or technical assistance to the proposed project will make a determination as to whether the proposed conversion is consistent with the FPPA.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM (For Federal Agency)

Part I: When completing the "County and State" questions, list all the local governments that are responsible for local land use controls where site(s) are to be evaluated.

Part III: When completing item B (Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly), include the following:

1. Acres not being directly converted but that would no longer be capable of being farmed after the conversion, because the conversion would restrict access to them or other major change in the ability to use the land for agriculture.
2. Acres planned to receive services from an infrastructure project as indicated in the project justification (e.g. highways, utilities planned build out capacity) that will cause a direct conversion.

Part VI: Do not complete Part VI using the standard format if a State or Local site assessment is used. With local and NRCS assistance, use the local Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA).

1. Assign the maximum points for each site assessment criterion as shown in § 658.5(b) of CFR. In cases of corridor-type project such as transportation, power line and flood control, criteria #5 and #6 will not apply and will, be weighted zero, however, criterion #8 will be weighed a maximum of 25 points and criterion #11 a maximum of 25 points.
2. Federal agencies may assign relative weights among the 12 site assessment criteria other than those shown on the FPPA rule after submitting individual agency FPPA policy for review and comment to NRCS. In all cases where other weights are assigned, relative adjustments must be made to maintain the maximum total points at 160. For project sites where the total points equal or exceed 160, consider alternative actions, as appropriate, that could reduce adverse impacts (e.g. Alternative Sites, Modifications or Mitigation).

Part VII: In computing the "Total Site Assessment Points" where a State or local site assessment is used and the total maximum number of points is other than 160, convert the site assessment points to a base of 160.

Example: if the Site Assessment maximum is 200 points, and the alternative Site "A" is rated 180 points:

$$\frac{\text{Total points assigned Site A}}{\text{Maximum points possible}} = \frac{180}{200} \times 160 = 144 \text{ points for Site A}$$

For assistance in completing this form or FPPA process, contact the local NRCS Field Office or USDA Service Center.

NRCS employees, consult the FPPA Manual and/or policy for additional instructions to complete the AD-1006 form.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration



Goddard Space Flight Center
Wallops Flight Facility
Wallops Island, VA 23337

Reply to Attn of: 250.W

April 25, 2023

Ms. Kayleen Meinen
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Accomac Service Center
22545 Center Parkway
Accomac, Virginia 23301

Dear Ms. Meinen,

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) that will evaluate potential impacts associated with replacement of the Wallops Island Causeway Bridge over Cat Creek at Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) in Accomack County, VA. The EA is being prepared to satisfy NASA's and FHWA's obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Coast Guard are serving as cooperating agencies on the EA.

This letter is being submitted to request your review of the Proposed Action's impacts on prime farmland in accordance with the Farmland Policy Protection Act.

The existing bridge, which would be demolished, was constructed in 1959 and is approaching the end of its anticipated service life. Approximately 1,000 feet of the causeway road at each bridge approaches would be realigned to allow construction of the new bridge parallel to the existing bridge. The limits of disturbance around the bridge would be approximately 25 acres.

The project would include three staging areas approximately 1 mile west of the bridge on NASA property (see Figure 4 in Attachment A). All three staging areas encompass approximately 2.5 acres and are currently open space covered with grass that is maintained by mowing. These areas would be used to store heavy equipment, materials, and demolition debris, and would serve as worker parking. Figures showing the project area, including the staging areas, and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil classifications at the staging areas are provided in Attachment A.

Soils in the project area at the Causeway Bridge are comprised of two soil map units: udorthents (UpD) and Chincoteague silt loam (ChA). The udorthents are likely due to the fill used to construct the Causeway Road. Most of the soils in the Causeway Bridge project area have been previously disturbed during construction of the Causeway Road and Bridge. Neither of the soil types are classified as prime farmland.

The soils within the two staging areas on the north side of the Causeway Road are both classified as Bojac loamy sand (BhB), with the eastern staging area having a small inclusion of Magotha fine sandy loam (MaA). The soil in the staging area south of Causeway Road is classified entirely as MaA. These soils have been previously disturbed by activities at WFF. The Bojac loamy sand is classified as prime farmland.

