

T.F. GREEN AIRPORT, WARWICK, RI

PVD

Environmental Impact Statement

Supplemental Scoping Information



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Background

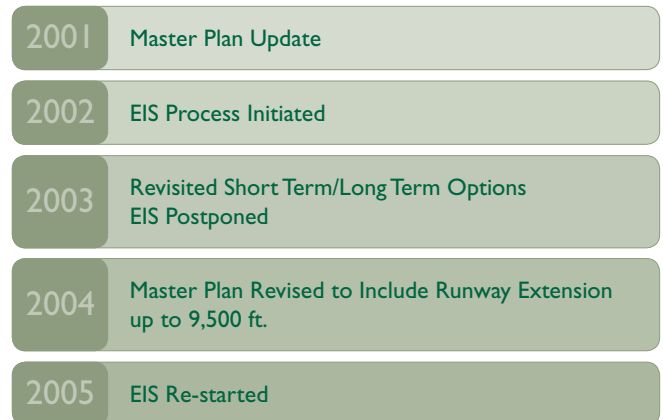
T.F. Green Airport is a medium hub commercial service airport currently serving over five million passengers per year with approximately 250 daily operations. The projected growth at T.F. Green is anticipated to be eleven million passengers and 630 daily operations by 2020. In early 2001, the Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC), the project sponsor, began to develop an update to its Master Plan for T.F. Green to identify those improvements that would be needed to accommodate the anticipated growth in aircraft operations and passengers in the short and long term. Potential improvements considered a range of projects, including: resurfacing Runway 16-34 and improving the safety areas at its runway ends, extending Runway 5-23 to 7,500 feet to address short term runway needs, as well as extending Runway 5-23 up to 9,500 feet to address long term runway needs. Other projects included in the Master Plan are terminal and concourse expansion, and parking and roadway improvements.

Because of potential environmental impacts associated with wetlands and community disruption from relocation of U.S. Route 1, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) decided to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for many of the proposed Master Plan improvements. Public scoping meetings were first held on July 25, 2002. At that time, the proposed project only addressed short term runway length needs. However, in December 2003, RIAC revisited the aviation forecasts and decided to support and

address a Master Plan that identified a longer-term plan to extend Runway 5-23 up to 9,500 feet. Therefore, after initial work commenced on the EIS for the Airport Improvements at T.F. Green Airport, the EIS was postponed while additional airport Master Planning was undertaken, and alternative runway extension options were explored.

Because an environmental evaluation of a major extension of Runway 5-23 was not part of the 2002 Scope for the EIS, FAA is conducting additional public and agency scoping. Other anticipated improvements under consideration include runway-end safety area improvements to Runway 16-34, and constructing of a 50,000 square foot cargo building at one of three locations at T.F. Green Airport, as well as terminal gate additions, terminal roadway enhancements, and parking. The extension of Runway 5-23 and other proposed airport improvement projects have the potential for environmental impacts, including aircraft noise, community disruption, and loss of wetlands.

Figure 1: Project Chronology



The purpose of this Scoping Information Document is to provide federal, state, regional and local agencies, as well as other interested parties, with supplemental information on the T.F. Green Airport Improvement Projects. Comments and suggestions are invited from these parties in order to ensure that a full range of issues related to the proposed projects are identified and addressed in the revised Scope.

What is the Proposed Action?

FAA approval of the T. F. Green Airport Layout Plan (ALP) that resulted from the Airport Master Plan Update conducted by RIAC is a Federal Action requiring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Environmental studies will be conducted to determine the potential impacts on the environment from the following projects:

- ▷ Extending of Runway 5-23 up to 9,500 feet
- ▷ Resurfacing and runway-end safety area improvements to Runway 16-34
- ▷ Constructing a 50,000 square foot cargo building
- ▷ Terminal gate additions, roadway enhancements, and parking.

Why Improve the Airport?

The Master Plan conducted a detailed demand/capacity analysis and identified the facility requirements at T.F. Green Airport needed to meet that demand. The analysis considered airfield, terminal area, and surface transportation facilities. The major findings show that:

Airfield

- ▷ The primary runway at its current length will not be able to accommodate the future demand for service to long-haul markets.
- ▷ Runway 16-34 will require resurfacing and standard safety areas for its runway ends.
- ▷ The airport needs to determine an efficient location for future air cargo facilities.

