

**THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY**

DEPT: PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BOARD AGENDA # 9:30 AM
Urgent _____ Routine X AGENDA DATE April 10, 2001
CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES _____ NO _____
(Information Attached) 4/5 Vote Required YES _____ NO _____

SUBJECT:
APPROVAL OF THE CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN FOR A
GENERAL AVIATION PERMIT AND TO FACILITATE TRANSFER OF THE
PROPERTY TITLE FROM NASA TO STANISLAUS COUNTY

- STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. APPROVE THE CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN FOR A GENERAL AVIATION PERMIT AND TO FACILITATE TRANSFER OF THE PROPERTY TITLE FROM NASA TO STANISLAUS COUNTY AS MODIFIED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION SUBJECT TO THE ATTACHED MITIGATION MEASURES.
 2. APPROVE THE FILING OF THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION, FIND THE PROJECT TO BE "DE MINIMIS" FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE FISH AND GAME CODES AND ADOPT THE NASA AMES RESEARCH CENTER CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN

FISCAL IMPACT: The County's Public Works Director is preparing and will submit to the federal aviation administration(FAA) and the California State Department of Transportation(Caltrans) an application for a general aviation permit. The Board has approved in the economic development budget \$10,000 for the necessary consulting services. The FAA and Caltrans will inspect the runways and may require some repairs before issuing a general aviation permit. If cost is to be incurred beyond what the Board has approved staff will return to the Board for approval.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS: No. 2001-275
On motion of Supervisor Caruso , Seconded by Supervisor Mayfield
and approved by the following vote,
Ayes: Supervisors: Mayfield, Blom, Simon, Caruso, and Chair Paul
Noes: Supervisors: None
Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None
Abstaining: Supervisor: None
1) X Approved as recommended
2) _____ Denied
3) _____ Approved as amended
Motion:

ATTEST: CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk Christine Ferraro By: Deputy File No. BD-70-2
1010-08 L

DISCUSSION:

On October 19, 2000 the Board of Supervisors authorized staff to proceed with the property title transfer of the Crows Landing Air Facility from NASA Ames Research Center to Stanislaus County and authorized the Public Works Director to prepare and submit applications to the appropriate State and Federal agencies for a General Aviation Permit for the Crows Landing Air Facility. The report before you today recommends a reuse plan for achieving these two objectives.

The Board also approved the formation of a Steering Committee and appointed Supervisor Caruso as Chair. The function of the Steering Committee is to develop a project description and design concept as the first step in the ultimate development of the Facility. These tasks are moving forward. The Steering Committee has met four times, which included a tour of the air facility. Staff will report to the Board on these efforts in the near future.

Background:

The Crows Landing Air Facility consist of 1528 acres. Approximately 100 acres of the Facility has areas of soil and water contamination. The transfer of these 100 acres is subject to the Federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). The remaining 1400 acres is clean and could be transferred now and without a reuse plan.

Under CERCLA, the State Governor may authorize an "Early Transfer" that allows property to be transferred prior to all of the clean-up being completed. In order for an Early Transfer to receive approval, all parties must agree to the following five tasks:

- 1) There must be a written agreement between the Navy, NASA and the State as to what process to follow in regards to clean-up activities;
- 2) The Navy must provide an "enforceable schedule" to the State regulators that defines the timing for installation and completion of all clean-up activities (A draft schedule has been provided by the Navy);
- 3) The County must provide the State with a reuse scenario that ensures that incompatible land uses - such as residential development - won't occur on the lands that still need to be cleaned-up (This Reuse Plan meets this objective);
- 4) Formal land use restrictions for the deed of transfer must be developed to ensure that incompatible land uses won't occur on those lands that still need to be cleaned; and
- 5) The State agencies must provide a report to the Governor, (who must agree to the early transfer) that, based on the other four items, the transfer will not harm human health and the environment.

Because the County desires to acquire the entire site at one time, including the 100 acres that requires continued remediation, the "Early Transfer" process is being pursued. The Reuse

Plan is designed to meet the "Early Transfer" process and ensures the Governor that the Navy will clean up the contaminated areas in a timely manner and that future land uses, once the County acquires title, are not potentially harmful to human health and the environment. Staff from the Chief Executive Office, Planning, and Department of Environmental Resources are working with the Navy, NASA and the State Regulators on a proposed Federal Facilities Site Remediation Agreement, a document that would assure that the above tasks are completed.

Reuse Plan:

The Reuse Plan consists of two phases:

Phase 1 Reuse – STATUS QUO – Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning.

The Crows Landing Flight Facility is currently closed to most aviation uses. NASA occasionally uses the base for fly-by's, touch-and-go training, and other exercises. This use may occur once every one or two months for a few hours. Most of the site is currently leased for agricultural crop production. Crops include sugar beets, peas, beans, tomatoes, spinach, grains, and melons.

The Phase 1 Reuse Plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility keeps current activities status quo. Upon transfer, Stanislaus County will continue the agricultural lease, and can allow NASA to continue training exercises on a sporadic, as-needed basis if an agreement is negotiated with the County. Additionally, the Navy, DTSC, and RWQCB will retain access to the site to continue necessary environmental characterization, remediation, and monitoring activities.

Phase 2 Reuse – GENERAL AVIATION - General Aviation in addition to activities under phase I of the Reuse Plan.

Stanislaus County will prepare and submit all necessary documentation and application materials for California Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration approval for use of the site as a General Aviation Airport. This process requires title transfer of the site, environmental review, documentation of existing facilities, and minor construction, repair and maintenance of appropriate facilities in order to bring the facility up to current state and federal standards for General Aviation airports. The goal is to acquire a State Operating Permit for a "non-precision instrument approach" small-scale, general aviation airport. Types of aircraft that will be accommodated likely will be limited to small aircraft, turbo-prop, and general aviation airplanes and helicopters. Decisions will be made to open either one or both runways depending on the structural status of each of the runways.

Stanislaus County can continue Phase One activities including the agricultural lease, and allowing NASA to continue training exercises if agreements are negotiated with the County. Additionally, the Navy, DTSC, and RWQCB will retain access to the site to continue necessary environmental characterization, remediation, and monitoring activities.

Environmental Review:

The Reuse Plan was submitted to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation on March 1, 2001. Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, all appropriate referrals and notices were provided. The project was referred to the State Clearinghouse (SCH#2001022003), over fifty (50) jurisdictions including all nine cities within Stanislaus County, Stanislaus County's Environmental Review Committee, various special districts, and numerous state and federal agencies.

A public hearing was conducted at the Planning Commission on March 1, 2001. Five people spoke in opposition to the proposed plan, and one letter of concern was received. Issues discussed at the public hearing included the desire to utilize existing structures on the site to house homeless veterans and their families, concerns regarding California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review prior to developing a final long range plan for the site, minority and local representation on the steering committee, and impacts to adjacent homeowners. The law offices of William D. Ross, representing the West Stanislaus Fire Protection District also submitted a letter (attached) questioning the adequacy of the CEQA review.

In response to the issue of utilizing existing structures for homeless veterans and their families, it should be noted that the existing structures require considerable renovation and are within the areas currently being cleaned-up by the Navy. The buildings are also in the areas where the Governor requires assurances that residential uses will not occur. Additionally, the transfer by special legislation was pursued and authorized with the understanding that reuse would be for economic development and that residential uses would be incompatible with future land use zoning.

The letter from the Law Offices of William D. Ross and West Stanislaus Fire District identifies four specific areas where they believe the CEQA review was inadequate.

First, they state that the initial study and mitigated negative declaration do not discuss potential economic impacts of the reuse plan. Economic impact analyses are not required in negative declarations, and may be used to evaluate the significance of physical impacts in an EIR (CEQA Guidelines 15131). The reuse plan as proposed does not include any physical impacts other than maintenance of facilities in order to obtain and maintain an FAA General Aviation permit. Because no physical impacts are expected, there would be no economic impacts associated with this reuse plan except those associated with County ownership, maintenance and operation of the site.

Second, the letter states that the mitigated negative declaration fails to adequately analyze the impacts on biological resources. In 1999, NASA prepared a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Assessment specifically to evaluate impacts of the transfer to the County, and came to the conclusion that there were no impacts to biological resources associated with the transfer. Additionally, prior to receiving the letter from the District, staff contacted the State and federal agencies responsible for managing biological resources: US Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game. Neither agency indicated that they considered there to be any impact to biological resources, and both agreed

with the conclusion in our study.

Third, the letter stated that the mitigated negative declaration does not identify “baseline physical conditions” as required for military base reuse plans, and cites CEQA Guidelines section 15229 as a reference. Section 15229 specifically refers to Military Base Reuse Plan EIR’s and is specifically an option for lead agency’s when they prepare an EIR, not a requirement for mitigated negative declarations. Nevertheless, baseline physical and environmental conditions were included in our initial study and Reuse Plan (and previously in NASA’s NEPA documentation). Also, the action by Congress was not a Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC) action.

Finally, the letter states that the initial study does not adequately discuss the provision of public utilities, such as drinking water, sewage processing and Fire Protection. In fact, the initial study specifically identifies the lack of suitable drinking water, sewage treatment, and fire protection as issues. However, since the Reuse Plan does not include any development of the site other than maintaining status quo and obtaining a general aviation permit, provision of, or development of additional systems to provide drinking water or sewage treatment are not part of the plan. Therefore, impacts were not considered significant.

Notably, the lack of fire protection services was considered a potentially significant impact in the initial study. (NASA currently is responsible for fire protection on site, and once transfer occurs, the County will be responsible for providing that service.) In order to determine if this impact could be mitigated to a level of insignificance, staff contacted West Stanislaus Fire District prior to releasing the initial study. A mitigation measure was devised by staff and the Chief of the Fire District, that, at the time, was considered by the Chief and staff, to adequately mitigate the lack of fire protection. Mitigation measure number four specifically states that:

“Following transfer of ownership from NASA to Stanislaus County, Stanislaus County will enter into an agreement with either West Stanislaus Fire Protection District, or another suitable fire protection service, or will devise an adequate fire protection service plan to provide fire services to the area.”

Staff believes that this mitigation measure and its implementation adequately reduces the potential impact to a less than significant level.

Lastly, in regards to the issue of the CEQA review being premature in that it does not evaluate impacts of eventual reuse of the site for business park or other uses, staff does not believe it is appropriate to speculate on future design scenarios that may be forthcoming from the Steering Committee or from this Board of Supervisors. CEQA also specifically discourages such speculation. The reuse plan does not include any proposed future use, other than maintaining the status quo and acquisition of a General Aviation permit in order to continue the use of the site as an airport. No on-site or off-site physical improvements are proposed except for those required for on-going maintenance or upgrades of existing facilities needed to meet FAA and CalTrans guidelines for acquisition of the general aviation permit.

The Planning Commission recognized that there may be some public confusion as to the scope of this reuse plan, and made specific recommendations to modify the plan as described below.

Following discussion, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Plan as proposed with one minor modification. The Commission felt that references to any future use of the site, beyond obtaining a General Aviation Permit was premature, and that all references to market perspectives, corporate/executive airport use, or future business park uses was inappropriate for the this plan. The Commission suggested removing the entirety of Section III of the Plan that describes reuse opportunities, goals and objectives, economic development, and market perspectives, as well as any other references to long term plans for reuse. Staff concurs with this recommendation, and has made the proposed modifications to the Plan.

POLICY ISSUES:

The Board should decide if the recommended Reuse Plan is consistent with their priorities of multi-jurisdictional cooperation and Community Leadership.

STAFFING IMPACT:

Adoption of the Reuse Plan and subsequent development of the Crows Landing Air Facility into a general aviation airport will demand time of staff in the Departments of Public Works, Planning and Community Development, Environmental Resources, County Counsel, and the Chief Executive Office. In addition, the county will need to contract with the appropriate experts as the need arises.

Attachments:

1. Crows Landing Flight Facility Reuse Plan (As revised by the Planning Commission)
2. Planning Commission Staff Report – Crows Landing Flight Facility Reuse Plan
Exhibit A - ReUse Plan, Initial Study, Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Mitigation Monitoring Plan
Exhibit B – Certificate for Exemption
Exhibit C – Environmental Review Referrals
3. Excerpt of Planning Commission Minutes of March 1, 2001
4. Letter received in opposition to the Project

ATTACHMENT 1

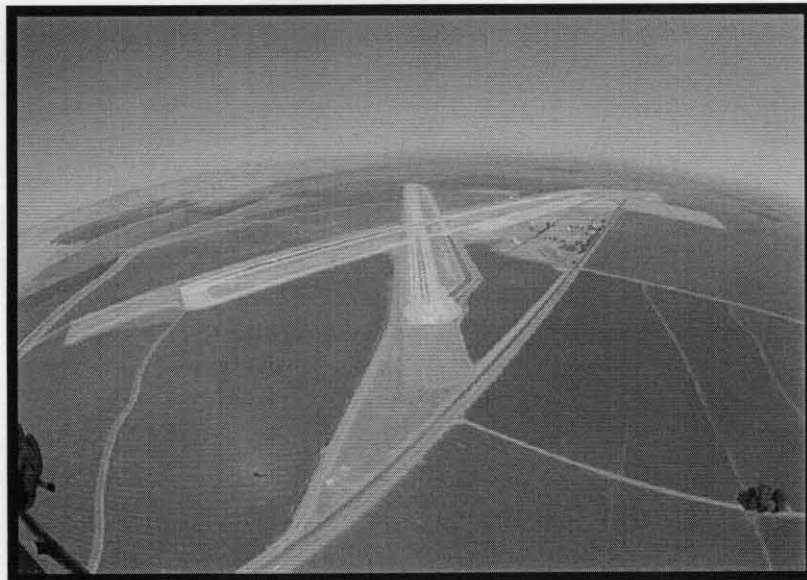


Stanislaus County
Crows Landing Flight Facility Task Force

Striving to be the Best

NASA AMES RESEARCH CENTER
CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY

REUSE PLAN



Prepared by:
Stanislaus County
Crows Landing Flight Facility Task Force

APRIL 2001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

II. CROWS LANDING SITE AND VICINITY

- A. Location and Accessibility
- B. Development Patterns and History
- C. General Plan, Zoning, and Land Uses
- D. Miscellaneous Land Use Conditions
- E. Environmental Remediation

~~III. CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE OPPORTUNITIES~~

- ~~A. Goals and Objectives~~
- ~~B. Economic Development and Market Perspectives~~

IV. REUSE PLAN (PROJECT DESCRIPTION)

- A. Phase 1 Reuse – Status Quo - NASA/Military Air Base, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning.
- B. Phase 2 Reuse - General Aviation, NASA/Military Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning.

V. INITIAL STUDY AND LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION

VI. MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

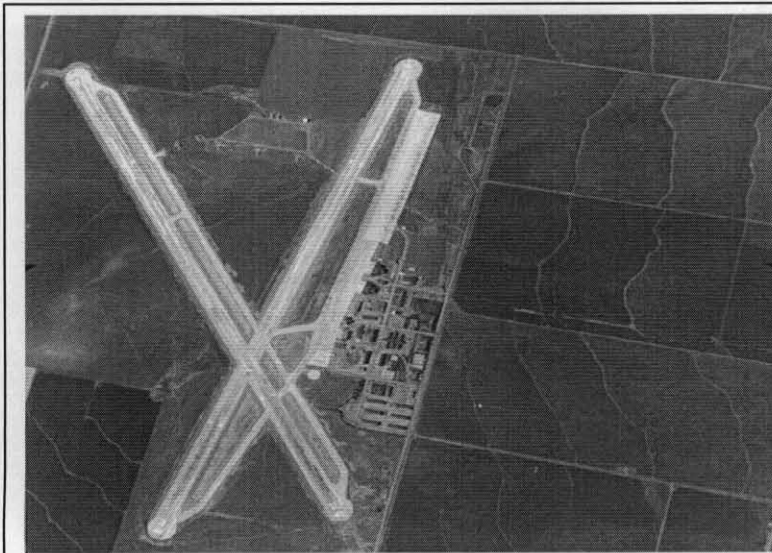
VII. MITIGATION MONITORING PLAN

VIII. REFERENCES

- APPENDIX A HR 356. An Act to provide conveyance of certain property from the United States to Stanislaus County, California.
- APPENDIX B Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission, Crows Landing Flight Facility ALUC Airport Land Use Plan
- APPENDIX C Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Environmental Business Plan, US Navy, SW Division, 2001
- APPENDIX D Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility, NASA 1999
- APPENDIX E NASA Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), NASA 1999

I. INTRODUCTION

The Crows Landing Flight Facility includes approximately 1528 acres and is located in Stanislaus County, California, approximately 80 miles southeast of San Francisco. On October 27, 1999, the President of the United States signed H.R. 356, "An Act to provide conveyance of certain property from the United States to Stanislaus County, California." The act states that as soon as practicable, the Administrator of NASA shall convey to Stanislaus County, California, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the NASA Ames Research Center, Crows Landing Facility.



CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY

Because the property contains lands that require environmental remediation of soil, groundwater, and surface water, the State of California and NASA have determined that the transfer ~~may~~ **will** be subject to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 USC 9620) (CERCLA). Transfer can take place, if desired by NASA and Stanislaus County, following a deferral procedure described in the CERCLA Section 120(h)(3)(C). This is commonly described as an "early transfer." In order to accomplish an "early transfer", the Governor of the State of California must find that:

(I) the property is suitable of transfer for the use intended by the transferee, and the intended use is consistent with protection of human health and the environment; (II) the deed or other agreement proposed to govern the transfer between the United States and the transferee of the property contains the assurances set forth ... (as described in CERCLA clause (ii)) ... ; (III) the Federal agency requesting the deferral has provided notice, by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the vicinity of the property, of the proposed transfer and of the opportunity for the public to submit, within a period of not less than 30 days after the date of the notice, written comments on the suitability of the property for transfer; and (IV) the deferral and the transfer of the property will not substantially delay any necessary response action at the property.