Of the approximately 2.5 acres within the staging areas, approximately 1.8 acres is prime farmland (BhB). No grading or excavations would occur for use as a staging area; however, gravel may be added to portions of the area to prepare them for use as parking and for equipment access. There would be minor long-term impacts to any native topsoil from the addition of gravel and compaction from equipment and vehicles. Access to the staging areas is restricted to government-authorized personnel, and the land is designated for non-agricultural use by NASA; none of the staging area sites are in active agriculture nor are they planned for agricultural use.

To minimize impacts to soils from erosion, NASA's construction contractor would develop site-specific erosion and sediment control (ESC) plans prior to ground-disturbing activities in compliance with the Virginia Stormwater Management Program regulations (9 VAC 25-870). The contractor would implement ESC best management practices (BMPs) throughout the site and before and after construction to stabilize soils. These BMPs could include using silt fencing, soil stabilization blankets, and matting.

We have completed the NRCS Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form (AD-1006), which is enclosed as Attachment B. We respectfully request your review and completion of this form and welcome any comments you may have regarding the Proposed Action. We would appreciate a response within 30 days. Please do not hesitate to contact me at douglas.w.bruner@nasa.gov or (757) 824-2441 if you have questions regarding this project.

Sincerely,

Douglas
Bruner

 Digitally signed by Douglas
Bruner
Date: 2023.04.25 13:07:00
-04'00'

Douglas W. Bruner, P.G.
Environmental Engineer

2 Enclosures

cc:

250/Ms. Shari A. Miller
780/Mr. John R. Saecker
FHWA/Mr. Ryan Kimberley
NRCS/Mr. Cameron Bermand



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



Virginia Field Office
6669 Short Lane
Gloucester, VA 23061

October 30, 2015

Greetings:

Due to increased workload and refinement of our priorities in Virginia, this office will no longer provide individual responses to requests for environmental reviews. However, we want to ensure that U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service trust resources continue to be conserved. When that is not possible, we want to ensure that impacts to these important natural resources are minimized and appropriate permits are applied for and received. We have developed a website that provides the steps and information necessary to allow any individual or entity requiring review/approval of their project to complete a review and come to the appropriate conclusion. This site can be accessed at: <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/virginiafield/endangered/projectreviews.html>.

The website is frequently updated to provide new species/trust resource information and methods to review projects. Refer to the website for each project review to ensure that current information and methods are utilized.

If you have any questions about project reviews or need assistance, please contact Troy Andersen of this office at (804) 824-2428 or troy_andersen@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Cindy Schulz
Field Supervisor
Virginia Ecological Services

From: [Kimberley, Ryan \(FHWA\)](#)
To: brian.d.hopper@noaa.gov; David.L.O'Brien@noaa.gov; victor.n.grycenkov@noaa.gov; Deborah_Darden@nps.gov; Brian.C.Denson@usace.army.mil; Joshua.j.zirbes@uscg.mil; Traver.Carrie@epa.gov; Rudnick.Barbara@epa.gov; cindy_schulz@fws.gov; emily_argo@fws.gov; kevin_holcomb@fws.gov; robert_leffel@fws.gov; nancy_finley@nps.gov
Cc: [Miller, Shari A. \(WFF-2500\)](#)
Subject: Wallops Island Causeway Bridge Replacement, Accomack County, VA, Scoping Notification
Date: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 11:15:00 AM
Attachments: [Attachment B preliminary plans.pdf](#)
[Attachment A maps and photos.pdf](#)
[Stakeholder Scoping Letter.pdf](#)

Dear Potential Stakeholder,

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are initiating an Environmental Assessment (EA) that will evaluate potential impacts associated with replacement of the Wallops Island Causeway Bridge over Cat Creek at Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility, in Accomack County, VA.