Terminal Area Facilities

- ▷ Based on Master Plan predictions and current demands by air carriers, four to eight additional gates are needed almost immediately. Expanding the Terminal would require removal of the existing USPS facility, which in turn would require reconstructing this cargo/sorting facility on another location on the airport.



T.F. Green Airport Terminal Building

Roadway Facilities

- ▷ The central roadway system needs to be reconfigured to improve traffic flow.
- ▷ Existing car rental facilities are in separate locations off the airport. Consideration needs to be given to their consolidation to reduce shuttle bus trips and improve land use efficiency.

Support Facilities

- ▷ The existing Jet Fuel storage facility is undersized and needs to be augmented.
- ▷ Ground Service Equipment Maintenance facilities are undersized and require additional storage facilities.

Alternatives Being Considered

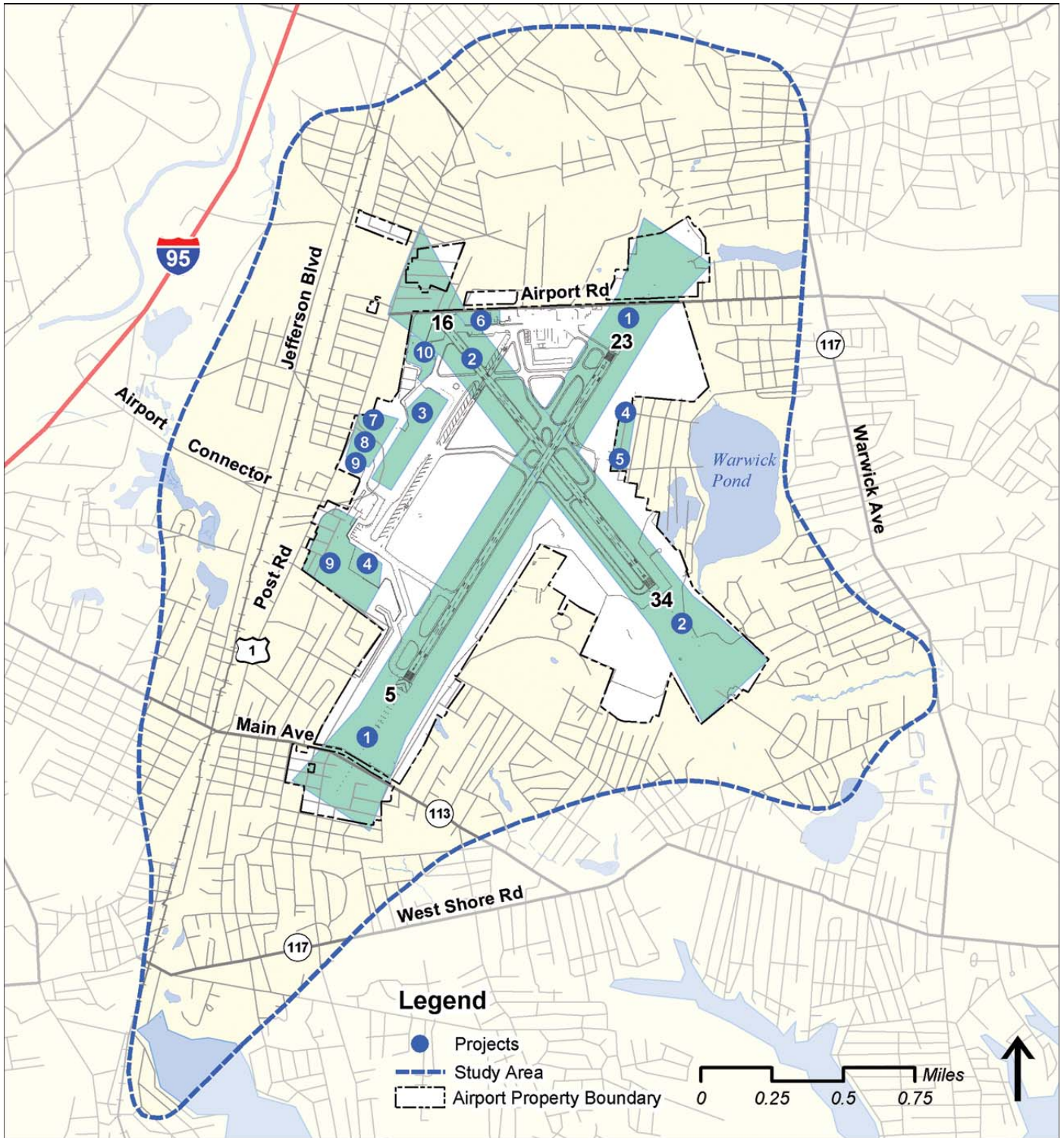
The alternatives being evaluated in the EIS include demand management alternatives and alternatives that are not within the jurisdiction of RIAC or FAA, such as greater use of regional airports or other transportation modes. The EIS will also evaluate alternatives identified during the Scoping process that could address current and anticipated future deficiencies at T.F. Green Airport.