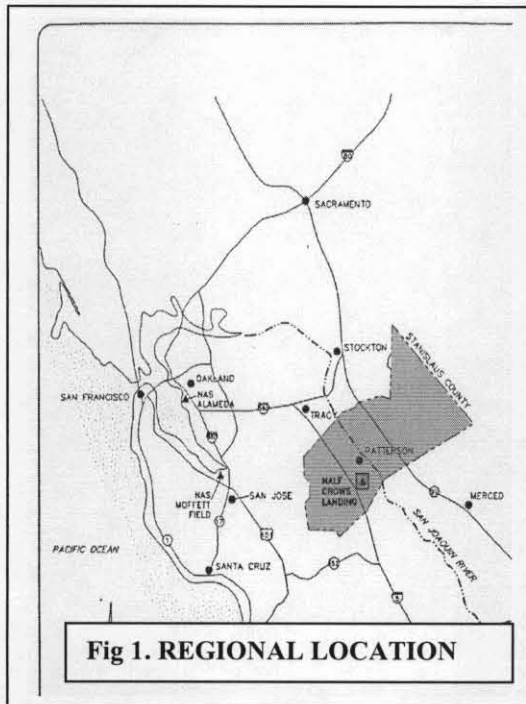
Several local, state, and federal agencies are currently involved in arranging for transfer of the property from NASA to Stanislaus County following the procedure described above. The following list describes the role of each:

1. Stanislaus County: Recipient of the Property;
2. Stanislaus County Department of Environmental Resources (DER): Oversight of Environmental Remediation
3. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA): Trustee Agency;
4. General Services Administration (GSA): Administrator of Federal Land Transfers;
5. Department of the Navy (Navy): Environmental Remediation of soil, ground water, and surface water;
6. California Department of Toxic Substances (DTSC): Oversight of Environmental Remediation
7. California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB): Oversight of Environmental Remediation

This document, therefore, provides the description of Stanislaus County's proposed reuse of the Crows Landing Facility. This Reuse Plan is designed to meet the needs of Stanislaus County and the various state and federal agencies involved in the title transfer process. It is specifically designed to provide adequate information on reuses so that future use of the facility after title transfer is consistent with protection of human health and the environment.

II. CROWS LANDING SITE AND VICINITY

A. Location and Accessibility



The Crows Landing Flight Facility is located in Stanislaus County, California, approximately 80 miles southeast of San Francisco as shown on Figure 1. It covers approximately 1,528 acres in the northwestern part of the San Joaquin Valley between the towns of Patterson and Crows Landing. The Community of Crows Landing is located approximately 1 mile to the southeast. The City of Patterson is approximately 2 miles to the north and the City of Newman is approximately 5 miles to the southwest.

California State Highway 33, Marshall Road, Bell Road, and Fink Road currently access the Facility. Interstate Highway 5 is located approximately 2 miles to the west with offramps located at Sperry Road near the City of Patterson and Fink Road near the community of Crows Landing. The California Northern Railroad main line is located immediately across Highway 33 and at one time accessed the site.

B. Development Patterns and History

Crows Landing Flight Facility includes two runways (approx. 7000 and 8000 feet long), a mix of buildings that have been used for a variety of uses, and a significant amount of land that is currently leased for agricultural production (Figure 2). Several support structures include a control tower, administration building, a club and exchange building, motor pool and public works shops, storage facilities, a baseball field, and a NASA research center. The Administrative area is fenced and much of that area (approximately 162 acres) is currently being evaluated and/or remediated by the Navy for soil and groundwater contamination. The remaining 1366 acres of the site have been certified by the Navy as "clean and suitable for transfer".

Crows Landing Flight Facility was originally commissioned by the Navy in May 1943 and originally served as a training field during World War II. The facility was largely inactive following World War II until the early 1950's, when the facility was used for fleet carrier landing practice during the Korean War. Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, the facility was also used for practice operations by the Navy, Air Force, Army, and Coast Guard. NASA Ames Research Center, located at Moffett Field also used the facility for paratroop practice by the Air Guard Rescue and as a research and development site. It has served primarily as an auxiliary airfield for operations from Naval Air Station (NAS), Moffett Field and other Navy facilities in the general area including the Lemoore Naval Airstation, as well as serving other federal and state agencies. Table 1 summarizes real estate transactions associated with the facility.

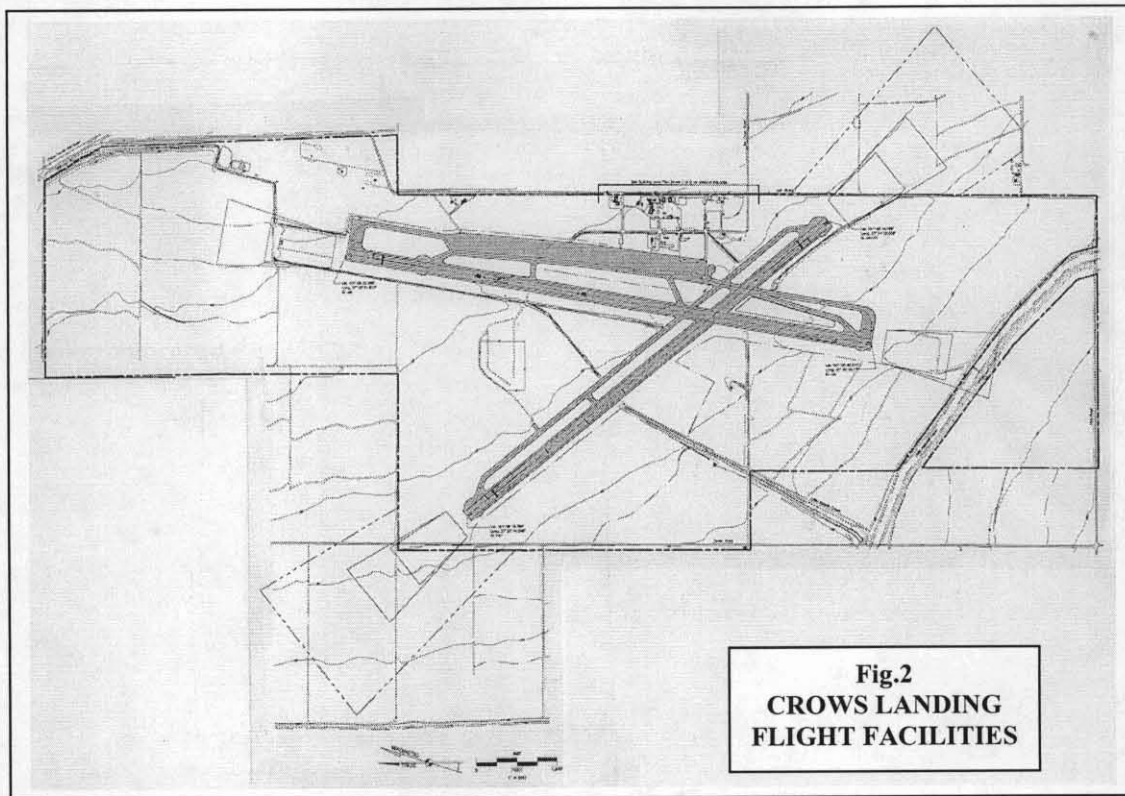


Table 1. Historical Real Estate Acquisition and Disposal Information

Estate Acquisition	Date of Acquisition or Transfer	Comments
Fee 803.63 acres	12 July 1943	Establishment of airfield
Fee 536.99 acres	18 April 1962	Additional aviation facilities
Fee 72.8 acres	22 January 1959	Flight clearance
Fee 113.98 acres	22 September 1958	Extension of runways
Total: 1527.4 acres		
	1527.4 acres transferred to NASA in 1994	
	HR 356 Passed in 1999, authorizing transfer of the property from NASA to Stanislaus County	

NASA retained the Crows Landing Flight Facility as a federal facility for use in July 1994. NASA currently operates flight research activities at the base and has become the federal host agency to all other users. The terms of the Navy and NASA agreement, including the Navy's responsibilities for environmental remediation, are described in the memorandum of understanding between the two parties dated December 22, 1992. As stated earlier, the Congress of the United States passed H.R. 356, in 1999, which states that as soon as practicable, the Administrator of NASA shall convey to Stanislaus County, California, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the Crows Landing Flight Facility.

C. General Plan, Zoning, and Land Uses

The use as a flight facility began in 1943 when the entire County was unrestricted and unclassified with zoning and General Plan designations. The site has remained in continuous use since then, and is currently considered to be a continually existing use within the General Agriculture zoning district.

All 1528 acres of the Crows Landing Flight Facility is currently designated as "Agriculture" on the Stanislaus County General Plan. Current zoning is "A-2-40" General Agriculture, (Figure 3.). Although the "A-2-40" zoning is valid, it cannot be enforced against the federal government because of the supremacy clause in the U.S. Constitution. (Article IV, Clause 2 prohibits the State or local government from imposing land use regulations or building regulations upon the federal government.)

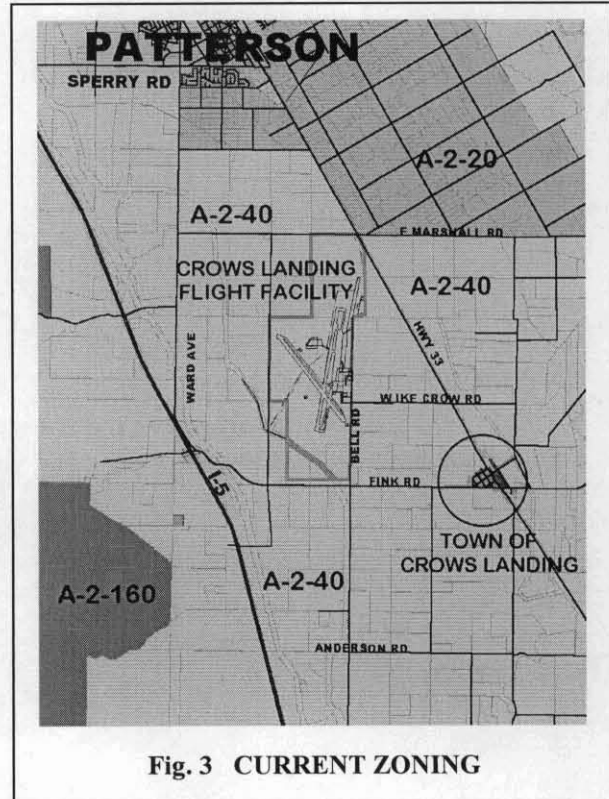


Fig. 3 CURRENT ZONING

Land uses on the site include the runways, maintenance and support facilities for general airport use, and agricultural crop production. (Figure 4.) The Delta Mendota Canal traverses the southwest corner. Adjacent private land uses are partially restricted by use easements for aircraft approach and departure.

Surrounding zoning and General Plan designations are also primarily agriculture.

The Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission adopted an airport land use plan for the County that included the Crows Landing Flight Facility in 1978. This plan defines various flight zones surrounding the facility and provides a listing of compatible Land Uses within each zone. The flight zones and compatible uses are shown in Appendix A. The Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission will review this reuse plan. New flight zone designations may be required depending on specific activities proposed at the Facility, and depending on State and federal rules and regulations governing General Aviation Airports.

D. Miscellaneous Land Use Conditions

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map, most of the facility is located in Flood Zone C, an area with minimal potential for flooding. On the western side of the facility, a small area adjacent to Little Salado Creek is designated as Flood Zone A, a zone that is expected to experience flooding during a 100-year storm. The remainder of the creek channel and the majority of the airfield are located in Flood Zone B, an area expected to experience flooding during a 500-year storm or flooding with average depths

habitat remains. Irrigated crops grown on the site include sugar beets, peas, beans, tomatoes, spinach, grains, and melons.

In February and October 1993, San Francisco State University and the Navy conducted an endangered species survey. The survey focused on the tri-colored blackbird, the blister beetle, and the giant garter snake. Because no evidence of these species was found, no federally-listed or candidate threatened or endangered species are known to inhabit the facility.

All buildings and structures at the facility have been evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Navy determined that the World War II buildings and structures do not qualify for listing on the National Register because of their altered appearance and setting. Moreover, NASA determined that no buildings, structures, or objects at the facility have historical significance from the Cold War perspective.

One additional historical note related to the Facility is that the Bonita School may have been located on the site near the existing main entrance on Ike Crow Road. The site was shown on the official County Map of the late 1800's, but had disappeared from the Official Maps by the turn of the century. The school may also have been used as a church, and a citizen has indicated that a graveyard may also have been present (Carol Wahl, pers. comm. October 2000).

E. Environmental Remediation Sites

Environmental contamination of Crows Landing Flight Facility has resulted from refuse disposal, aircraft and vehicle maintenance, fire training activities, and fuel storage. Contaminated or potentially contaminated sites are identified as either Installation Restoration Program (IRP) or underground storage tank (UST) sites. Investigations of the IRP and UST sites were substantially completed in 1996. However, the Navy administration of the remediation effort was transferred from the Navy EFA West to the Southwest Division, Naval Facilities, Engineering Command in San Diego in early 2000. **After transferring the project to Southwest Division, the Navy decided to re-evaluate the entire site for the environmental investigation and remediation.**

Eight IRP sites and seventeen UST sites have been identified and are shown on Figure 5. Of these, only two (2) IRP sites and eight (8) UST sites require any additional remediation. The remainder require no further action. Appendix B provides a detailed summary and status report of all of the remediation sites. Of the approximately 1500 acres, 1366 have been certified as clean and suitable for transfer.

Several areas of groundwater contamination were identified prior to the transfer of remediation responsibilities. Groundwater is located ~~approximately 50~~ **between 35 and 85** feet below ground surface beneath much of the installation. Pumping from irrigation wells influences groundwater elevations and a vertically downward gradient has been identified. The nearest irrigation well is approximately 1,500 feet east of IRP Site 17.

IRP Site 17, the former site of two aircraft hangars and a maintenance building, comprises an area of approximately 11 acres, and is the most problematic of all the remediation sites. A release

of carbon tetrachloride to groundwater was identified during the SI and was evaluated during subsequent investigations and pilot studies. The carbon tetrachloride release to groundwater extends to a depth of approximately 260 feet.

During July 2000, water samples were collected from seven wells in the IRP Site 17/UST Cluster 1 vicinity, and solvents (acetone, MEK, MIBK) and ethylene dibromide (EDB) were identified in some of the samples. The results of the July 2000 sampling event indicated that the solvent plume and other solvents had commingled with the petroleum release associated with UST Cluster 1. The BCT determined that the IRP Site 17 plume should be expanded to include the releases associated with UST Cluster 1, and the combined plume is known as the Administration Area Plume. The Administration Area Plume includes the groundwater releases from IRP Site 17, UST Site 117, and UST Cluster 1, and the area of the plume is estimated at 70 acres. The feasibility study is in the process of being revised in late calendar year 2000.

In summary, the environmental remediation of the site is an ongoing process for two (2) of the IRP sites and nine (9) of the UST sites. No further action is required at the other eight (8) UST sites or the other six (6) IRP sites. Table 2 provides a summary of the status of the Restoration Sites.

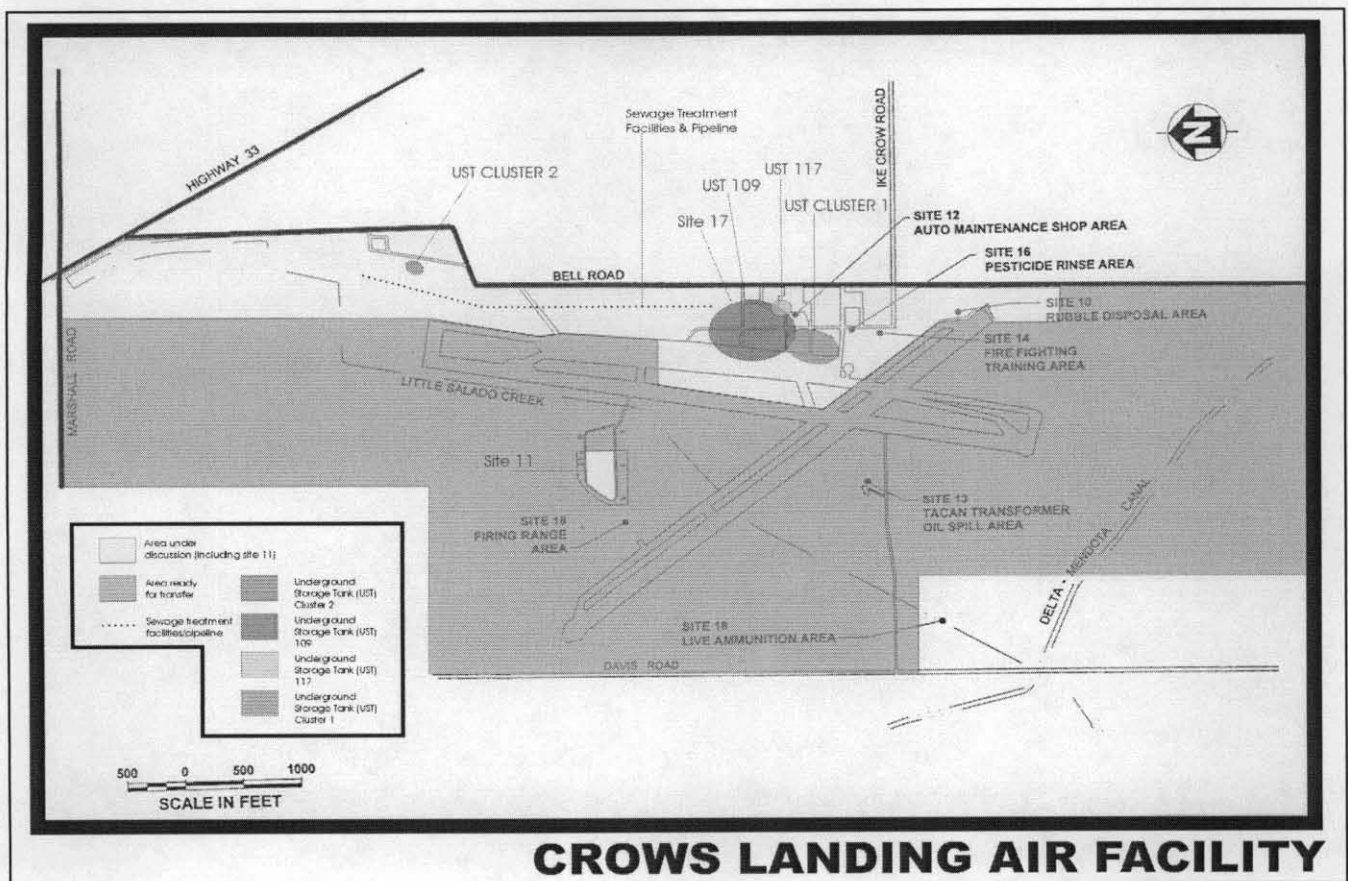


Table 2.
Status of Various Environmental Restoration Program Sites
Crows Landing Flight Facility

Site ID	Type	Status	Description of NFA Decision Document	Site Name
Work in Progress				
Site 11	IRP	FS		Disposal Pits Area
Site 17	IRP	FS		Demolished Hangar Area
UST 117	UST	FS		UST 117 (former 1,200-gallon tank site included within the investigation boundary of Site 17)
Sewer System	IRP	FA		Former and Current Sewer System
UST Cluster 1	UST	RA		Tanks CL-1, CL-2, CL-3 (each 50,000 gallons)
UST CL-40	UST	FA		UST CL-40 (former 1,500-gallon tank site located within UST Cluster 1 investigation boundary)
UST Cluster 2	UST	RA		Tanks CL-7, CL-8, and CL-9 (each 210,000 gallons)
UST 109	UST	FA		UST 109 (former 1,000-gallon tank site)
No Further Action Sites				
Site 10	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Rubble Disposal Area
Site 12	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Auto Maintenance Shop Area
Site 13	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	TACAN Transformer Spill Area
Site 14	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Fire Training Area
Site 16	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Pesticide Mixing Area
Site 18	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Firing Range
UST CL-4	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-4
UST CL-5	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-5
UST CL-6	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-6
UST CL-101	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-101
UST CL-102	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-102
UST CL-138	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-138
UST CL-138A	UST	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	UST CL-138A (located within investigation boundary of Site 12)
UST CL-147	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-147

ACRONYMS:

ROD:	Record of Decision
RWQCB:	Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region
FA:	Further Action
FS:	Feasibility Study Phase
NFA:	No Further Action
RA:	Remedial Action

III. CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE OPPORTUNITIES

A. Goals and Objectives

The Stanislaus County Crows Landing Flight Facility Task Force has been meeting on a regular basis for over a year, and has periodically participated in various other meetings with State and federal agencies. With direction from the Board of Supervisors and the Stanislaus County Workforce Investment Board, the Task Force has defined a reuse plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility as a General Aviation Airport with possible expansion at some later date to a corporate or executive business air facility with associated business park development.

