

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION (NASA)

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT: NASA Wallops Flight Facility Shoreline Protection Program Environmental Assessment (SPP EA)

AGENCY: NASA Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility (WFF)

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 4321 et seq.) and NASA's NEPA policy and procedures (14 CFR Part 1216), NASA has made a FONSI with respect to its proposed shoreline protection program at WFF, Accomack County, Virginia.

ADDRESS: The Final EA that supports and serves as a basis for this FONSI may be reviewed at:

- Chincoteague Island Library, Chincoteague, Virginia
- Wallops Flight Facility Visitor's Center, Route 175 near Chincoteague, Virginia
- Eastern Shore Public Library, Accomac, Virginia
- Northampton Free Library, Nassawadox, Virginia

An electronic copy of the Final EA is available on the Internet at:
<https://www.nasa.gov/goddard/memd/nepa/shoreline>

A limited number of copies of the EA may be obtained by contacting the NASA representative at the address or email indicated below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Shari Miller
Center NEPA Manager
Mail Stop 250
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center Wallops Flight Facility
34200 Fulton Street Wallops Island, VA 23337
Email: gsfc-dl-nepa@mail.nasa.gov

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Wallops Island's constructed beach system has served its intended purpose of reducing damage to the launch range assets. However, the area has been severely eroded. The effects are most apparent within the southern half of Wallops Island, where the majority of NASA's critical launch assets are located. Within this area, storms, winds, and waves have acted to reduce the beach berm and sand dune system which are needed to provide the level of storm damage

reduction for which it was originally intended. Therefore, the Proposed Action is to renourish the beach along the southern and mid-Wallops Island in the area adjacent to launch infrastructure and to construct a series of parallel nearshore breakwater structures that would reduce the intensity of wave action and slow sediment transport.

All elements of the proposal are described in NASA's October 2010, *Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Wallops Flight Facility Shoreline Restoration and Infrastructure Protection Program* (Final SRIPP PEIS). Accordingly, the SPP EA prepared for the proposal tiers from the Final SRIPP PEIS and provides a focused analysis of the proposed repair work.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) served as Cooperating Agencies in preparing the SPP EA as each has both specialized expertise and regulatory authority regarding the proposal.

Alternatives Considered

The SPP EA evaluates in detail three alternatives and the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action could involve a combination of the following:

- sand renourishment within an approximate 15,000-foot section of shoreline from the south property line on Wallops Island north to the location of the fire station using material dredged from Outer Continental Shelf Unnamed Shoal A, an offshore sand ridge located at the southern end of the Assateague ridge field;
- construction of up to six breakwaters in the nearshore area between the existing breakwaters; and
- repairs and extension of the existing seawall.

The SPP EA evaluates the No Action Alternative as well as three Action Alternatives: beach renourishment, breakwater construction, and seawall repair/extension; beach renourishment and seawall repair/extension (no breakwaters); and breakwater construction and seawall repair/extension (no renourishment).

Environmental Analysis

The SPP EA examines the potential effects of the alternatives on physical, biological, and social resources. Resources evaluated in detail include coastal geology and processes, water quality, coastal zone management, air quality, noise, benthos, wildlife, fisheries and essential fish habitat, marine mammals, special status species, and cultural resources. The SPP EA concludes that potential effects to these resources are not significant.

Public Involvement

NASA initiated coordination with federal, state, and local government agencies and the public in January 2024, to obtain input on the development of the SPP EA. A 30-day scoping period ended on February 19, 2024.

NASA notified the public of the availability of the Draft SPP EA for review and comment during a 30-day public comment period through advertisements placed in the *Eastern Shore Post*, *Shore Daily News*, and *The Daily Times*. The Draft SPP EA was available on the project website, as well as at local libraries. The public comment period ended on February 17, 2026.

In preparing the Final SPP EA, NASA considered all comments received on the Draft SPP EA. The Final SPP EA and FONSI are available for review on the project website: <https://www.nasa.gov/goddard/memd/nepa/shoreline>. As with the Draft SPP EA, a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Final SPP EA and FONSI were placed in the newspapers listed above.

Related Environmental Reviews and Requirements

While preparing the SPP EA, NASA undertook consultation with and permitting by relevant regulatory agencies including the following:

- Individual Permit from USACE
- Dune and Subaqueous Permits from Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC)
- Federal Consistency Determination with Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
- Essential Fish Habitat Assessment with the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries (NOAA Fisheries)
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and NOAA Fisheries
- National Historic Preservation Act Consultation with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office and tribes with ties to Wallops Island

As such, NASA has met its obligations with respect to these statutes in parallel with the development of the SPP EA. Required mitigation measures resulting from these consultations and permitting have been incorporated into the Final SPP EA with the exception of the following: USFWS ESA consultation and USACE and VMRC permits were completed after the Final SPP EA. NASA will adhere to all mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements, including those resulting from USFWS ESA consultation and USACE and VMRC permitting. Any such requirement will be incorporated into final project design plans and specifications.

Conclusion

Based on the Final SPP EA, NASA has determined that the environmental impacts associated with the Wallops Flight Facility Shoreline Protection Program would not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, a new Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

David L. Pierce

David L. Pierce
Director, Wallops Flight Facility

9/15/2026

Date