No-Action Alternative — The No-Action Alternative assumes that only routine periodic maintenance and minor enhancement needed to maintain safe operations at the Airport would occur. The No-Action Alternative serves as the basis for assessing the impacts of the other alternatives being considered.

Project Alternatives — There are several projects under consideration in the EIS which together will address various needs at T.F. Green Airport. For some of the major projects, alternative configurations will be evaluated separately and in combination with the other projects in the EIS. Those projects with already identified alternatives include:

- ▷ **Extension of Runway 5-23:**
 - **Extend Mostly North and Some South** — Extend RW end 23 by 1,833 ft to the north and RW end 5 by 450 feet to the south. This would not affect the cemetery at the RW 5 end, crosses Airport Road requiring its relocation, and affects wetlands north of Airport Road.
 - **Extend South** — Achieve 9,500 feet by relocating RW 23 end (threshold) by 333 feet

Figure 2: Projects and Study Area



Projects:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 5-23 Extension | 6 Demolition of Hangar I |
| 2 16-34 Reconstruction & Safety End Improvements | 7 Possible Rental Car Consolidation |
| 3 Terminal/Concourse Expansion | 8 Terminal Roadway Improvements |
| 4 Cargo Facility | 9 Parking Improvements |
| 5 VHF (Very High Frequency) Omni-directional Radio-range Relocation | 10 Fuel Farm Expansion |

to the south and extending RW 5 by 2,667 feet to the south. Requires Main Avenue to be tunneled or relocated, the cemetery off RW 5 must be relocated but no wetland impacts are incurred.

- Extend Mostly South and Some North — Extend RW 23 by 376 feet to the north and RW 5 by 1,985 feet to the south. Airport Road may have to be relocated and reconnected, and Main Avenue may have to be tunneled or relocated.

Each of these alternatives has the potential to cause considerable community impacts including residential disruption and relocation. The EIS may well develop yet another alternative in addition to the three described in the Master Plan Supplement that would further minimize the environmental impacts of a runway extension.

- ▷ Construct 50,000 SF Cargo Building — To address long term need for integrated cargo facilities, a new Cargo building is proposed to be constructed at possible locations:
 - West of Warwick Pond; or
 - Southwest corner of Airport.

Use of Other Modes of Transportation — The EIS will consider the feasibility and practicality of using other modes of transportation such as cars, trucks, trains, or ships, to meet the same needs and demands the airport satisfies for passenger and cargo users.

Use of Other Airports — The feasibility and practicality of moving aircraft operations to another regional airport will be evaluated.

Which Areas Could be Affected?

The study area is defined as broadly as possible to include resources and people that the alternatives would affect. The study area initially determined for the EIS now will be expanded as shown in Figure 2. The study area may be further adjusted if additional alternatives are identified during Scoping or during the preparation of the Draft EIS. FAA will define it further, as needed, based on the detailed analyses of environmental consequences that FAA will conduct for the Draft EIS.

Environmental Analysis Process

The proposed Airport Improvement Projects at T.F. Green require the preparation of an EIS in accordance with NEPA.

What is an Environmental Impact Statement?

An EIS is a document that describes a federal project and its effects on the environment. The EIS process can also be used to provide base information in the environmental permitting process required by federal and state agencies for projects. An EIS is used by federal agencies to evaluate proposed projects.

The FAA intends to prepare an EIS to study the environmental impacts that may occur with the implementation of the Proposed Action at T.F. Green Airport.