This objective is driven by a variety of positive factors, including the site's strategic location to the San Francisco Bay Area and regional educational and transportation facilities, easy access to Interstate Highway 5 and energy generating facilities, the presence of two runways of 7,000 and 8,000 feet in length, and accessibility to a strong workforce and regional agricultural products available for export or distribution. Additional positive factors include the availability of an adequate groundwater supply, the presence of approximately 1500 acres of underdeveloped land adjacent to the facility, and the site's location within a foreign trade zone.

B. Economic Development and Market Perspectives

1. Economic Development

Stanislaus County has a historically high unemployment rate, which regularly soars at twice the state average and three times the national average. This critically high unemployment rate is due in part to our Agri-business economy and the consistent trends toward more advanced (less labor intensive) production, processing and manufacturing technologies.

As our changing Agri-business cluster continues to become increasingly automated and technology driven—a displaced workforce shifts to lower paying service sector employment caused in part by population driven retail sector growth.

While actual job creation in Stanislaus County continues to outpace other areas of the state and even the nation, our unemployment (and under employment) rates also continue to increase due to a steady increase in population and housing inspired by the outstretch of the booming greater San Francisco Bay Area economy.

Subsequently, the jobs/housing imbalance that is the status quo is compounded by a per capita household income of almost half of the state average.

Stanislaus County sees the Crows Landing Air Facility as a viable business park development opportunity for the westside communities and the county because it is directly adjacent to the I-5 corridor and has already established itself as an amenity for general aviation capabilities.

Proximity to the higher education institutions of California State at Stanislaus, in Turlock and the soon to be opened University of Merced, offer a unique business, technology, research connection to this location as well.

2. Market Perspectives

In a recent commuter demographic study commissioned by the San Joaquin Partnership and the San Joaquin Council of Governments, several key commuter characteristics and significant employment trends further highlight the "brain drain" process occurring in our county and the region.

The brightest and most educated employees are making, in some cases, two hour plus commute to the greater bay area and Silicon Valley in search of high paying technology and manufacturing employment.

When asked, 83% of these commuters stated that they own homes in our county and 87.8% said they would be willing to shift to a comparable job closer to home.

All of these points are consistent with market trends in the greater Silicon Valley which are continuing to skyrocket on several key variables — land costs, labor expense, air and traffic congestion issues, astronomical housing costs, and a general deterioration of the quality of life.

From these perspectives, the Crows Landing Air Facility is a timely, centrally located (strategic I-5 location), economic development initiative.

IV. REUSE PLAN

The Reuse Plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility is phased to accommodate transfer of existing lands and facilities, protect human health and the environment, and allow the greatest flexibility for future planning of the Flight Facility.

A. Phase 1 Reuse – STATUS QUO – NASA Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning.

The Crows Landing Flight Facility is currently closed to most aviation uses. The Navy and NASA occasionally use the base for fly-by's, touch-and-go training, and other exercises. This use may occur once every one or two months for a few hours. Most of the site is currently leased for agricultural crop production. Crops include sugar beets, peas, beans, tomatoes, spinach, grains, and melons.

The Phase 1 Reuse Plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility keeps current activities status quo. Upon transfer, Stanislaus County will continue the agricultural lease, and allow NASA to continue training exercises on a sporadic, as-needed basis under a negotiated agreement. Additionally, the Navy, DTSC, and RWQCB will retain access to the site to continue necessary environmental characterization, remediation, and monitoring activities.

B. Phase 2 Reuse – GENERAL AVIATION - General Aviation, NASA Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning ~~for Business Park Development.~~

Stanislaus County will prepare and submit all necessary documentation and application materials for California Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration approval for use of the site as a General Aviation Airport. This process requires title transfer of the site, environmental review, documentation of existing facilities, and minor construction, repair and maintenance of appropriate facilities in order to bring the facility up to current state and federal standards for General Aviation airports. The goal is to acquire a State Operating Permit for a "non-precision instrument approach" small-scale, general aviation airport. Types of aircraft that will be accommodated likely will be limited to small aircraft, turbo-prop, and general aviation airplanes and helicopters. Decisions will be made to open either one or both runways depending on the structural status of each of the runways.

Stanislaus County will continue the agricultural lease, and allow NASA to continue training exercises on a sporadic, as-needed basis under a negotiated agreement. Additionally, the Navy, DTSC, and RWQCB will retain access to the site to continue necessary environmental characterization, remediation, and monitoring activities.

ATTACHMENT 2

STANISLAUS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MARCH 1, 2001

STAFF REPORT

NASA AMES RESEARCH CENTER CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN

REQUEST: RECOMMEND THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPT THE NASA AMES RESEARCH CENTER CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Owner/Applicant:	Owner: NASA Applicant: Stanislaus County
Location:	Crows Landing Flight Facility, Crows Landing Area
Section, Township, Range:	Sections 8, 17, & 20 T6S R8E
Supervisory District:	Five (Supervisor Caruso)
Assessor's Parcel:	027-01-13; 027-03-04, 22, 23, 25
Referrals:	See Exhibit "G" Environmental Review Referrals
Area of Parcels:	1,528 acres
Water Supply:	Water wells
Sewage Disposal:	On-site Sewage Treatment/ Septic tank/leach field system
Existing Zoning:	A-2-40
General Plan Designation:	Agriculture
Community Plan Designation:	Not applicable
Environmental Review:	Mitigated Negative Declaration
Present Land Use:	Air Facility, Agricultural
Surrounding Land Use:	Agriculture and scattered single-family dwellings

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Crows Landing Flight Facility includes approximately 1,528 acres and is located near the community of Crows Landing on Highway 33 between the City of Patterson and the City of Newman. On October 27, 1999, the President of the United States signed H.R. 356, "An Act to provide conveyance of certain property from the United States to Stanislaus County, California." The act states that as soon as practicable, the Administrator of NASA shall convey to Stanislaus County, California, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the NASA Ames Research Center, Crows Landing Facility.

CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN

Staff Report

March 1, 2001

Page 2

Because the property contains lands that require environmental remediation of soil, groundwater, and surface water, the State of California and NASA have determined that the transfer may be subject to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 USC 9620) (CERCLA). Transfer can take place, if desired by NASA and Stanislaus County, following a deferral procedure described in the CERCLA Section 120(h)(3)(C). This is commonly described as an "early transfer." In order to accomplish an "early transfer", the Governor of the State of California must find that:

(I) the property is suitable for the use intended by the transferee, and the intended use is consistent with protection of human health and the environment; (II) the deed or other agreement proposed to govern the transfer between the United States and the transferee of the property contains the assurances set forth ... (as described in CERCLA clause (ii)) ... ; (III) the Federal agency requesting the deferral has provided notice, by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the vicinity of the property, of the proposed transfer and of the opportunity for the public to submit, within a period of not less than 30 days after the date of the notice, written comments on the suitability of the property for transfer; and (IV) the deferral and the transfer of the property will not substantially delay any necessary response action at the property.

Several local, state, and federal agencies are currently involved in arranging for transfer of the property from NASA to Stanislaus County following the procedure described above. The following list describes the role of each:

1. Stanislaus County: Recipient of the Property;
2. Stanislaus County Department of Environmental Resources (DER): Oversight of Environmental Remediation
3. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA): Trustee Agency;
4. General Services Administration (GSA): Administrator of Federal Land Transfers;
5. Department of the Navy (Navy): Environmental Remediation of soil, ground water, and surface water;
6. California Department of Toxic Substances (DTSC): Oversight of Environmental Remediation
7. California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB): Oversight of Environmental Remediation

The Reuse Plan provides the description of Stanislaus County's proposed reuse of the Crows Landing Facility. This Reuse Plan is designed to meet the needs of Stanislaus County and the various state and federal agencies involved in the title transfer process. It is specifically designed to provide adequate information on reuses so that future use of the facility after title transfer is consistent with protection of human health and the environment.

The Reuse Plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility is phased to accommodate transfer of existing lands and facilities, protect human health and the environment, and allow the greatest flexibility for future planning of the Flight Facility. It also ensures the Governor that the site will not be used for residential or other incompatible purposes.

CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN

Staff Report

March 1, 2001

Page 3

1. Phase 1 Reuse – STATUS QUO – NASA Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning.

The Crows Landing Flight Facility is currently closed to most aviation uses. The Navy and NASA occasionally use the base for fly-by's, touch-and-go training, and other exercises. This use may occur once every one or two months for a few hours. Most of the site is currently leased for agricultural crop production. Crops include sugar beets, peas, beans, tomatoes, spinach, grains, and melons.

The Phase 1 Reuse Plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility keeps current activities status quo. Upon transfer, Stanislaus County will continue the agricultural lease, and allow NASA to continue training exercises on a sporadic, as-needed basis under a negotiated agreement. Additionally, the Navy, DTSC, and RWQCB will retain access to the site to continue necessary environmental characterization, remediation, and monitoring activities.

2. Phase 2 Reuse – GENERAL AVIATION - General Aviation, NASA Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning for Business Park Development.

Stanislaus County will prepare and submit all necessary documentation and application materials for California Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration approval for use of the site as a General Aviation Airport. This process requires title transfer of the site, environmental review, documentation of existing facilities, and minor construction, repair and maintenance of appropriate facilities in order to bring the facility up to current state and federal standards for General Aviation airports. The goal is to acquire a State Operating Permit for a "non-precision instrument approach" small-scale, general aviation airport. Types of aircraft that will be accommodated likely will be limited to small aircraft, turbo-prop, and general aviation airplanes and helicopters. Decisions will be made to open either one or both runways depending on the structural status of each of the runways.

Stanislaus County will continue the agricultural lease, and allow NASA to continue training exercises on a sporadic, as-needed basis under a negotiated agreement. Additionally, the Navy, DTSC, and RWQCB will retain access to the site to continue necessary environmental characterization, remediation, and monitoring activities.

Additionally, Phase 2 includes continued long-term planning for eventual development of the site as a Corporate/Executive air facility and associated business park and commodity or goods distribution uses.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Crows Landing Flight Facility includes two runways (approx. 7000 and 8000 feet long), a mix of buildings that have been used for a variety of uses, and a significant amount of land that is currently leased for agricultural production. Several support structures include a control tower, administration building, a club and exchange building, motor pool and public works shops, storage facilities, a baseball field, and a NASA research center.

CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN

Staff Report

March 1, 2001

Page 4

DISCUSSION

General Plan and Zoning. The use as a flight facility began in 1943 when the entire County was unrestricted and unclassified with zoning and General Plan designations. The site has remained in continuous use since then, and is currently considered to be a continually existing use within the General Agriculture zoning district.

All 1,528 acres of the Crows Landing Flight Facility is currently designated as "Agriculture" on the Stanislaus County General Plan. Current zoning is "A-2-40" General Agriculture. Although the "A-2-40" zoning is valid, it cannot be enforced against the federal government because of the supremacy clause in the U.S. Constitution. (Article IV, Clause 2 prohibits the State or local government from imposing land use regulations or building regulations upon the federal government.)

This Crows Landing Flight Facility Reuse Plan is consistent with Goal Five (5) of the Land Use Element of the General Plan which states that Stanislaus County will "foster stable economic growth through appropriate land use policies." It is also consistent with Policy Seventeen (17) which promotes diversification and growth of the local economy. Implementation Measure Three (3) under Policy 17 further calls for implementation of the County's "Economic Strategic Plan" which has a specifically defined program for acquisition and reuse of the Crows Landing Flight Facility. The Reuse Plan therefore is consistent with the General Plan.

Land Use. Land uses on the site include the runways, maintenance and support facilities for general airport use, and agricultural crop production. The Delta Mendota Canal traverses the southwest corner. Adjacent private land uses are partially restricted by use easements for aircraft approach and departure. Surrounding zoning and General Plan designations are also primarily Agriculture.

Airport Land Use Commission. The Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission adopted an airport land use plan for the County that included the Crows Landing Flight Facility in 1978. This plan defines various flight zones surrounding the facility and provides a listing of compatible Land Uses within each zone. The flight zones and compatible uses are shown in Appendix A of the Reuse Plan. The Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission will review this reuse plan. New flight zone designations may be required depending on specific activities proposed at the Facility, and depending on State and federal rules and regulations governing General Aviation Airports.

Environmental Remediation. Environmental contamination of Crows Landing Flight Facility has resulted from refuse disposal, aircraft and vehicle maintenance, fire training activities, and fuel storage. Contaminated or potentially contaminated sites are identified as either Installation Restoration Program (IRP) or underground storage tank (UST) sites. Investigations of the IRP and UST sites were substantially completed in 1996. However, the Navy administration of the remediation effort was transferred from the Navy EFA West to the Southwest Division, Naval Facilities, Engineering Command in San Diego in early 2000.

CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN

Staff Report

March 1, 2001

Page 5

Eight IRP sites and seventeen UST sites have been identified and are shown on Figure 5 of the Reuse Plan. Of these, only two (2) IRP sites and eight (8) UST sites require any additional remediation. The remainder require no further action. Appendix B of the Reuse Plan provides a detailed summary and status report of all of the remediation sites. Of the approximately 1500 acres, 1366 have been certified as clean and suitable for transfer. The remaining sites are still undergoing characterization and remediation activities by the Navy. The Navy is responsible for continual clean-up of the site.

Crows Landing Flight Facility Task Force. A task force of County staff representing various departments including CEO, Planning, DER, and Public Works have been meeting weekly for over a year to facilitate and expedite transfer of the facility from NASA to the County. Members have also attended monthly meetings with various state and federal agency representatives to maintain knowledge of the environmental remediation on site and facilitate transfer of the property.

Status of Transfer. In order to finalize transfer of the facility, the County, State, and Federal agencies have agreed that five steps must be taken:

First, because the transfer is authorized by an independent Act of Congress, and not through the Base Reuse and Closure Act, certain typical federal property transfer processes do not apply. Therefore, the Navy, DTSC and RWQCB must agree on the remediation process to follow. This is currently under negotiation, and a draft agreement has yet to be finalized.

Second, the Navy must provide an enforceable schedule for environmental remediation activities. A draft schedule was provided by the Navy for all agencies to review in November 2000.

Third, land use covenants, restrictions and easements must be drafted and agreed to by Stanislaus County that will ensure adequate access to the Navy and the State oversight agencies for their remediation activities, and to ensure that future uses of the lands will not interfere with those activities. Examples of similar easements and restrictions have been provided for review and revision.

Fourth, Stanislaus County must develop a Reuse Plan that describes the proposed future uses of the facility. (This Reuse Plan is specifically designed to meet this goal.)

Lastly, the State agencies must certify to the Governor's office that an "early transfer" is appropriate, and that the property is suitable for transfer based on agreements and assurances provided by the federal government. Finalizing the agreements, schedules, restrictions, and reuse plan described above should enable the State agencies to provide the certification required.

Crows Landing Flight Facility Steering Committee. In November 2000, the Board of Supervisors appointed a 21-member Steering Committee to specifically develop a long range reuse plan for the facility. The Committee is comprised of members representing the

CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN

Staff Report

March 1, 2001

Page 6

community and each of the Supervisorial districts, the Cities of Patterson and Newman, agricultural interests, the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission, Governor Davis' Office, Congressman Condit's Office, Senator Monteith's Office, Assemblyman Cardoza's Office, and Assemblyman House's Office. This Steering Committee is tasked with developing a long-term vision and reuse plan for the site

The Crows Landing Flight Facility Steering Committee will, over the next several months, expand ideas and visions for possible future uses of the site. The committee will prepare a detailed "project description" that will be used as the basis for the Final Reuse Plan. If necessary, and as appropriate, the Task Force will prepare all documents for zoning changes, general plan amendments, airport land use planning, and environmental review and CEQA compliance. Because the Steering Committee has yet to finalize its work, it is unknown precisely what form the final reuse plan will take. It is likely that it will eventually focus on use as a Corporate or Executive air facility with associated business park or distribution facilities.

