



FACT SHEET

Wallops Flight Facility Causeway Bridge Replacement Project Environmental Assessment

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), have prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the potential impacts of constructing a new Causeway Bridge parallel to the existing bridge that connects WFF's Mainland to Wallops Island and demolishing the existing bridge within 5 years after the new bridge is opened.

Why Did WFF Prepare an EA?

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), NASA must evaluate the potential environmental impacts of a proposed action. The EA has been prepared to determine if impacts would be significant, in which case NASA would be required to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

What is the Purpose and Need of the Causeway Bridge Replacement Project?

Need: The current bridge is approaching the end of its service life and showing accelerated signs of deterioration. The Causeway Bridge provides the only vehicular access to and from Wallops Island.

Purpose: To support NASA's mission by providing safe, efficient, and reliable transportation while improving the sustainability of operations by incorporating climate change resilience in the new bridge design. The new bridge would provide cost-effective, environmentally responsible solutions for updating NASA's transportation infrastructure.

What is Evaluated in the EA?

The Draft EA evaluates the environmental consequences of NASA's Proposed Action to construct a new Causeway Bridge and demolish the existing bridge.

What Alternatives Were Evaluated?

NASA initially considered both construction of a new bridge and construction of a new causeway. Construction of a new causeway was dismissed from evaluation in the EA because it did not pass all screening criteria. NASA is evaluating the Proposed Action (construction of a new bridge) and the No Action Alternative in the EA.

What is the Proposed Action Alternative?

NASA would construct a new, lower-profile Causeway Bridge parallel to the existing bridge and demolish the existing bridge within 5 years after the new bridge is opened. The Proposed Action may be implemented in the approximate sequence:

1. Preparation of site and staging area
2. Construction of temporary construction access
3. Construction of a new bridge including the installation of all superstructure and substructure elements such as piers, beams, and decks
4. Removal of temporary construction access
5. Construction of temporary access for demolition of existing bridge
6. Demolition of existing bridge
7. Removal of demolition temporary access
8. Maintenance and repair activities over the life of the new bridge (75+ years)

What is the No Action Alternative?

This alternative is required in NEPA analyses and serves as a baseline for comparing impacts of the Proposed Action. The No Action Alternative for this EA means that NASA and its tenants would continue using the existing Causeway Bridge indefinitely, conducting maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing bridge until structural deficiencies necessitate a full closure.



Project Location

Environmental Impacts and Permitting

The EA analyzes the potential effects of the Proposed Action on the following resources: noise; air quality; toxic substances, hazardous and regulated materials, and waste; health and safety; land resources; water resources; vegetation; wildlife; special status species; transportation; employment and income; recreation; and archaeological resources. No significant impacts are anticipated to result from the Proposed Action. Cumulative impacts are also evaluated in the EA.

The following consultations, coordination, and permits are required for the Proposed Action. Some have been completed and others are ongoing and will be completed before any action is taken.

- USACE:
 - Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 Dredge and Fill Permit
 - CWA Section 408 Authorization to Use or Alter a Federal Works Project
 - Rivers and Harbors Act Section 10 Navigable Waters Permit
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality:
 - CWA Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit
 - CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification
 - Construction Site Stormwater Permit
 - Coastal Zone Management Act Consistency Determination coordination
- Virginia Marine Resources Commission:
 - Tidal Wetlands & Subaqueous Bottom Permit
 - Offshore Reef Program coordination
- USCG:
 - Preliminary Navigation Clearance Determination
 - Bridge Permit
- Accomack County:
 - Wetlands Board Permit
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries & U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
 - Endangered Species Act consultation
- NOAA Fisheries:
 - Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Essential Fish Habitat consultation
- Virginia Department of Historic Resources:
 - National Historic Preservation Act consultation
- WFF's Stormwater, Erosion, and Environmental Development Program:
 - Construction Stormwater Permit

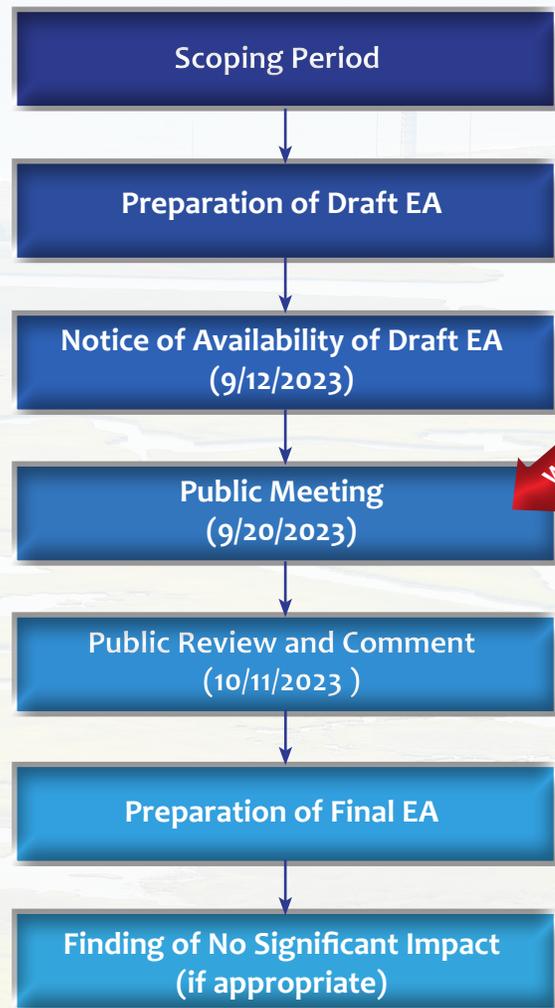
What is the National Environmental Policy Act?

NEPA establishes a framework for considering the scope of environmental issues and concerns early in the Federal decision-making process. Public involvement is an essential part of the process. Through involving the public and completing a detailed environmental analysis, the NEPA process helps the decision-maker arrive at the best possible informed decision.

How are Stakeholders and the Public Involved?

During the Scoping Period, NASA and FHWA sought input and suggestions from stakeholders on proposed activities to be addressed in the EA. Following data collection and research, the Proposed Action's potential effects on resources were analyzed and the type and extent of impacts were identified.

NASA is seeking public comments on the analysis and findings presented in the Draft EA during the 30-day public comment period (9/12/2023-10/11/2023). Responses to relevant comments on the Draft EA will be included in the preparation of the Final EA.



How Can You Be Involved?

Your involvement in the decision-making process is important to NASA. There are a number of ways to submit a comment on the Draft EA:

1. Fill out a comment form at the public meeting and give it to a NASA representative
2. Visit the project website: <https://code200-external.gsfc.nasa.gov/250-WFF/C-BREAs>
3. Mail or email your comments:

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To ensure consideration in the Final EA, please provide comments no later than **10/11/2023**.