The EIS will provide analyses covering a full range of technical areas. The EIS will identify and examine key issues, evaluate potential impacts, and develop appropriate conceptual mitigation measures. Some of the issues to be analyzed are listed. Together with input from various agencies and the public, these technical analyses will provide the basis for the assessments and conclusions presented in the EIS.

What is Studied in an EIS?

According to federal requirements, an EIS must:

- ▷ Explain the purpose of and need for the proposed improvements;
- ▷ Develop and describe the range of alternatives;
- ▷ Provide the reasons why certain alternatives are rejected from further consideration;
- ▷ Identify those alternatives that are reasonable, practicable, or feasible ways to achieve the purpose and need and provide detailed analyses of these alternatives, including the No-Action Alternative;
- ▷ Determine the environmental consequences of the No Build Alternative, the proposed action, and each alternative that is capable of achieving the purpose and need;
- ▷ Identify measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate potential environmental consequences for the proposed action and other alternatives that would achieve the purpose and need;

- ▷ Describe the agency and public coordination efforts;
- ▷ The EIS serves as the document supporting the Record of Decision that FAA and the other federal agencies need to prepare.

Environmental Consequences to be Analyzed

- Noise
- Land Use
- Social Impacts
- Induced Socioeconomic Impacts
- Air Quality
- Water Quality
- DOT 4(f) Resources – public lands
- Historic, Architectural, Archaeological and Cultural Resources
- Biotic Communities
- Endangered and Threatened Species
- Wetlands
- Floodplains
- Coastal Zone Management and Coastal Barriers
- Prime and Unique Farmlands
- Energy Supply and Natural Resources
- Light Emissions
- Solid and Hazardous Waste
- Construction
- Surface Transportation
- Cumulative Impacts
- Environmental Justice

What is Scoping?

Scoping is an early, open, and on-going process used to determine the range of alternatives, issues, and impacts that the EIS will address in detail. The process includes appropriate federal, state, regional, and local agencies and occurs early in the EIS process before final decisions have been made on the types of studies, study area, or content of the EIS. FAA typically also holds public scoping meetings. Scoping provides agencies and the public with the opportunity to contribute to the technical direction and analysis of the EIS and to contribute information that could be relevant to evaluation of the impacts of the proposed action.

Why is there Supplemental Scoping?

Additional or supplemental scoping is being held for this project because the scope and alternatives for the project have changed since the EIS began.

An Agency Scoping Meeting for the Airport Improvement Projects will be held at 1:00 PM February 8, 2005 at the Radisson Hotel at 2081 Post Rd, Warwick , and a Scoping Meeting for the general public from 5 PM to 8 PM is scheduled at the same location. This public meeting will allow the public to talk with the EIS Team members, and will include a short presentation about the project and the EIS process. Information about the project, the schedule for the EIS, and the purpose of the EIS will also be provided.

Scoping comments can be submitted at the Scoping Meeting or anytime before February 22, 2005 . A comment sheet for the EIS is enclosed with this package. The comment sheet may also be downloaded from the project web site, www.vhb.com/pvd/eis. Comments may also be submitted to:

John Silva, Environmental Program Manager
 Federal Aviation Administration
 New England Region
 12 New England Executive Park
 Burlington, MA 01803
 E-mail: john.silva@faa.gov

After completing the Scoping Meeting, a Scoping Process Report will be prepared for the EIS. This report will document the issues and concerns raised and will be distributed to those appearing on the distribution list at the end of this document. The report will be available on the project web site, www.vhb.com/pvd/eis.

Environmental Impact Analysis

FAA, in cooperation with many agencies and consultation with others interested in the project, will prepare a detailed evaluation of environmental impacts from the No-Action Alternative and from those alternatives that are reasonable, practicable, and feasible ways to achieve the project's purpose and need. FAA will complete the EIS in accordance with FAA Order 1050.1E, Environmental Impacts, Policy and Procedure and with FAA Order 5050.4A, Airports Environmental Handbook. These Orders provide instructions to FAA staff to ensure that FAA environmental documents prepared for airport development actions comply with NEPA and other federal and state regulations. Airport sponsors, environmental consultants, and others interested in those actions may also use the Orders as guidance and information.