It is likely that the site will be used in the future for governmental purposes, including, it is assumed, for airport uses. It may be appropriate, therefore, once the specific project description is defined, to change both the zoning and general plan designation on all or part of the site.

Summary. This Reuse Plan is designed specifically to address the needs of the County, State, and Federal agencies involved in the "early transfer" process and to provide adequate assurances to those agencies that future reuse of the site will be compatible with the protection of human health and the environment. Long-term planning is on-going and will continue beyond adoption of this reuse plan.

The reuse plan includes two phases:

Phase 1 Reuse – STATUS QUO – NASA Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning

Phase 2 Reuse – GENERAL AVIATION - General Aviation, NASA Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning for Business Park Development

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The project was referred to the various agencies for their review and comment. The Department did not receive any substantial comments or issues.

Staff believes the proposal can be found consistent with the General Plan and the goals and priorities of the Board of Supervisors.

RECOMMENDATION

This is a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. Order the filing of the Mitigated Negative Declaration, find the project to be "De Minimis" for the purposes of the Fish and Game Codes and adopt the NASA Ames Research Center Crows Landing Flight Facility Reuse Plan subject to the attached Mitigation Measures.

Report written by: Kirk Ford, Senior Planner, February, 2001

Attachments: Exhibit A - ReUse Plan, Initial Study, Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Mitigation Monitoring Plan
Exhibit B - Certificate of Fee Exemption
Exhibit C - Environmental Review Referrals

Reviewed by:


Kirk Ford, Senior Planner

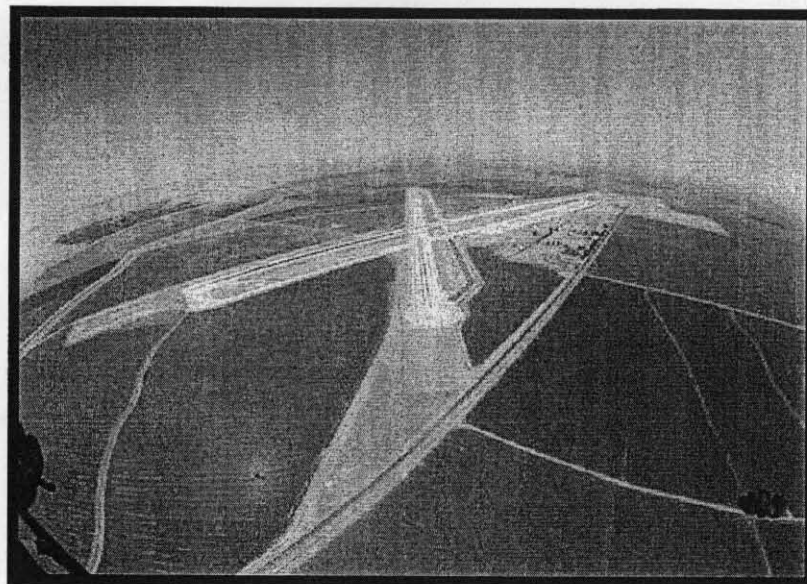


Stanislaus County
Crows Landing Flight Facility Task Force

Striving to be the Best

NASA AMES RESEARCH CENTER
CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY

REUSE PLAN, INITIAL STUDY, MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION,
AND MITIGATION MONITORING PLAN



Prepared by:
Stanislaus County
Crows Landing Flight Facility Task Force

JANUARY 2001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

II. CROWS LANDING SITE AND VICINITY

- A. Location and Accessibility
- B. Development Patterns and History
- C. General Plan, Zoning, and Land Uses
- D. Miscellaneous Land Use Conditions
- E. Environmental Remediation

III. CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE OPPORTUNITIES

- A. Goals and Objectives
- B. Economic Development and Market Perspectives

IV. REUSE PLAN (PROJECT DESCRIPTION)

- A. Phase 1 Reuse – Status Quo - NASA/Military Air Base, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning.
- B. Phase 2 Reuse - General Aviation, NASA/Military Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning.

V. INITIAL STUDY AND LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION

VI. MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

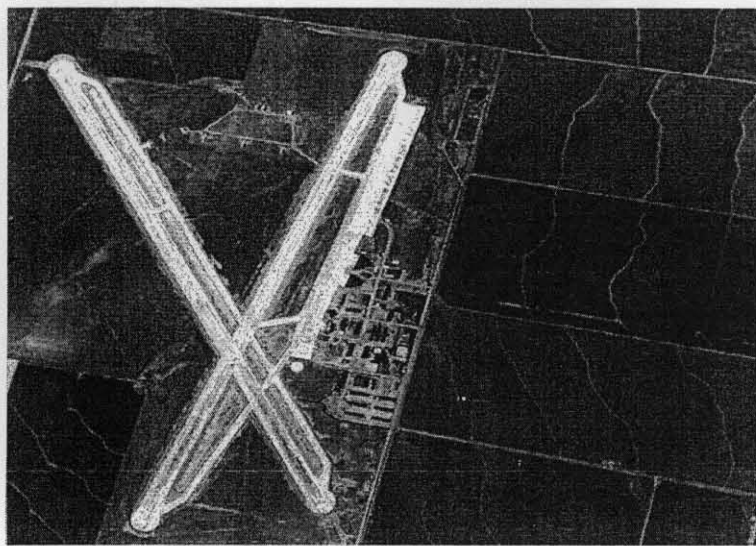
VII. MITIGATION MONITORING PLAN

VIII. REFERENCES

- APPENDIX A HR 356. An Act to provide conveyance of certain property from the United States to Stanislaus County, California.
- APPENDIX B Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission, Crows Landing Flight Facility ALUC Airport Land Use Plan
- APPENDIX C Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Environmental Business Plan, US Navy, SW Division, 2001
- APPENDIX D Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility, NASA 1999
- APPENDIX E NASA Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), NASA 1999

I. INTRODUCTION

The Crows Landing Flight Facility includes approximately 1528 acres and is located in Stanislaus County, California, approximately 80 miles southeast of San Francisco. On October 27, 1999, the President of the United States signed H.R. 356, "An Act to provide conveyance of certain property from the United States to Stanislaus County, California." The act states that as soon as practicable, the Administrator of NASA shall convey to Stanislaus County, California, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the NASA Ames Research Center, Crows Landing Facility.



CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY

Because the property contains lands that require environmental remediation of soil, groundwater, and surface water, the State of California and NASA have determined that the transfer may be subject to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 USC 9620) (CERCLA). Transfer can take place, if desired by NASA and Stanislaus County, following a deferral procedure described in the CERCLA Section 120(h)(3)(C). This is commonly described as an "early transfer." In order to accomplish an "early transfer", the Governor of the State of California must find that:

(I) the property is suitable of transfer for the use intended by the transferee, and the intended use is consistent with protection of human health and the environment; (II) the deed or other agreement proposed to govern the transfer between the United States and the transferee of the property contains the assurances set forth ... (as described in CERCLA clause (ii)) ... ; (III) the Federal agency requesting the deferral has provided notice, by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the vicinity of the property, of the proposed transfer and of the opportunity for the public to submit, within a period of not less than 30 days after the date of the notice, written comments on the suitability of the property for transfer; and (IV) the deferral and the transfer of the property will not substantially delay any necessary response action at the property.

Several local, state, and federal agencies are currently involved in arranging for transfer of the property from NASA to Stanislaus County following the procedure described above. The following list describes the role of each:

1. Stanislaus County: Recipient of the Property;
2. Stanislaus County Department of Environmental Resources (DER): Oversight of Environmental Remediation
3. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA): Trustee Agency;
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5. Department of the Navy (Navy): Environmental Remediation of soil, ground water, and surface water;
6. California Department of Toxic Substances (DTSC): Oversight of Environmental Remediation
7. California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB): Oversight of Environmental Remediation

This document, therefore, provides the description of Stanislaus County's proposed reuse of the Crows Landing Facility. This Reuse Plan is designed to meet the needs of Stanislaus County and the various state and federal agencies involved in the title transfer process. It is specifically designed to provide adequate information on reuses so that future use of the facility after title transfer is consistent with protection of human health and the environment.

II. CROWS LANDING SITE AND VICINITY

A. Location and Accessibility

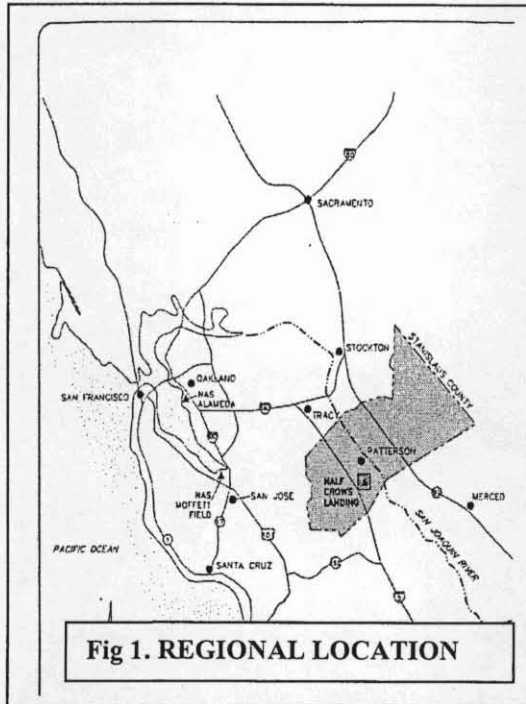


Fig 1. REGIONAL LOCATION

The Crows Landing Flight Facility is located in Stanislaus County, California, approximately 80 miles southeast of San Francisco as shown on Figure 1. It covers approximately 1,528 acres in the northwestern part of the San Joaquin Valley between the towns of Patterson and Crows Landing. The Community of Crows Landing is located approximately 1 mile to the southeast. The City of Patterson is approximately 2 miles to the north and the City of Newman is approximately 5 miles to the southwest.

California State Highway 33, Marshall Road, Bell Road, and Fink Road currently access the Facility. Interstate Highway 5 is located approximately 2 miles to the west with offramps located at Sperry Road near the City of Patterson and Fink Road near the community of Crows Landing. The California Northern Railroad main line is located immediately across Highway 33 and at one time accessed the site.

B. Development Patterns and History

Crows Landing Flight Facility includes two runways (approx. 7000 and 8000 feet long), a mix of buildings that have been used for a variety of uses, and a significant amount of land that is currently leased for agricultural production (Figure 2). Several support structures include a control tower, administration building, a club and exchange building, motor pool and public works shops, storage facilities, a baseball field, and a NASA research center. The Administrative area is fenced and much of that area (approximately 162 acres) is currently being evaluated and/or remediated by the Navy for soil and groundwater contamination. The remaining 1366 acres of the site have been certified by the Navy as "clean and suitable for transfer".

Crows Landing Flight Facility was originally commissioned by the Navy in May 1943 and originally served as a training field during World War II. The facility was largely inactive following World War II until the early 1950's, when the facility was used for fleet carrier landing practice during the Korean War. Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, the facility was also used for practice operations by the Navy, Air Force, Army, and Coast Guard. NASA Ames Research Center, located at Moffett Field also used the facility for paratroop practice by the Air Guard Rescue and as a research and development site. It has served primarily as an auxiliary airfield for operations from Naval Air Station (NAS), Moffett Field and other Navy facilities in the general area including the Lemoore Naval Airstation, as well as serving other federal and state agencies. Table 1 summarizes real estate transactions associated with the facility.

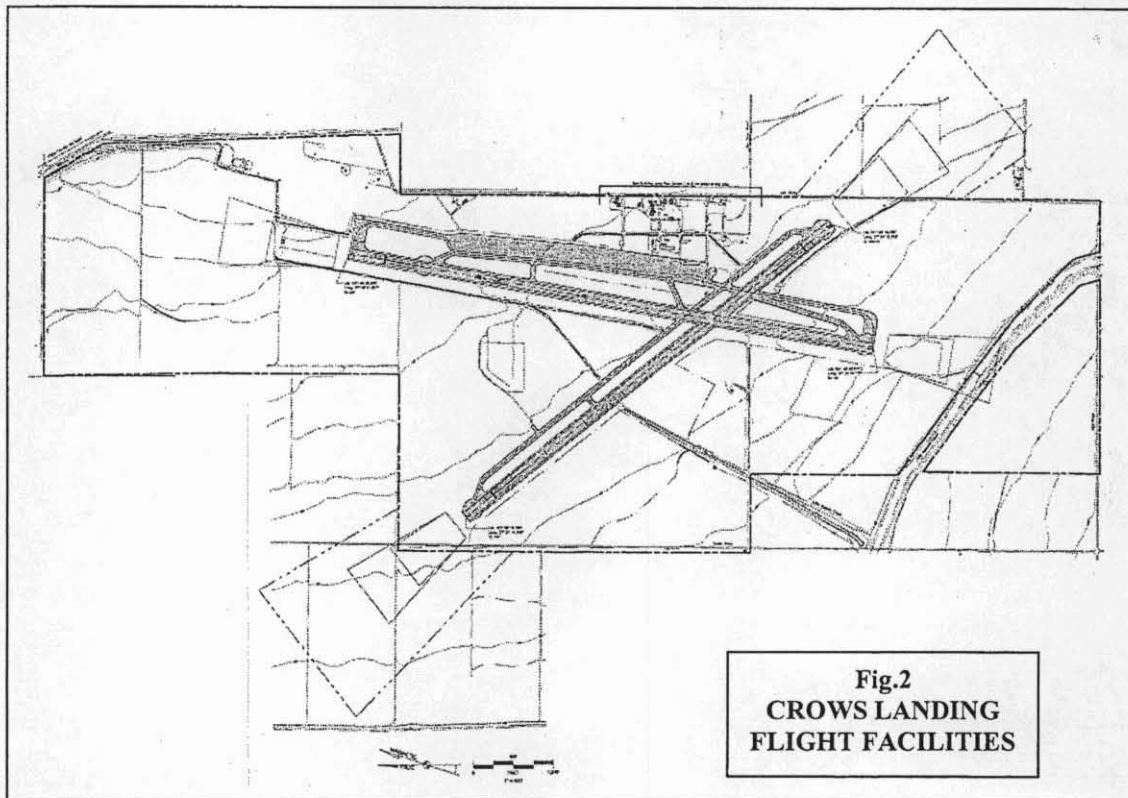


Table 1. Historical Real Estate Acquisition and Disposal Information

Estate Acquisition	Date of Acquisition or Transfer	Comments
Fee 803.63 acres	12 July 1943	Establishment of airfield
Fee 536.99 acres	18 April 1962	Additional aviation facilities
Fee 72.8 acres	22 January 1959	Flight clearance
Fee 113.98 acres	22 September 1958	Extension of runways
Total: 1527.4 acres		
	1527.4 acres transferred to NASA in 1994	
	HR 356 Passed in 1999, authorizing transfer of the property from NASA to Stanislaus County	

NASA retained the Crows Landing Flight Facility as a federal facility for use in July 1994. NASA currently operates flight research activities at the base and has become the federal host agency to all other users. The terms of the Navy and NASA agreement, including the Navy's responsibilities for environmental remediation, are described in the memorandum of understanding between the two parties dated December 22, 1992. As stated earlier, the Congress of the United States passed H.R. 356, in 1999, which states that as soon as practicable, the Administrator of NASA shall convey to Stanislaus County, California, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the Crows Landing Flight Facility.

C. General Plan, Zoning, and Land Uses

The use as a flight facility began in 1943 when the entire County was unrestricted and unclassified with zoning and General Plan designations. The site has remained in continuous use since then, and is currently considered to be a continually existing use within the General Agriculture zoning district.

All 1528 acres of the Crows Landing Flight Facility is currently designated as "Agriculture" on the Stanislaus County General Plan. Current zoning is "A-2-40" General Agriculture, (Figure 3.). Although the "A-2-40" zoning is valid, it cannot be enforced against the federal government because of the supremacy clause in the U.S. Constitution. (Article IV, Clause 2 prohibits the State or local government from imposing land use regulations or building regulations upon the federal government.)