The attached documents provide additional information about the proposed project and EA. Please review the scoping materials and provide comments on behalf of your agency. Feel free to forward this email to others in your office who may be interested. The scoping period is open until September 20, 2020. The attached scoping materials are summarized as follows:

1. Stakeholder Scoping Letter- This letter includes project descriptions, internet links, and information about the EA and scoping process.
2. Attachment A- Satellite image, topographic map, photos of the existing bridge, and a rendering of the proposed bridge
3. Attachment B- Preliminary/proposed engineer plans, including the type, size, and location of the bridge.

We greatly appreciate your participation in the scoping process.

Ryan Kimberley
Environmental Protection Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Sterling, VA 20166
540-622-3069 (CELL- TEMPORARY NUMBER)

From: [Kimberley, Ryan \(FHWA\)](mailto:Kimberley.Ryan@FHWA)
To: ["ksmith@mdcoastalbays.org"](mailto:ksmith@mdcoastalbays.org); ["sean.mulligan@vaspace.org"](mailto:sean.mulligan@vaspace.org); ["rene.hypes@dcr.virginia.gov"](mailto:rene.hypes@dcr.virginia.gov); ["sheri.kattan@deq.virginia.gov"](mailto:sheri.kattan@deq.virginia.gov); ["amy.ewing@dgif.virginia.gov"](mailto:amy.ewing@dgif.virginia.gov); ["ruth.boettcher@dgif.virginia.gov"](mailto:ruth.boettcher@dgif.virginia.gov); ["karend@vims.edu"](mailto:karend@vims.edu); ["lyle@vims.edu"](mailto:lyle@vims.edu); ["Hank.Badger@mrc.virginia.gov"](mailto:Hank.Badger@mrc.virginia.gov); ["tony.watkinson@mrc.virginia.gov"](mailto:tony.watkinson@mrc.virginia.gov); ["ALLISON.NORRIS@MRC.VIRGINIA.GOV"](mailto:ALLISON.NORRIS@MRC.VIRGINIA.GOV)
Cc: ["Miller, Shari A. \(WFF-2500\)"](mailto:Miller,Shari.A@WFF-2500)
Subject: FW: Wallops Island Causeway Bridge Replacement, Accomack County, VA, Scoping Notification
Date: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 11:28:00 AM
Attachments: [Attachment B preliminary plans.pdf](#)
[Attachment A maps and photos.pdf](#)
[Stakeholder Scoping Letter.pdf](#)

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Ryan Kimberley
Environmental Protection Specialist
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Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Sterling, VA 20166
540-622-3069 (CELL- TEMPORARY NUMBER)

From: [Kimberley, Ryan \(FHWA\)](mailto:Kimberley.Ryan@FHWA)
To: crmajor@co.accomack.va.us; vanessajohnson@co.accomack.va.us; rwoff@co.accomack.va.us; btarr@co.accomack.va.us; commissioners@somersetmd.us; ALeonard@chincoteague-va.gov; administration@co.accomack.va.us; planning@co.accomack.va.us; envprograms@co.accomack.va.us; cridley@co.accomack.va.us; salexander@a-npdc.org; mtolbert@chincoteague-va.gov; JulieWheatley@co.accomack.va.us
Cc: [Miller, Shari A. \(WFF-2500\)](mailto:Miller.Shari.A@WFF-2500)
Subject: Wallops Island Causeway Bridge Replacement, Accomack County, VA, Scoping Notification
Date: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 10:53:00 AM
Attachments: [Attachment B preliminary plans.pdf](#)
[Attachment A maps and photos.pdf](#)
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We greatly appreciate your interest and participation in the scoping process,

Ryan Kimberley
Environmental Protection Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Sterling, VA 20166
540-622-3069 (CELL- TEMPORARY NUMBER)

From: [Kimberley, Ryan \(FHWA\)](#)
To: Chet@cbfieldstation.org; bdwatt@wm.edu; john.haag@navy.mil; peter.bale@srsgrp.com
Cc: [Miller, Shari A. \(WFF-2500\)](#)
Subject: Wallops Island Causeway Bridge Replacement, Accomack County, VA, Scoping Notification
Date: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 11:19:00 AM
Attachments: [Attachment B preliminary plans.pdf](#)
[Attachment A maps and photos.pdf](#)
[Stakeholder Scoping Letter.pdf](#)

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Ryan Kimberley
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