Environmental Documentation and Review

After completing the environmental impact analysis for affected resources, FAA will prepare a Draft EIS for public review. A public review and comment period of no less than 45 days will occur. A public hearing will be held in the study area for the public to comment on the proposed conceptual design, environmental impacts and mitigation for each alternative the Draft EIS evaluated in detail. Following the hearings and a review of the public comments received, and balancing a number of factors, the FAA will identify its preferred alternative. FAA will then prepare its Final EIS. The Final EIS will:

- ▷ Summarize the comments received on the Draft EIS and the key issues raised during the public hearings;
- ▷ Provide FAA responses to these key issues and substantiate comments;
- ▷ Identify FAA's preferred alternative;
- ▷ Document avoidance and minimization efforts associated with the preferred alternative;
- ▷ Describe conceptual measures and other commitments needed to mitigate the unavoidable environmental impacts that the preferred alternative would cause; and
- ▷ Discuss compliance with applicable federal and state regulations.

The FAA will issue a Record of Decision (ROD) no sooner than 30 days after FAA releases the Final EIS. The ROD will document environmental and other factors such as aviation safety and airport efficiency that the FAA considered in making a decision on project approval and commitment to funding.

Public Outreach

As part of this NEPA process, a broad array of opportunities will be provided to distribute information about the Draft EIS and Final EIS to relevant federal, state, and local agencies and other interested parties, as well as to solicit the input of these parties on those documents. The FAA intends to use the preparation of this EIS to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and the Endangered Species Act. The public outreach actions will also help to obtain public input on any draft general conformity determination on air quality in accordance with General Conformity requirements under the Clean Air Act.



Northern end of Runway 16-34
Corner of Airport Road and Post Road

Each of these public outreach opportunities is described briefly below.

Public Meetings

A series of public meetings for the project in Warwick, Cranston and other locations will be held during the preparation of the EIS. The meetings will be well advertised and will provide information to the public as well as opportunities for public comment and technical input. The meetings will include technical presentations of information and analyses, opportunities to discuss issues with the EIS Team, and opportunities to comment on the information presented. Additional public meetings will be held, if necessary, to discuss issues of particular concern to the community. These issues will be identified during the initial Scoping process.

Public Hearings

After the Draft EIS is made available for public review, a public hearing or hearings will be held in the study area to provide an opportunity for public comment on the Draft EIS.

Newsletters

Newsletters will be developed and distributed at key points during preparation of the EIS and will contain information about the EIS. The newsletters will provide brief summaries of progress and the schedule for the EIS, as well as information on upcoming meetings and particular issues or analyses of concern.

Web Site

An EIS information web site will be maintained for the project throughout the development of the EIS. The web site address is www.vhb.com/pvd/eis. Information that will be

displayed on the site includes meeting locations, dates, and times; EIS status reports and schedules; newsletters; study report highlights; and alternative concepts. The web site will also house technical reports generated during development of the EIS. Interested parties will be able to download the EIS comment form from the web site.

Agency Coordination

As the lead federal agency, the FAA will prepare the Draft EIS and the Final EIS. Federal and state agencies with jurisdiction by law or with special expertise on resources the project may affect have been invited to be Cooperating Agencies. Cooperating agencies include: the Federal Highway Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Rhode Island Department of Transportation, and others.

The FAA will coordinate closely with environmental review agencies with regard to technical issues throughout the development of the Draft EIS and Final EIS as described below. An Agency Scoping meeting will be held on February 8, 2005.

Additional group agency meetings and/or meetings with individual agencies will be held to discuss:

- ▷ Screening criteria for and ways to measure the effectiveness of reasonable, practicable, and feasible alternatives;
- ▷ The rationale for eliminating alternatives;
- ▷ The study area boundaries;
- ▷ Data requirements and methodology for data collection;
- ▷ The level of detail and methodology for environmental resource and community impact analysis;
- ▷ The level of detail needed for engineering design; and
- ▷ Conceptual measures to mitigate unavoidable environmental impacts.

Each meeting may address one or more of these topics. The meetings will include presentations of information and analyses, field meetings, opportunities to discuss issues with the EIS Team, and opportunities to comment on the information presented.



Southern end of Runway 5-23 at Main Avenue

EIS Process

The estimated completion date for the EIS is approximately 18 months from now, as illustrated on the right. The EIS preparation process consists of the following primary tasks:



For additional information contact:

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Web Site:
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