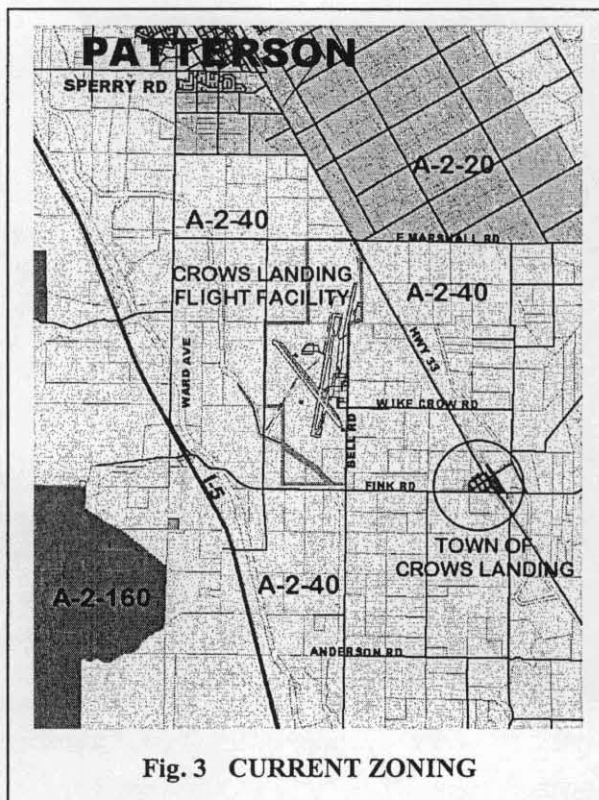


Fig. 3 CURRENT ZONING

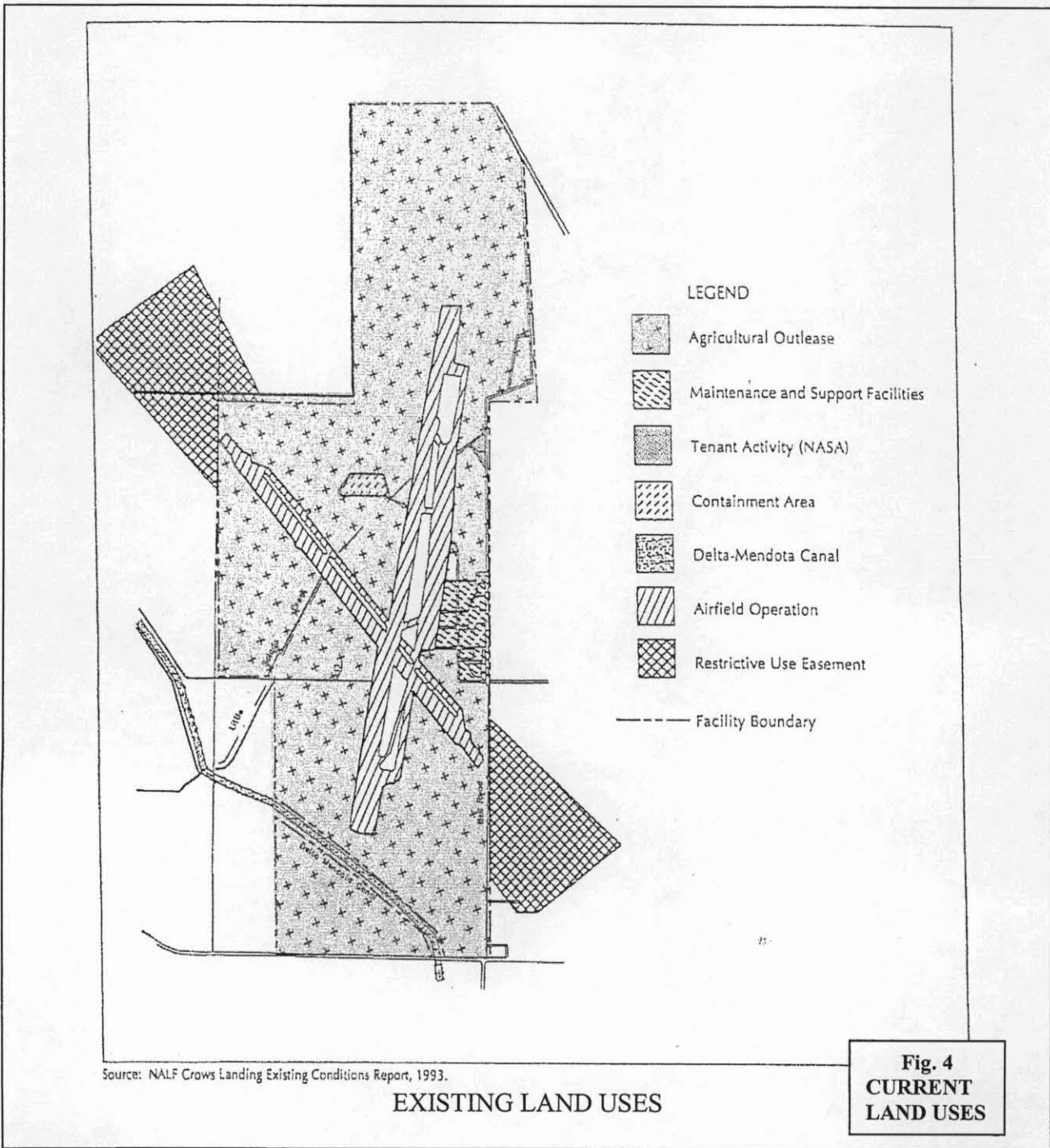
Land uses on the site include the runways, maintenance and support facilities for general airport use, and agricultural crop production. (Figure 4.) The Delta Mendota Canal traverses the southwest corner. Adjacent private land uses are partially restricted by use easements for aircraft approach and departure.

Surrounding zoning and General Plan designations are also primarily agriculture.

The Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission adopted an airport land use plan for the County that included the Crows Landing Flight Facility in 1978. This plan defines various flight zones surrounding the facility and provides a listing of compatible Land Uses within each zone. The flight zones and compatible uses are shown in Appendix A. The Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission will review this reuse plan. New flight zone designations may be required depending on specific activities proposed at the Facility, and depending on State and federal rules and regulations governing General Aviation Airports.

D. Miscellaneous Land Use Conditions

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map, most of the facility is located in Flood Zone C, an area with minimal potential for flooding. On the western side of the facility, a small area adjacent to Little Salado Creek is designated as Flood Zone A, a zone that is expected to experience flooding during a 100-year storm. The remainder of the creek channel and the majority of the airfield are located in Flood Zone B, an area expected to experience flooding during a 500-year storm or flooding with average depths



less than one foot from a 100-year storm. A sediment basin for irrigation runoff is located on the northeastern corner of the property. Effluent from this pond and runoff from the adjacent areas eventually discharge into the Marshall Road Basin.

The predominant type of vegetation at the site is agriculturally related (field crops), with the balance consisting primarily of maintained grassland. None of the original perennial grassland

habitat remains. Irrigated crops grown on the site include sugar beets, peas, beans, tomatoes, spinach, grains, and melons.

In February and October 1993, San Francisco State University and the Navy conducted an endangered species survey. The survey focused on the tri-colored blackbird, the blister beetle, and the giant garter snake. Because no evidence of these species was found, no federally-listed or candidate threatened or endangered species are known to inhabit the facility.

All buildings and structures at the facility have been evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Navy determined that the World War II buildings and structures do not qualify for listing on the National Register because of their altered appearance and setting. Moreover, NASA determined that no buildings, structures, or objects at the facility have historical significance from the Cold War perspective.

One additional historical note related to the Facility is that the Bonita School may have been located on the site near the existing main entrance on Ike Crow Road. The site was shown on the official County Map of the late 1800's, but had disappeared from the Official Maps by the turn of the century. The school may also have been used as a church, and a citizen has indicated that a graveyard may also have been present (Carol Wahl, pers. comm. October 2000).

E. Environmental Remediation Sites

Environmental contamination of Crows Landing Flight Facility has resulted from refuse disposal, aircraft and vehicle maintenance, fire training activities, and fuel storage. Contaminated or potentially contaminated sites are identified as either Installation Restoration Program (IRP) or underground storage tank (UST) sites. Investigations of the IRP and UST sites were substantially completed in 1996. However, the Navy administration of the remediation effort was transferred from the Navy EFA West to the Southwest Division, Naval Facilities, Engineering Command in San Diego in early 2000.

Eight IRP sites and seventeen UST sites have been identified and are shown on Figure 5. Of these, only two (2) IRP sites and eight (8) UST sites require any additional remediation. The remainder require no further action. Appendix B provides a detailed summary and status report of all of the remediation sites. Of the approximately 1500 acres, 1366 have been certified as clean and suitable for transfer.

Several areas of groundwater contamination were identified prior to the transfer of remediation responsibilities. Groundwater is located approximately 50 feet below ground surface beneath much of the installation. Pumping from irrigation wells influences groundwater elevations and a vertically downward gradient has been identified. The nearest irrigation well is approximately 1,500 feet east of IRP Site 17.

IRP Site 17, the former site of two aircraft hangars and a maintenance building, comprises an area of approximately 11 acres, and is the most problematic of all the remediation sites. A release of carbon tetrachloride to groundwater was identified during the SI and was evaluated during

subsequent investigations and pilot studies. The carbon tetrachloride release to groundwater extends to a depth of approximately 260 feet.

During July 2000, water samples were collected from seven wells in the IRP Site 17/UST Cluster 1 vicinity, and solvents (acetone, MEK, MIBK) and ethylene dibromide (EDB) were identified in some of the samples. The results of the July 2000 sampling event indicated that the solvent plume and other solvents had commingled with the petroleum release associated with UST Cluster 1. The BCT determined that the IRP Site 17 plume should be expanded to include the releases associated with UST Cluster 1, and the combined plume is known as the Administration Area Plume. The Administration Area Plume includes the groundwater releases from IRP Site 17, UST Site 117, and UST Cluster 1, and the area of the plume is estimated at 70 acres. The feasibility study is in the process of being revised in late calendar year 2000.

In summary, the environmental remediation of the site is an ongoing process for two (2) of the IRP sites and nine (9) of the UST sites. No further action is required at the other eight (8) UST sites or the other six (6) IRP sites. Table 2 provides a summary of the status of the Restoration Sites.

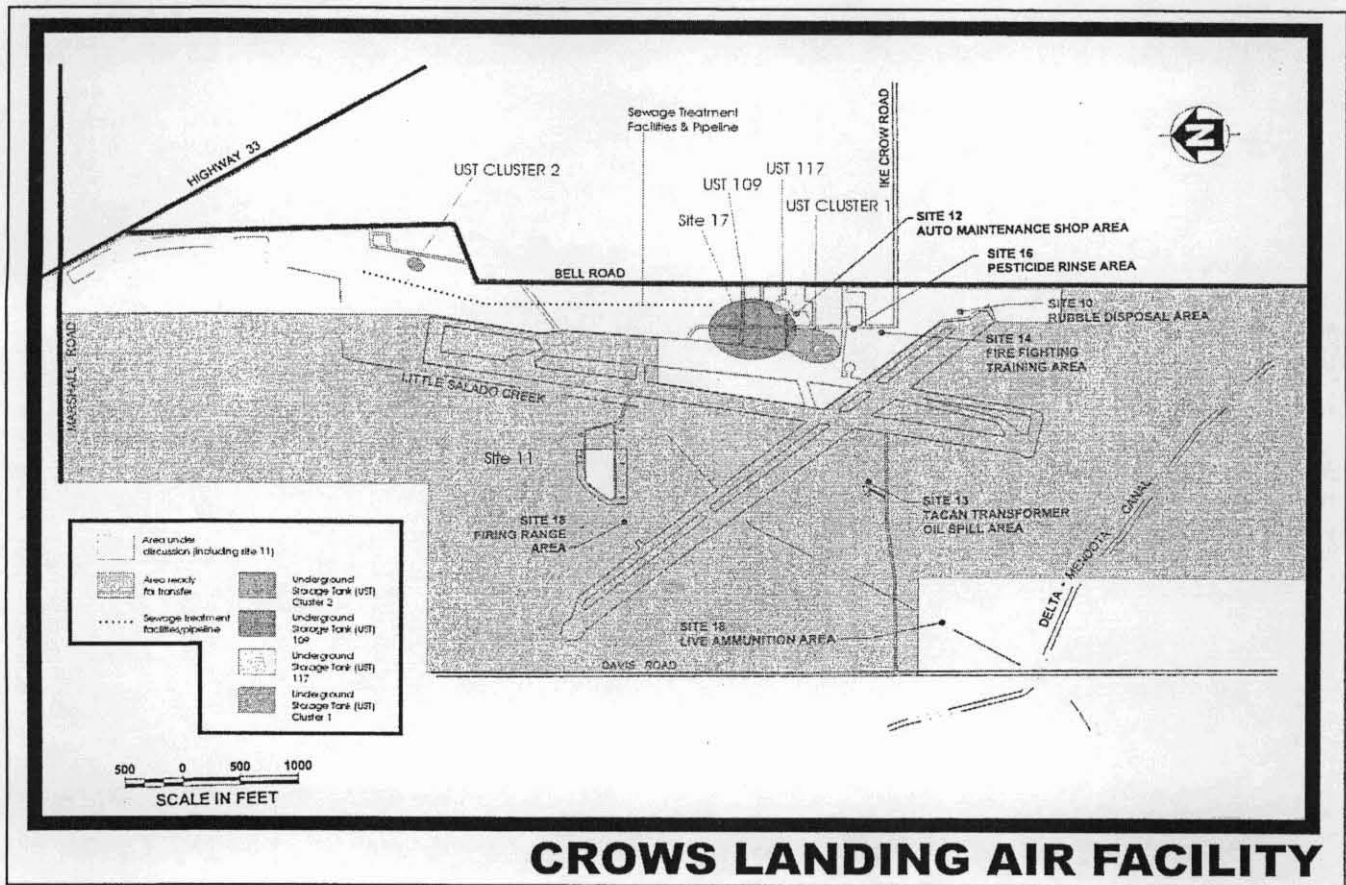


Table 2.
Status of Various Environmental Restoration Program Sites
Crows Landing Flight Facility

Site ID	Type	Status	Description of NFA Decision Document	Site Name
Work in Progress				
Site 11	IRP	FS		Disposal Pits Area
Site 17	IRP	FS		Demolished Hangar Area
UST 117	UST	FS		UST 117 (former 1,200-gallon tank site included within the investigation boundary of Site 17)
Sewer System	IRP	FA		Former and Current Sewer System
UST Cluster 1	UST	RA		Tanks CL-1, CL-2, CL-3 (each 50,000 gallons)
UST CL-40	UST	FA		UST CL-40 (former 1,500-gallon tank site located within UST Cluster 1 investigation boundary)
UST Cluster 2	UST	RA		Tanks CL-7, CL-8, and CL-9 (each 210,000 gallons)
UST 109	UST	FA		UST 109 (former 1,000-gallon tank site)
No Further Action Sites				
Site 10	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Rubble Disposal Area
Site 12	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Auto Maintenance Shop Area
Site 13	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	TACAN Transformer Spill Area
Site 14	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Fire Training Area
Site 16	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Pesticide Mixing Area
Site 18	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Firing Range
UST CL-4	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-4
UST CL-5	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-5
UST CL-6	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-6
UST CL-101	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-101
UST CL-102	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-102
UST CL-138	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-138
UST CL-138A	UST	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	UST CL-138A (located within investigation boundary of Site 12)
UST CL-147	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-147

ACRONYMS:

ROD: Record of Decision
RWQCB: Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region
FA: Further Action
FS: Feasibility Study Phase
NFA: No Further Action
RA: Remedial Action

III. CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE OPPORTUNITIES

A. Goals and Objectives

The Stanislaus County Crows Landing Flight Facility Task Force has been meeting on a regular basis for over a year, and has periodically participated in various other meetings with State and federal agencies. With direction from the Board of Supervisors and the Stanislaus County Workforce Investment Board, the Task Force has defined a reuse plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility as a General Aviation Airport with possible expansion at some later date to a corporate or executive business air facility with associated business park development.

This objective is driven by a variety of positive factors, including the site's strategic location to the San Francisco Bay Area and regional educational and transportation facilities, easy access to Interstate Highway 5 and energy generating facilities, the presence of two runways of 7,000 and 8,000 feet in length, and accessibility to a strong workforce and regional agricultural products available for export or distribution. Additional positive factors include the availability of an adequate groundwater supply, the presence of approximately 1500 acres of underdeveloped land adjacent to the facility, and the site's location within a foreign trade zone.

B. Economic Development and Market Perspectives

1. Economic Development

Stanislaus County has a historically high unemployment rate, which regularly soars at twice the state average and three times the national average. This critically high unemployment rate is due in part to our Agri-business economy and the consistent trends toward more advanced (less labor intensive) production, processing and manufacturing technologies.

As our changing Agri-business cluster continues to become increasingly automated and technology driven – a displaced workforce shifts to lower paying service sector employment caused in part by population driven retail sector growth.

While actual job creation in Stanislaus County continues to outpace other areas of the state and even the nation, our unemployment (and under employment) rates also continue to increase due to a steady increase in population and housing inspired by the outstretch of the booming greater San Francisco Bay Area economy.

Subsequently, the jobs/housing imbalance that is the status quo is compounded by a per capita household income of almost half of the state average.

Stanislaus County sees the Crows Landing Air Facility as a viable business park development opportunity for the westside communities and the county because it is directly adjacent to the I-5 corridor and has already established itself as an amenity for general aviation capabilities.

Proximity to the higher education institutions of California State at Stanislaus, in Turlock and the soon to be opened University of Merced, offer a unique business, technology, research connection to this location as well.

2. Market Perspectives

In a recent commuter demographic study commissioned by the San Joaquin Partnership and the San Joaquin Council of Governments, several key commuter characteristics and significant employment trends further highlight the “brain drain” process occurring in our county and the region.

The brightest and most educated employees are making, in some cases, two hour plus commute to the greater bay area and Silicon Valley in search of high paying technology and manufacturing employment.

When asked, 83% of these commuters stated that they own homes in our county and 87.8% said they would be willing to shift to a comparable job closer to home.

All of these points are consistent with market trends in the greater Silicon Valley which are continuing to skyrocket on several key variables – land costs, labor expense, air and traffic congestion issues, astronomical housing costs, and a general deterioration of the quality of life.

From these perspectives, the Crows Landing Air Facility is a timely, centrally located (strategic I-5 location), economic development initiative.

IV. REUSE PLAN

The Reuse Plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility is phased to accommodate transfer of existing lands and facilities, protect human health and the environment, and allow the greatest flexibility for future planning of the Flight Facility.

A. Phase 1 Reuse – STATUS QUO – NASA Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning.

The Crows Landing Flight Facility is currently closed to most aviation uses. The Navy and NASA occasionally use the base for fly-by's, touch-and-go training, and other exercises. This use may occur once every one or two months for a few hours. Most of the site is currently leased for agricultural crop production. Crops include sugar beets, peas, beans, tomatoes, spinach, grains, and melons.

The Phase 1 Reuse Plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility keeps current activities status quo. Upon transfer, Stanislaus County will continue the agricultural lease, and allow NASA to continue training exercises on a sporadic, as-needed basis under a negotiated agreement. Additionally, the Navy, DTSC, and RWQCB will retain access to the site to continue necessary environmental characterization, remediation, and monitoring activities.

B. Phase 2 Reuse – GENERAL AVIATION - General Aviation, NASA Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning for Business Park Development.

Stanislaus County will prepare and submit all necessary documentation and application materials for California Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration approval for use of the site as a General Aviation Airport. This process requires title transfer of the site, environmental review, documentation of existing facilities, and minor construction, repair and maintenance of appropriate facilities in order to bring the facility up to current state and federal standards for General Aviation airports. The goal is to acquire a State Operating Permit for a "non-precision instrument approach" small-scale, general aviation airport. Types of aircraft that will be accommodated likely will be limited to small aircraft, turbo-prop, and general aviation airplanes and helicopters. Decisions will be made to open either one or both runways depending on the structural status of each of the runways.

Stanislaus County will continue the agricultural lease, and allow NASA to continue training exercises on a sporadic, as-needed basis under a negotiated agreement. Additionally, the Navy, DTSC, and RWQCB will retain access to the site to continue necessary environmental characterization, remediation, and monitoring activities.

V. INITIAL STUDY AND LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION

CEQA INITIAL STUDY

Adapted from CEQA Guidelines APPENDIX G Environmental Checklist Form, Final Text, October 26, 1998

- 1. Project title: **NASA AMES RESEARCH CENTER
CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY
REUSE PLAN**

- 2. Lead agency name and address: **Stanislaus County
1010 10th Street, Suite 3400
Modesto, CA 95354**

- 3. Contact person and phone number: **Richard Jantz
(209)525-6333**

- 4. Project location: **NASA Ames Research Center
Crows Landing Flight Facility
Located on Hwy 33 between the City
of Newman and the City of Patterson**

- 5. Project sponsor's name and address: **Stanislaus County
1010 10th Street, Suite 3400
Modesto, CA 95354**

- 6. General plan designation: **Agriculture**

- 7. Zoning: **A-2-40 (General Agriculture)**

- 8. Description of project: **Proposal for Stanislaus County reuse of the
Crows Landing Flight Facility, including
general aviation, NASA training,
environmental remediation, agricultural
production and planning for business park
development. See Attached for additional
details.**

- Surrounding land uses and setting: **Surrounding land uses include City's of
Patterson and Newman, and general
agricultural production.**

- 10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)
Federal Aviation Administration, Cal Trans

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology /Soils
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology / Water Quality
- Land Use / Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population / Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities / Service Systems
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- 1. I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- 1. I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- 1. I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- 1. I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- 1. I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Kirk Ford
Signature

1-22-01
Date

KIRK FORD
Printed name

STANISLAUS COUNTY
For

INTRODUCTION

Reuse Plan. Stanislaus County is currently in the process of finalizing transfer of ownership of the Crows Landing Flight Facility from NASA to the County. With direction from the Board of Supervisors and the Stanislaus County Workforce Investment Board, Stanislaus County Staff have defined a reuse plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility as a General Aviation Airport with possible expansion at some later date to a corporate or executive business air facility with associated business park development. A Steering Committee has been appointed by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors to develop a long range vision and plan for possible future reuse scenarios based on pending market analyses. The Reuse Plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility is phased to accommodate transfer of existing lands and facilities, protect human health and the environment, and allow the greatest flexibility for future planning of the Flight Facility.

A. **Phase 1 Reuse – STATUS QUO – NASA Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning.**

The Crows Landing Flight Facility is currently closed to most aviation uses. The Navy and NASA occasionally use the base for fly-by's, touch-and-go training, and other exercises. This use may occur once every one or two months for a few hours. Most of the site is currently leased for agricultural crop production. Crops include sugar beets, peas, beans, tomatoes, spinach, grains, and melons.

The Phase 1 Reuse Plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility keeps current activities status quo. Upon transfer, Stanislaus County will continue the agricultural lease, and allow NASA to continue training exercises on a sporadic, as-needed basis under a negotiated agreement. Additionally, the Navy, DTSC, and RWQCB will retain access to the site to continue necessary environmental characterization, remediation, and monitoring activities.

B. **Phase 2 Reuse – GENERAL AVIATION - General Aviation, NASA Training, Environmental Remediation, Agricultural Production, and Planning for Business Park Development.**

Stanislaus County will prepare and submit all necessary documentation and application materials for California Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration approval for use of the site as a General Aviation Airport. This process requires title transfer of the site, environmental review, documentation of existing facilities, and minor construction, repair and maintenance of appropriate facilities in order to bring the facility up to current state and federal standards for General Aviation airports. The goal is to acquire a State Operating Permit for a "non-precision instrument approach" small-scale, general aviation airport. Types of aircraft that will be accommodated likely will be limited to small aircraft, turbo-prop, and general aviation airplanes and helicopters. Decisions will be made to open either one or both runways depending on the structural status of each of the runways.

Stanislaus County will continue the agricultural lease, and allow NASA to continue training exercises on a sporadic, as-needed basis under a negotiated agreement. Additionally, the Navy, DTSC, and RWQCB will retain access to the site to continue necessary environmental characterization, remediation, and monitoring activities.

Environmental Review. A draft Environmental Baseline Study was prepared for the Department of the Navy in March 1998. In June, 1999 NASA completed an Environmental Assessment under the auspices of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that evaluated impacts associated with transfer of the Flight Facility to Stanislaus County. NASA adopted a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) at that time.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this Initial Study evaluates only impacts associated with transfer of ownership and use of the facility as a General Aviation Airport. It does not evaluate impacts associated with any other future or speculative development proposal. Environmental

review of other possible scenarios will be conducted when the Steering Committee has completed its vision and plan.

CEQA ISSUES AND CHECKLIST:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Include	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: The Crows Landing Flight Facility is not located near any scenic vistas or scenic roadways, and continued use as an airport will not result in any significant visual impacts since most facilities are currently existing on site.

Mitigation:

None Required

References:

Stanislaus County General Plan
 Crows Landing Naval Auxiliary Landing Field Master Plan (1981)

II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

Approximately 1,100 acres (445.2 ha) of the land at Crows Landing is leased to a private tenant for agriculture. As a condition of the lease, the tenant provides maintenance at the site including fence repair, weed and pest control, irrigation management, and debris removal. The proposed reuse plan includes maintaining the status quo as it relates to agricultural production. There would be no conversion of agricultural uses. The current airport facilities would also be used for General Aviation as well as for the existing NASA training.

Mitigation:

None Required

References:

Stanislaus County General Plan, Agricultural Element

III. AIR QUALITY -- Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

a-c. The project site is within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin, which has been classified as "serious non-attainment" for ozone and respirable particulate matter (PM-10) as defined by the Federal Clean Air Act. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) has been established by the State in an effort to control and minimize air pollution. As such, the District maintains permit authority over stationary sources of pollutants.

The primary source of air pollutants generated by this project would be classified as being generated from "mobile" sources. Mobile sources would generally include dust from roads, farming, and automobile

exhausts, but also includes exhaust from aircraft. Mobile sources are generally regulated by the Air Resources Board of the California EPA which sets emissions for vehicles and acts on issues regarding cleaner burning fuels and alternative fuel technologies. As such, the SJVAPCD has addressed most criteria air pollutants through basin wide programs and policies to prevent cumulative deterioration of air quality within the Basin.

Operation emissions for single engine aircraft such as crop dusters or typical general aviation craft average about 1.1 lbs/hour NOX which equates to about 1.3 lbs/hr VOC. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District level of significance is approximately 20,000 lbs per year of pollutant. (ie. An impact is considered less than significant if this level is not exceeded) At this threshold, the Crows Landing facility would need to support approximately 18,000 hours of single-engine aircraft operation before the NOX threshold was exceeded. (This equates to approximately 15,000 hours of operation before the VOC level was exceeded).

The current use of the site by NASA for training activities is expected to remain at the same level as currently exists. Once ownership transfers to the County, it is likely that NASA use will decrease slightly while general aviation use will increase slightly. It is unlikely that general aviation air traffic at Crows Landing would be very significant without development of associated airport services, facilities, or business parks. The Reuse Plan Phase 2 general aviation use does not include development of significant associated airport services, facilities, or business parks, and thus air traffic and associated air quality impacts are expected to be insignificant.

d, e. There is no evidence to suggest this project will expose and/or create objectionable odors.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Guidelines
 EPA Guidelines

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

hydrological interruption, or other means?

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

Wetlands

There are 34.5 acres (14.0 ha) of wetlands at Crows Landing. This includes 2.2 acres (0.9 ha) of sewer ponds on the northeastern portion of the property, a 6.8-acre (2.8 ha) siltation pond, 18.5 acres (7.5 ha) encompassing the Delta Mendota Canal, 5 acres in the Little Salado Creek area, and a 2-acre (0.8 ha) wildlife area created by the Boy Scouts, the Navy, the RCD, and the NRCS.

Vegetation

The predominant type of vegetation at the site is agriculturally related, with the balance consisting primarily of maintained grassland. None of the original perennial grassland habitat remains. Irrigated crops grown on site include sugar beets, peas, beans, tomatoes, spinach, grains, and melons. Vegetation in the wildlife area includes saltbush, vetch, quail bush, willow, curly dock, cattail, blackberry, bull sedge, Johnson grass, ripgut brome, and California oatgrass.

Grass species in landscaped areas include perennial ryegrass, alta fescue, Kentucky bluegrass, and Bermuda grass. Shrub species include star acacia, Sydney golden wattle, juniper, privet, laurel, purple leaf plum, rose, firethorn, and waxleaf ligustrum. Groundcover includes needle point ivy, English ivy, and South African daisy, and shore juniper, while evergreen elm, acacia, ash, buckeye, deodar cedar, mulberry, olive, photinia, pine, poplar, black walnut, sycamore, and willow are the predominate trees on the property.

Palmate-bracted bird's beak, soft birds beak, bearded alloverva, delta coyote thistle, spiny-petaled coyote thistle, and diamond-petaled California poppy are the sensitive plant species that have a potential to occur at the site. None have been observed.

Wildlife

Mammals commonly found at Crows Landing include desert cottontail, California ground squirrel, wood rat, muskrat, black rat, Norway rat, house mouse, red fox, opossum, California vole, deer mouse, black-tailed jackrabbit, striped skunk, coyote, raccoon, feral dog, and feral cat. Because no native grassland remains, suitable habitat for the San Joaquin kit fox is not present at the facility, nor has any evidence of the animal been identified.

CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY - REUSE PLAN

JANUARY 2001

Birds at Crows Landing include red-tailed hawk, rough-legged hawk, American kestrel, American crow, common Raven, lesser goldfinch, yellow-billed magpie, western meadowlark, California quail, mourning dove, egrets, American robin, scrub jay, northern mockingbird, sparrow, and a small number of migratory birds. California species of special concern on the property include the western burrowing owl, California horned lark, white-tailed kite, northern harrier, and loggerhead shrike.

Known amphibians at the site include the Pacific tree frog, the bullfrog, and the western toad. Reptiles include the king snake and gopher snake.

In February and October of 1993, San Francisco State University and the Navy conducted an endangered species survey. The study focused on the tri-colored blackbird, the blister beetle, and the giant garter snake. Because no evidence of these species was found, no federally listed or candidate threatened or endangered species are known to inhabit the facility.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (NASA, June 1999).
Tetra Tech, 1994. NALF Crows Landing, California, Baseline Environmental Report.
Department of the Navy, 1998, NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility, Draft Environmental Baseline Survey

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

All buildings and structures at the facility have been evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Navy determined that the World War II buildings and structures do not qualify for listing on the National Register because of their altered appearance and setting. Moreover, NASA determined that no buildings, structures, or objects at the facility have historical significance from the Cold War perspective.

One additional historical note related to the Facility is that the Bonita School may have been located on the site near the existing main entrance on Ike Crow Road. The school may also have been used as a church, and a citizen has indicated that a graveyard may also have been present (Carol Wahl, pers. comm. October 2000). Two Government Land Office Maps dated 1854 and 1856 do not indicate a cemetery in this area. The site was shown on the official County Map of the late 1800's, but had disappeared from the Official Maps by the turn of the century. In 1991, Basin Research Associates, Inc. conducted an archaeological survey of Salado Creek. The site was not systematically surveyed because the majority of the facility had been paved or subjected to ground-disturbing activities. Since no remains of ethnographic or contemporary Native American resources were observed, buried archaeological deposits are not expected to be present.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (NASA, June 1999).

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- *Would the project:*

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:Regional Geology & Hydrogeology

NASA Crows Landing is located in the San Joaquin Valley, which is a topographic and structural basin bounded to the east by the Sierra Nevada mountains and to the west by the Coast Range. The valley is filled with a thick sequence of marine and continental sedimentary rocks overlying a basement complex of Sierra Nevada granite rocks on the east and metamorphosed sediments and igneous rocks of the Franciscan Formation on the west. The thickness of sediments is thought to exceed 12,000 feet [3858 meters (m)] in the western part of the valley, including the area beneath Crows Landing.

Geologic units comprising the groundwater reservoir in the Crows Landing area include surficial deposits of the Pleistocene and Holocene age and the underlying Tulare Formation of Pliocene and Pleistocene age. The alluvial deposits are primarily overlapping alluvial fans composed of interbedded clay, silt, sand, and gravel, derived from the Coast Ranges to the west. The alluvial deposits are thought to be a maximum of 100 feet (30.5 m) thick.

The Tulare Formation is composed of beds and lenses of clay, sand and gravel derived from the Coast Ranges to the west and the Sierra Nevada to the east. The Corcoran Clay is a lacustrine deposit (lake bed sediments) that underlies much of the San Joaquin Valley. The unit is also referred to as the E-clay in some areas or the "blue clay" in many local well drilling reports. The Corcoran Clay acts as a confining bed separating a primarily unconfined aquifer above from a confined aquifer below.

The Tulare Formation is thought to be about 500 to 600 feet (152.4 to 182.9 m) thick near Crows Landing. The base of the formation cannot easily be distinguished from underlying units, but is generally considered to coincide with the base of the fresh groundwater reservoir. The top of the Corcoran Clay is about 230 to 270 feet (70.1 to 82.3 m) below ground surface (bgs) and averages about 65 feet (19.8 m) thick.

Groundwater reservoirs include a lower, confined water-bearing zone in the Tulare Formation below the Corcoran Clay, and an upper, primarily unconfined water-bearing zone contained in the Tulare Formation and alluvial deposits above the Corcoran Clay (see Figure 3-1). In the northwestern part of San Joaquin Valley, the regional trend of horizontal groundwater movement in both the upper and lower water-bearing zones is east to northeast, from the Coast Ranges to the San Joaquin River.

There has been no recent seismic activity near the facility. Furthermore, there are no known major active faults within the Central Valley. However, California is located in one of the most seismically active regions in the United States. The Hayward and Calaveras faults are located approximately thirty miles to the west. Additionally, minor faults known as the Ortigalita, Greenville, and Vernalis are located approximately 20 miles [32.2 kilometers (km)] to the west. Although these faults have not been active recently, they have a potential to cause a moderate earthquake that could be felt at Crows Landing.

Ground shaking caused by an earthquake occurring at a significant distance has the potential to induce structural damage at the site. In particular, older masonry buildings without reinforcement are at the greatest risk. However, the majority of buildings are metal frame or poured concrete, making significant earthquake damage unlikely. Moreover, liquefaction of the soil is improbable because of its high clay content.

Local Geology & Hydrogeology

According to a recent National Cooperative Soil Survey conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Crows Landing consists primarily of very deep, well-

drained medium to fine textured alluvial soils. Soil Series include Capay, Vernalis, Stomar, and Zacharias and are classified by the NRCS as Land Capability Class I and II (Prime Farmland). These soils have few limitations for most crops grown in the area.

Logs for soil borings completed at the site indicate that three principal lithologies dominate in the subsurface beneath the base. These principal lithologies include sandy silt with clay, silty fine-grained sand, and medium-grained sand. Coarse-grained sand and pebble-sized gravel occur less frequently. Individual lithologic units are not continuous across sites and generally cannot be traced even between closely spaced borings.

Approximately 55 groundwater-monitoring wells and the base water supply well are used to monitor groundwater quality and flow characteristics at the facility. Currently, depth to groundwater ranges from approximately 35 feet to 58 feet (10.7 to 17.7 m) bgs. Water levels beneath the base vary seasonally by several feet in response to precipitation and irrigation well pumping. Overall, however, groundwater levels have decreased approximately 20 feet (6.1 m) since 1988.

Due to pumping of irrigation wells, groundwater flow patterns in the upper water-bearing zone near the southern and western sides of the site are usually reversed relative to the northeasterly regional pattern across the main part of the base. In the summer, the water table depression caused by these wells enlarges. In addition, groundwater mounding may occur as a result of irrigation water percolating to the upper water-bearing zone. Groundwater near the northeastern corner of the base usually flows to the east or northeast throughout the year, coinciding with the expected regional flow pattern.

Transfer of ownership and reuse as a General Aviation airport would not result in any impacts to geology or soils.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

Tetra Tech EM, Inc., September 1998. "Environmental Baseline Survey, NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility." Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (NASA, June 1999).

VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

Environmental contamination at the facility has resulted from refuse disposal, aircraft and vehicle maintenance, fire training activities, and fuel storage. Contaminated or potentially contaminated sites are identified as either Installation Restoration Program (IRP) or Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program sites. The Navy is currently conducting remediation of these sites or has completed all clean-up as necessary. Appendix C provides the Navy's most recent summary of activities and conditions. Land Use restrictions will be required on certain areas within the boundary of the Flight Facility because of on-going and past remediation activities. The Navy, NASA, GSA, DTSC, RWQCB, and the County are currently preparing draft land use restrictions.

Mitigation:

1. The Navy will continue its responsibilities for remediation as described in their Business Plan, or as agreed to by the Navy, NASA, GSA, RWQCB, DTSC, and Stanislaus County.
2. Land Use restrictions will be required on certain areas within the boundary of the Flight Facility.

References:

Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (NASA, June 1999).
Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Environmental Business Plan.

VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

Flood Plains. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map, most of the facility is located in Flood Zone C, an area with minimal potential for flooding. On the western side of the facility, a small area adjacent to Little Salado Creek is designated as Flood Zone A, a zone that is expected to experience flooding during a 100-year storm. The remainder of the creek channel and the majority of the airfield are located in Flood Zone B, an area expected to experience flooding during a 500-year storm or flooding with average depths less than one foot from a 100-year storm.

A constructed sediment basin for irrigation tailwater runoff is located on the northeastern corner of the property. Effluent from this pond and runoff from the adjacent areas eventually discharge into the Marshall Road Basin. Since this basin was not designed as a flood control structure, close coordination with Caltrans and Stanislaus County Public Works Department is needed to manage flooding at the intersection of Highway 33 and Marshall Road during heavy rainstorms.

Transfer of ownership and operation as a general aviation airport will have no impact on flood plains.

Surface Water. Crows Landing is located approximately three miles northwest of Orestimba Creek, which drains the eastern Diablo Range. This creek eventually flows into the San Joaquin River, located approximately four miles east of the property. The Delta Mendota Canal, running through the site south of Runway 17/35, provides irrigation water to the region. The California Aqueduct, the primary canal of the California Central Valley Project, runs in a southerly direction approximately one mile west of the site along the eastern edge of the Diablo Range near Interstate 5. Little Salado Creek drains part of the Diablo Range to the west of Crows Landing and eventually flows onto the site adjacent to the Delta Mendota Canal.

Surface drainage from the property flows in a northeasterly direction. Runoff and irrigation tailwater is channeled in surface ditches, pipes, and culverts to a sediment collection basin on the northeastern corner of the property prior to its discharge into the Marshall Road Basin and subsequently the San Joaquin River.

Because 100 miles (160.9 km) of the San Joaquin River were identified as an impaired water body in the 1990 California Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Assessment, several studies were conducted to identify primary pollutant sources. These studies pinpointed the West Stanislaus area as the highest contributor of sediment borne contaminants affecting this river. Consequently, the NRCS has expressed concerns regarding irrigation-induced soil erosion resulting from agriculture at Crows Landing.

To address this issue, the Resource Conservation District (RCD) in cooperation with the NRCS established a "Demonstration Farm" at the site to evaluate use of soil amendments, conditioners, and Best Management Practices to improve soil quality and reduce non-point source (NPS) pollution. Results of this study were published in a Clean Water Act Section 319h document: "Crows Landing 319 Demonstration Project: Evaluation of Best Management Practices in Controlling the Off-Site Movement of Pesticides and Sediment, June 1995." Efforts to control NPS pollution from Crows Landing continue.

No additional impacts to surface water are expected. Transfer of ownership and operation as a general aviation airport will have no further impact on surface waters.

Groundwater . Due to extensive agricultural land use, nitrate levels in groundwater exceed Federal and State Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs). Furthermore, in localized areas, groundwater at the site is contaminated with petroleum compounds and industrial solvents. Characterization of contamination at these parcels varies, ranging from the initial stages to almost complete. See Appendix B for additional details.

Transfer of ownership and operation as a general aviation airport will have no further impact on groundwater resources.

Mitigation:

3. Stanislaus County will provide access to all appropriate state and federal agencies and their contractors, including the Navy, GSA, California RWQCB, California DTSC, and others, for purposes of completing all necessary groundwater and soil remediation activities.

References:

Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (NASA, June 1999).

IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

NASA Crows Landing is located in Stanislaus County, CA, approximately 80 miles southeast of San Francisco (see Figure 1-1). The facility encompasses 1,528 acres [618.4 hectares (ha)] on the west side of the San Joaquin River Valley and is located between Highway 33 and Interstate 5, two miles north of the town of Crows Landing and four miles south of Patterson. Access to the station is provided by Bell Road, located south of Marshall Road. Primary land use at the site is related to airfield operations, support facilities, and agriculture.

Surrounding areas are predominately agricultural with scattered small urban and farm-oriented centers. Because a large portion of the facility is actively farmed, land use at Crows Landing is compatible with the General Agricultural status designated by Stanislaus County's General Plan.

The Crows Landing airfield consists of two concrete runways in an "X" configuration. Runway 17/35 and Runway 12/30 are 8,000 feet (2438 m) and 7,000 feet (2134 m) long, respectively. Both runways accommodate single-tire aircraft with wheel loading up to 59,000 pounds (26,762 m).

To reduce aircraft hazards north and south of Runway 17/35, easements equaling approximately 210 acres are located at both ends of Runway 12/30. These easements prohibit construction of buildings or structures and restrict the use of land to agriculture (excluding orchards). Furthermore, the government maintains the right to remove trees and structures that may inhibit safe takeoffs and landings.

Previous activities at the facility included advanced flight technology research and development, in addition to data collection for experimental aircraft. Test facilities include short take-off and landing areas (STOL), acoustic analysis arrays, and high precision laser, radar and video tracking systems.

A control tower, administrative offices, maintenance areas, and fire/rescue facilities are located east of the runways. The north end of the facility includes a NASA satellite flight research site and test area comprised of temporary and mobile buildings. Hangar space, aircraft maintenance, and overnight lodging are not available on-site.

Because the site is currently used as an air flight facility, transfer of ownership to the County and use as a General Aviation airport would not result in any additional impacts to Land Use patterns.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance and General Plan

X. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

There are no known mineral resources on the Crows Landing Flight facility, therefore, no impacts are expected.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

Stanislaus County General Plan

XI. NOISE -- Would the project result in:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

Aircraft are the primary sources of noise at the facility. Noise contours using the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) program were last updated in 1986 based on 30,000 flight operations per year. Runway 17/35, the primary runway, had a maximum Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) of 75 dB. Since the standard noise threshold level with reference to speech, sleep, and community reaction is CNEL 65 dB, the area within the 65 to 75 CNEL contour was considered to have significant noise levels. (The Stanislaus County General Plan Noise Element similarly requires that noise levels for new development or operation of existing facilities cannot exceed 65dB at the property lines.)

The Navy purchased approximately 210 acres of flight easements adjacent to the ends of existing runways. These easements serve both to preclude incompatible land uses with air operations and to ensure that no residences or other sensitive receptor sites for noise would be constructed. Additionally, the Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission adopted an Airport Land Use Plan for the Crows Landing Flight Facility in August 1978. This land use plan precludes construction of homes, and other facilities in those areas identified as high risk for accident or incompatible with airport operations (including noise level incompatibilities).

Transfer of ownership and operation as a general aviation airport will have no additional impact on noise levels currently occurring in association with operations of the air facility. It is possible that noise levels associated with aircraft use of the site will decrease because general aviation aircraft typically do not produce as much noise as do military or experimental aircraft.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Western Division, 1981. "Master Plan for Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Crows Landing California."

Naval Facilities Engineering Command 1986. "Air Installation Compatible Use Zone Study, Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Crows Landing California."

Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (NASA, June 1999).

Stanislaus County General Plan, Noise Element.

Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission Plan, 1978.

XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

Western Stanislaus County offers a variety of housing for sale and rent at well below the costs of more urban regions of California. This includes every type and style of housing from rural ranchettes to small starter homes and garden apartments. The median home price in the area was approximately \$125,000 in 1992. Housing immediately surrounding the Flight Facility is limited to single family homes on larger agricultural parcels. No housing is present on-site, nor is any proposed with the Reuse Plan. Transfer of ownership and operation as a general aviation airport will have no additional impact on housing or population.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

Stanislaus County General Plan, Housing Element

XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

The Patterson School District, which includes NASA Crows Landing, has seven facilities including one high school, one junior high, and five elementary schools. These facilities serve approximately 3,000 students.

California State University, Stanislaus, is located within Turlock, approximately 20 miles (32.2 km) east of the site. Modesto Junior College is also located with commuting distance.

Medical services are no longer available at Del Puerto Hospital in Patterson. Major injuries are usually transferred for long term care to one of two major medical facilities in Modesto. Additional facilities are available in Newman and Turlock.

Local police currently provide onsite security services through an inter-agency agreement between NASA and the City of Patterson. Fire protection at the site is maintained through mutual aid agreements with the cities and towns of Patterson, Newman, Westley, and Gustine, and with the West Stanislaus Fire Protection District.

Transfer of ownership and operation as a general aviation airport will have no significant impact on schools, parks, or medical facilities. It is likely that the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Office will be responsible for police protection at the site. The need for fire protection services will increase in relation to the use. Use as a non-precision approach, un-lighted, general aviation airport would result in minimal, but potentially significant increases in Fire Protection services. It is likely that West Stanislaus Fire Protection District would continue its obligation to provide services to the site.

Mitigation:

- Following transfer of ownership from NASA to Stanislaus County, Stanislaus County will enter into an agreement with either West Stanislaus Fire Protection District or another suitable fire protection service, or will devise an adequate fire protection service plan to provide fire services to the site.

References:

R. Gaiser, West Stanislaus Fire Protection District.

XIV. RECREATION --

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

No recreational facilities are currently operating at the facility, however there is an abandoned baseball field and a swimming pool. Several recreational facilities are nearby. These include two municipal parks in the City of Patterson, various facilities operated by the Patterson School District, the Frank Raines Regional Park, and a municipal swimming pool in the City of Newman. Transfer of ownership and operation as a general aviation airport could support some recreational uses on a one time or continuous basis, but no specific proposals are known at this time. Transfer and reuse as an airport will have no additional impact on recreational resources.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

Stanislaus County Parks Master Plan, Stanislaus County General Plan
 City of Patterson General Plan
 City of Newman General Plan

XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

Running along the eastern side of the facility from Fink Road, past the former main gate near Ike Crow Road, and to the northern gate at Highway 33, Bell Road provides primary access to the site (see Figure 1-1). The area is also accessible from Davis Road to the west via a service road to Buildings 102 and 43. Regional access to Crows Landing is provided by Interstate 5, which runs north and south along the base of the Diablo Mountains, approximately three miles west of the airfield. Local access is provided by Highway 33 east of the base.

Two transcontinental railroads, Santa Fe and Southern Pacific, serve Stanislaus County, and the California Northern Railroad Company rail line is located immediately across Highway 33 from the facility. The Modesto airport is located approximately 25 miles (40.2 km) northeast of the site, providing daily connector flights to San Francisco, San Jose, and Los Angeles. Modesto airport also provides private air services, air taxi, charter, and air cargo services. Furthermore, the Stanislaus County Transit system offers bus service to the area.

Transfer of ownership and operation as a general aviation airport will have no significant impact on surface transportation facilities including roads and rail. Operation as a general aviation airport will increase general aviation air traffic to the facility, but will result in decreased military and NASA related air traffic. The addition of a general aviation airport in the California Airport System is viewed by the County, CalTrans and the FAA as a positive impact to local and regional air service.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. 1999. Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility. June.

XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS --

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

Electricity is delivered to the site by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) via a 12 kilovolt aboveground main service feeder running parallel to Ike Crow Road. An emergency generator on the first floor of Building 101, the Control Tower, supplies power during emergencies. PG&E also supplies natural gas to the site, while Evans Telephone provides telephone service.

Due to high levels of nitrates, the base water supply does not meet applicable drinking water standards. Consequently, bottled water is furnished for drinking. The water supply is used only for activities that do not involve ingestion or skin contact, including fire suppression, irrigation, and sewer flow. Besides groundwater, the Delta-Mendota Canal, the California Aqueduct, and the San Joaquin River provide water for irrigation.

The sanitary sewer collection and disposal system at Crows Landing is composed of a concrete trunk line parallel to Bell Road and a lateral line running westward to Building 40. The sanitary sewer system runs northward to an inoperable processing tank (Imhoff tank) and three unlined settling ponds at the northern end of the installation. Observations during environmental field activities revealed that the sewer pipelines contained little or no water, indicating that current volumes are insufficient to reach the Imhoff tank.

Stormwater runoff flows through a series of ditches and pipes along the runways into Little Salado Creek. This creek, which leads to a siltation pond at the northern end of the base, is also used to collect irrigation tailwater from the surrounding farms. Water in the siltation pond is reused to irrigate fields at the northern end of the base or discharged through a culvert under Highway 33, into a storm drain along Marshall Road, and finally into the San Joaquin River.

A total of 17 underground storage tanks (USTs) and seven aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) were used at various times by NASA and the Navy at Crows Landing. All of these tanks have been removed. The only two remaining tanks are two ASTs of unknown capacity that are owned by the farmer leasing the agricultural parcel (Parcel #1). These tanks are used to store fuel for irrigation pumps.

Crows Landing has no active landfills. The Fink Road landfill is 2.5 miles west of the site. Because of the small number of employees at the facility, minimal solid waste was, or is expected to be generated.

Mitigation:

None Required.

References:

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. 1999. Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility. June.

XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE --

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

Transfer of ownership to Stanislaus County and operation of the Crows Landing Flight Facility as a non-precision approach general aviation airport will have limited cumulative environmental impacts as described in the above initial study.

A Steering Committee has been appointed by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors to plan for possible future uses of the facility. At this time, there are no specific plans for reuse other than those described in the attached Reuse Plan (ie. Phase 1: Status Quo; and Phase 2: Status quo plus operation as a general aviation airport), and the Steering Committee is just beginning to evaluate possible future scenarios. Because there are no specific plans for any future uses beyond those described in this Reuse Plan, it would be too speculative to evaluate possible cumulative impacts related to any other uses at this time.

Once the Steering Committee has completed its work, a comprehensive environmental evaluation of the Committee's proposed uses will be required, prior to adoption of any further use of the facility. Because these possible uses are unknown at this time, it is inappropriate to speculate about possible future impacts beyond those described above. Therefore, cumulative impacts are considered to be less than significant.

Additional References and/or Sources of Information:

L. Hornecker, Southwest Division, Naval Facilities, Engineering Command

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. 1999. Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility. June.

National Flood Insurance Program. 1989. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Stanislaus County, California, FIRM Panel 060384 0715C. September.

Naval Energy and Environmental Support Activity (NEESA). 1984. Initial Assessment Study of Naval Air Station, Moffett Field, Sunnyvale, California, NEESA 13-049. April.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command. 1994. Real Estate Records for NALF Crows Landing.

PRC Environmental Management, Inc. 1997. Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Crows Landing, California, BRAC Environmental Business Plan. 21 February [Navy Contract N62474-94-D-7609, CTO 115]

VI. MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

NAME OF PROJECT: NASA Ames Research Center
Crows Landing Flight Facility Reuse Plan

LOCATION OF PROJECT: Crows Landing, CA

PROJECT DEVELOPER: Stanislaus County

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: Proposal for Stanislaus County reuse of the Crows Landing Flight Facility, including general aviation, NASA training, environmental remediation, agricultural production and planning for business park development.

Based upon the Initial Study, dated January 18, 2001, the Environmental Coordinator finds as follows:

1. This project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, nor to curtail the diversity of the environment.
2. This project will not have a detrimental effect upon either short-term or long-term environmental goals.
3. This project will not have impacts which are individually limited but cumulatively considerable.
4. This project will not have environmental impacts which will cause substantial adverse effects upon human beings, either directly or indirectly.

The aforementioned findings are contingent upon the following mitigation measures (if indicated) which shall be incorporated into this project:

1. The Navy will continue its responsibilities for remediation as described in their Business Plan, or as agreed to by the Navy, NASA, GSA, RWQCB, DTSC, and Stanislaus County.
2. Land Use restrictions will be required on certain areas within the boundary of the Flight Facility.
3. Stanislaus County will provide access to all appropriate state and federal agencies and their contractors, including the Navy, GSA, California RWQCB, California DTSC, and others, for purposes of completing all necessary groundwater and soil remediation activities.
4. Following transfer of ownership from NASA to Stanislaus County, Stanislaus County will enter into an agreement with either West Stanislaus Fire Protection District or another suitable fire protection service, or will devise an adequate fire protection service plan to provide fire services to the site.

The Initial Study and other environmental documents are available for public review at the Department of Planning and Community Development, 1010 10th Street, Suite 3400, Modesto, California.
Initial Study prepared by: Kirk Ford, Senior Planner

Submit comments to: Stanislaus County
Planning and Community Development Department
1010 10th Street, Suite 3400
Modesto, California 95354

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

CERTIFICATE OF FEE EXEMPTION

De Minimis Impact Finding

Project Title/Location (include county):

NASA Ames Research Center, Crows Landing Flight Facility Reuse Plan, Crows Landing Area, Stanislaus County, California.

Project Description:

Proposal for Stanislaus County reuse of the Crows Landing Flight Facility, including general aviation, NASA training, environmental remediation, agricultural production and planning for business park development.

Findings of Exemption (attach as necessary):

The Stanislaus County Planning Commission make a finding of "De Minimis" on this project for the following reasons:

- 1) The site is not in a riparian corridor; and
- 2) The site is not identified on the Natural Diversity Data Base as having any threatened or endangered animals or plants or any sensitive habitat.

Certification:

I hereby certify that the public agency has made the above finding and that the project will not individually or cumulatively have an adverse effect on wildlife resources, as defined in Section 711.2 of the Fish and Game Code.

(Chief Planning Official)

Title: Planning Director
 Lead Agency: Stanislaus County
 Date: _____

VII. MITIGATION MONITORING PLAN**Mitigation Monitoring Plan**

Adapted from CEQA Guidelines sec. 15097 Final Text, October 26, 1998

JANUARY 18, 2001

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Project title and location: | NASA AMES RESEARCH CENTER
CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY
REUSE PLAN
CROWS LANDING AREA,
STANISLAUS COUNTY, CA |
| 2. Project Applicant name and address: | Stanislaus County
1010 10th Street, Suite 3400
Modesto, CA 95354 |
| 3. Person Responsible for Implementing Mitigation Program: | Stanislaus County |
| 4. Contact person at County: | Richard Jantz (209)525-6333 |

MITIGATION MEASURES AND MONITORING PROGRAM:

List all Mitigation Measures by topic as identified in the Mitigated Negative Declaration and complete the form for each measure.

VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- | | |
|---|--|
| No. 1 Mitigation Measure: | The Navy will continue its responsibilities for remediation as described in their Business Plan, or as agreed to by the Navy, NASA, GSA, RWQCB, DTSC, and Stanislaus County. |
| Who Implements the Measure: | Applicant |
| When should the measure be implemented: | Continuous |
| When should it be completed: | Continuous |
| Who verifies compliance: | RWQCB, DTSC, Navy, Stanislaus County |
| Other Responsible Agencies: | |

No. 2	Mitigation Measure:	Land Use restrictions will be required on certain areas within the boundary of the Flight Facility
	Who Implements the Measure:	Applicant
	When should the measure be implemented:	Continuous
	When should it be completed:	Continuous
	Who verifies compliance:	Stanislaus County
	Other Responsible Agencies:	RWQCB, DTSC, Navy

VIII HYDROLOGY & WATER QUALITY

No. 3	Mitigation Measure:	Stanislaus County will provide access to all appropriate state and federal agencies and their contractors, including the Navy, GSA, California RWQCB, California DTSC, and others, for purposes of completing all necessary groundwater and soil remediation activities.
	Who Implements the Measure:	Applicant
	When should the measure be implemented:	Continuous
	When should it be completed:	Continuous
	Who verifies compliance:	Stanislaus County
	Other Responsible Agencies:	RWQCB, DTSC, Navy

XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES

No. 4	Mitigation Measure:	Following transfer of ownership from NASA to Stanislaus County, Stanislaus County will enter into an agreement with either West Stanislaus Fire Protection District or another suitable fire protection service, or will devise an adequate fire protection service plan to provide fire services to the site
	Who Implements the Measure:	Applicant
	When should the measure be implemented:	Following transfer of Ownership
	When should it be completed:	Prior to Operation
	Who verifies compliance:	Stanislaus County

VIII. REFERENCES

L. Hornecker, Southwest Division, Naval Facilities, Engineering Command

Castle Joint Powers Authority. 1992. Castle Air Force Base Preliminary Reuse Plan.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. June 1999. Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility.

Naval Energy and Environmental Support Activity (NEESA). 1984. Initial Assessment Study of Naval Air Station, Moffett Field, Sunnyvale, California, NEESA 13-049.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command. 1994. Real Estate Records for NALF Crows Landing.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Western Division, 1981. "Master Plan for Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Crows Landing California."

Naval Facilities Engineering Command 1986. "Air Installation Compatible Use Zone Study, Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Crows Landing California."

PRC Environmental Management, Inc. 1997. Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Crows Landing, California, BRAC Environmental Business Plan. 21 February [Navy Contract N62474-94-D-7609, CTO 115]

Stanislaus County Airport Land Use Commission Plan, 1978.

Stanislaus County General Plan, 1995.

Tetra Tech EM, Inc. 1998. NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility Draft Environmental Baseline Survey.

Western Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command. 1991. Master Plan for Naval Auxillary Landing Field, Crows Landing, California

APPENDIX A

**HR 356. AN ACT TO PROVIDE CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY FROM
THE UNITED STATES TO STANISLAUS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.**

One Hundred Sixth Congress
of the
United States of America

AT THE FIRST SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Wednesday,
the sixth day of January, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine*

An Act

To provide for the conveyance of certain property from the United States to
Stanislaus County, California.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of
the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY.

As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (in this Act referred to as "NASA") shall convey to Stanislaus County, California, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the property described in section 2.

SEC. 2. PROPERTY DESCRIBED.

The property to be conveyed pursuant to section 1 is—

(1) the approximately 1528 acres of land in Stanislaus County, California, known as the NASA Ames Research Center, Crows Landing Facility (formerly known as the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Crows Landing);

(2) all improvements on the land described in paragraph (1); and

(3) any other Federal property that is—

(A) under the jurisdiction of NASA;

(B) located on the land described in paragraph (1);

and

(C) designated by NASA to be transferred to Stanislaus County, California.

SEC. 3. TERMS.

(a) **CONSIDERATION.**—The conveyance required by section 1 shall be without consideration other than that required by this section.

(b) **ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION.**—(1) The conveyance required by section 1 shall not relieve any Federal agency of any responsibility under law, policy, or Federal interagency agreement for any environmental remediation of soil, groundwater, or surface water.

(2) Any remediation of contamination, other than that described in paragraph (1), within or related to structures or fixtures on the property described in section 2 shall be subject to negotiation to the extent permitted by law.

(c) **RETAINED RIGHT OF USE.**—NASA shall retain the right to use for aviation activities, without consideration and on other terms and conditions mutually acceptable to NASA and Stanislaus County, California, the property described in section 2.

(Copy)

H. R. 356-2

(d) RELINQUISHMENT OF LEGISLATIVE JURISDICTION.—NASA shall relinquish, to the State of California, legislative jurisdiction over the property conveyed pursuant to section 1—

(1) by filing a notice of relinquishment with the Governor of California, which shall take effect upon acceptance thereof;

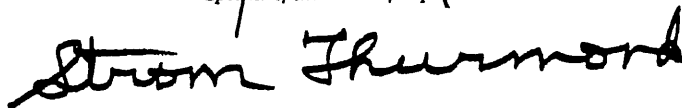
or

(2) in any other manner prescribed by the laws of California.

(e) ADDITIONAL TERMS.—The Administrator of NASA may negotiate additional terms to protect the interests of the United States.



Speaker of the House of Representatives.

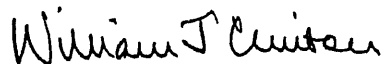


Vice President of the United States and

President of the Senate Pro Tempore.

APPROVED

OCT. 27. 1999



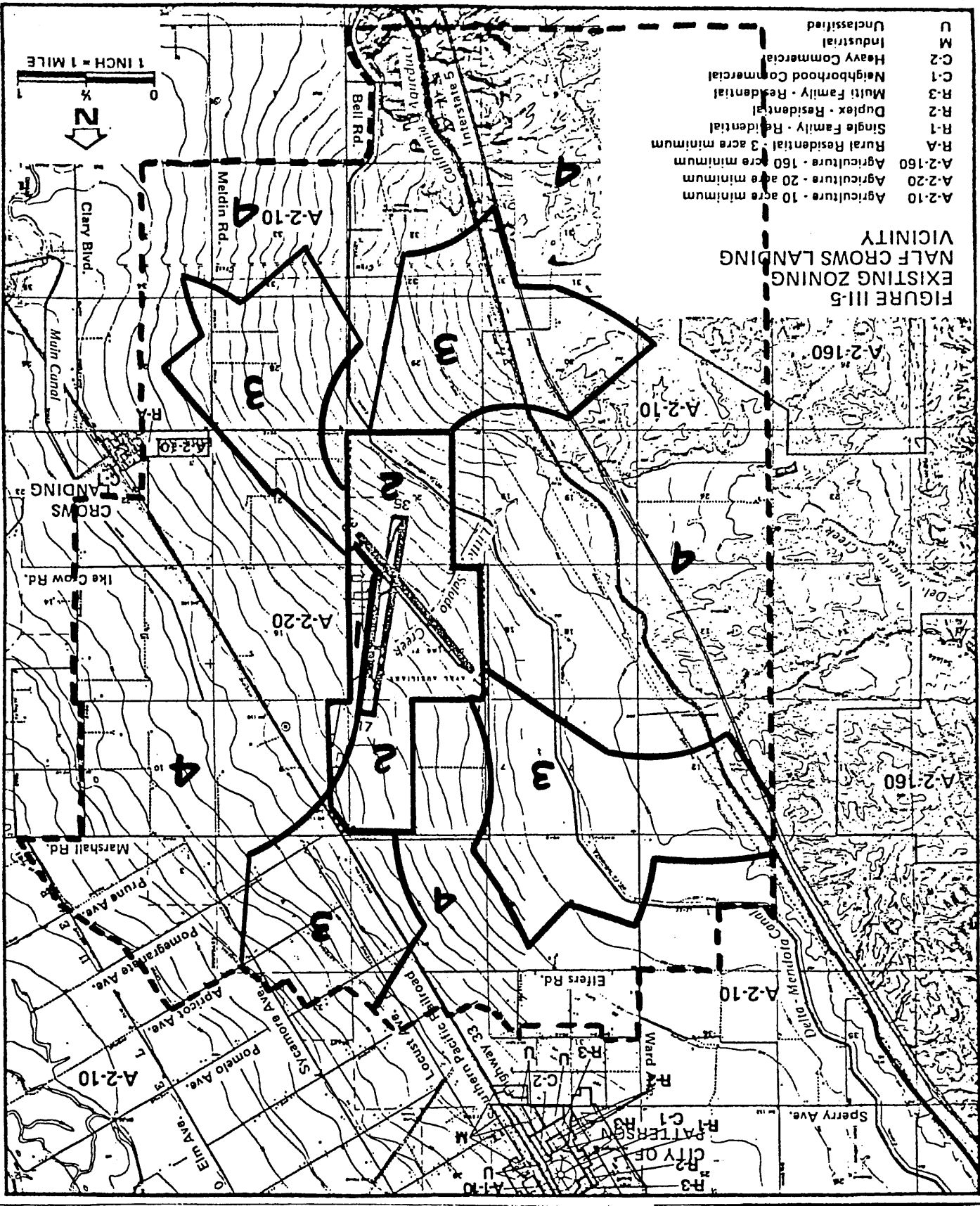
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**APPENDIX B
CROWS LANDING AIRPORT LAND USE PLAN**

NA LF CROWS LANDING

- A-2-10 Agriculture - 10 acre minimum
- A-2-20 Agriculture - 20 acre minimum
- A-2-160 Agriculture - 160 acre minimum
- R-A Rural Residential - 3 acre minimum
- R-1 Single Family - Residential
- R-2 Duplex - Residential
- R-3 Multi Family - Residential
- C-1 Neighborhood Commercial
- C-2 Heavy Commercial
- M Industrial
- U Unclassified

FIGURE III-5
EXISTING ZONING
NA LF CROWS LANDING
VICINITY



AIRPORT LAND USE COMPATIBILITY LISTING

<u>USES</u>	<u>AREAS</u>	<u>1.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>3.</u>	<u>4.</u>	
		<u>AIRPORT BUILDING AREA</u>		<u>OTHER AIRPORT PROPERTY</u>		
				<u>APPROACH AND TRANSITIONAL SURFACES</u>		
					<u>OTHER LANDS WITHIN AIRPORT PLANNING BOUNDARY</u>	
<u>AGRICULTURAL USES</u>						
Truck and Specialty Crops		0	0	0	0	
Field Crops		0	0	0	0	
Pasture and Rangeland		0	0	0	0	
Orchard and Vineyards		X	X	0	0	
Dry Farm and Grain		0	0	0	0	
Tree Farms, Landscape Nurseries and Greenhouses		0	0	C	0	
Fish Farms		X	X	0	0	
Feed Lots and Stockyards		X	X	0	0	
Poultry Farms		X	X	C	0	
Dairy Farms		X	X	C	0	
<u>NATURAL USES</u>						
Fish and Game Reserves		X	X	0	0	
Land Reserves and Open Space		0	0	0	0	
Flood and Geological Hazard Areas		0	0	0	0	
Waterways: Rivers, Creeks, Canals, Swamps, Bays, Lakes		0	0	0	0	
<u>RESIDENTIAL & INSTITUTIONAL</u>						
Rural Residential - 10 acres or more		X	X	C	0	
Suburban Residential - 20,000 sq. ft. to 10 acre lots		X	X	X	0	
Urban Single Family - under 20,000 sq. ft. lots		X	X	X	0	
Multi Family		X	X	X	0	
Mobile Home Parks		X	X	X	0	
Schools, Colleges and Universities		X	X	X	C	
Hospitals		C	C	X	0	
Churches		X	X	X	0	
<u>RECREATIONAL</u>						
Golf Course		0	0	0	0	
Parks		0	0	0	0	
Playgrounds and Picnic Areas		0	0	0	0	
Athletic Fields		X	X	X	0	
Riding Stables and Trails		X	X	0	0	
Marinas		0	0	0	0	
Tennis Courts		0	0	0	0	

0 = COMPATIBLE

X = PROHIBITED

C = CONDITIONALLY APPROVABLE

USESAREAS

1. AIRPORT BUILDING AREA

2. OTHER AIRPORT AREA

3. APPROACH AND TRANSITIONA.
SURFACES4. OTHER LANDS WITHIN
AIRPORT PLANNING
BOUNDARY

Outdoor Theatres	X	X	X	0
Swimming Pools	0	0	0	0
Fairgrounds and Race Tracks	X	X	X	0

COMMERCIAL USES

Aircraft Sales and Repairs	0	0	0	0
Flying Schools	C	C	C	0
Hotels and Motels	C	C	X	0
Shopping Centers	C	C	X	0
Banks	C	C	X	0
Gas Stations	C	C	X	0
Auto Storage and Parking	0	0	0	0
Office Buildings	C	C	C	0
Theaters and Auditoriums	X	X	X	0
Public Buildings	C	C	C	0
Taxi, Bus and Terminals	0	0	X	0
Memorial Parks	X	X	X	0
Pet Cemeteries	X	X	X	0
Restaurants and Food Take-Outs	C	C	C	0
Retail Stores	C	C	C	0
Truck Terminals	0	0	0	0
Other Service Uses	C	C	C	0

INDUSTRIAL

Research Laboratories	C	C	C	0
Warehouses	0	0	0	0
Aircraft Factories	0	0	C	0
Air Freight Terminals	0	0	0	0
Non-air Related Manufacturing	C	C	C	0
Rail Sidings	0	0	0	0
Other Transportation Parks	0	0	0	0
Petroleum and Chemical Products				
Bulk Storage	C	C	C	0

UTILITIES

Reservoirs	C	C	0	0
Water Treatment	C	C	0	0
Sewage Disposal	C	C	0	0
Petroleum and Chemical Products				
Bulk Storage	C	C	C	0
Electrical Plants	C	C	C	0
Power Lines	C	C	C	0

0 = COMPATIBLEX = PROHIBITEDC = CONDITIONALLY APPROVABLE

APPENDIX C
BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Environmental Business Plan (EBP) describes the status, management, response strategy, schedule, and action items related to the ongoing environmental restoration program at the former Naval Auxiliary Landing Field (NALF), Crows Landing, Stanislaus County, California. The facility is now known as the NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility and will be referred to as the facility throughout this document. The Navy's environmental restoration program supports full restoration of the facility, which is necessary to meet the requirements for property transfer. This EBP updates the NALF Crows Landing BRAC Business Plan (EBP) dated 21 February 1997. This EBP includes brief descriptions of environmental restoration program sites, highlights cleanup progress, and serves as a periodic report from the BRAC Cleanup Team (BCT) to Navy headquarters, Congress, and the public. Items addressed in this report are specifically targeted to reuse, funding, and environmental commitments for the restoration of the facility.

The former NALF Crows Landing was commissioned in May 1943 and has served primarily as an auxiliary air field for operations from Naval Air Station (NAS), Moffett Field and other Navy facilities in the general area, as well as serving other federal and state agencies, including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Ames Research Center, located at Moffett Field. NALF Crows Landing was retained as a federal facility for use by NASA in July 1994. The terms of the Navy and NASA agreement, including the Navy's responsibilities for environmental restoration, are described in the memorandum of understanding between the two parties dated December 22, 1992. Compliance issues relevant to daily operations are not discussed in this EBP because the facility is currently operated by NASA.

The following sections of this EBP update the reuse status and environmental cleanup activities for the time period from 1997 through 2000, summarize the milestones reached, and identify target completion dates for future activities. Additionally, major execution plans for the next calendar year are discussed.

REUSE STATUS

Operation and ownership of the facility were transferred to NASA on July 1, 1994 and the facility is now known as the NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility. The Navy, however, continues to maintain responsibility for cleaning up contamination from historical Navy operations. NASA is responsible for future property reuse decisions. NASA is also committed to following proper environmental requirements while making reuse decisions.

Stanislaus County has expressed an interest in obtaining the facility, and in 1999, NASA was authorized by legislative act to transfer the facility to the County. The County intends to use

the facility as a regional agricultural products and cargo distribution center. Detailed reuse plans, however, have not yet been issued.

HISTORICAL AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The former NALF Crows Landing is located in Stanislaus County, California, approximately 80 miles southeast of San Francisco as shown on Figure 1. It covers approximately 1,520 acres in the northwestern part of the San Joaquin Valley between the towns of Patterson and Crows Landing. NALF Crows Landing was commissioned in May 1943 and originally served as a training field during World War II. The facility was largely inactive following World War II until the early 1950's, when the facility was used for fleet carrier landing practice during the Korean War. Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, the facility was also used for practice operations by the Navy, Air Force, Army, and Coast Guard. The facility was also used for paradrop practice by the Air Guard Rescue and as a research and development site by NASA.

The facility includes two runways and several support structures: a control tower, administration building, a club and exchange building, motor pool and public works shops, storage facilities, and a NASA research center. Most of the facilities are no longer in use, except for several storage buildings. A substantial portion of the base property and most of the surrounding area is used for agriculture.

Table 1. Historical Real Estate Acquisition and Disposal Information

Estate Acquisition	Date of Acquisition or Transfer	Comments
Fee 803.63 acres	12 July 1943	Establishment of airfield
Fee 113.98 acres	22 September 1958	Extension of runways
Fee 72.8 acres	22 January 1959	Flight clearance
Fee 536.99 acres	18 April 1962	Additional aviation facilities
Total: 1527.4 acres		
	1527.4 acres transferred to NASA in 1994	

Environmental contamination at the facility has resulted from refuse disposal, aircraft and vehicle maintenance, fire training activities, and fuel storage. Contaminated or potentially contaminated sites are identified as either Installation Restoration Program (IRP) or Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program sites. Figures 2 and 3 show IRP and UST site locations, survey sites are shown on Figure 4, and the Administration Area Plume is shown on Figure 5. The environmental condition of property (ECP) and ECP categories are described in Tables 2A (Soil) and 2B (Groundwater). ECP categories 1 through 4 are considered suitable for transfer and these areas are shown on Figure 6. Special features, including wetlands and flood zones, are shown on Figure 7.

Table 2A. Environmental Condition of Property (ECP) - SOIL

ECP Category	Approximate Number of Acres	Comments
1 Areas where no release or disposal of hazardous substances or petroleum products (including migration) has occurred.	1398.15	Includes agricultural lease area, taxiways, and runways
2 Areas where only release or disposal of petroleum products has occurred.	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UST Cluster 1 (2 acres) • UST Cluster 2 (1 acre) • UST 109 (0.5 acre) • UST 117 (0.5 acre) • UST CL-4, UST CL-5, UST CL-6, UST CL-40, UST CL-101, UST CL-102, UST CL-138, UST CL-147 (8 sites at 0.25 acre per site = 2 acres)
3 Areas of contamination below action levels.	3.25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site 10 (1 acre) • Site 13 (0.25 acre) • Site 18 (2 acres)
4 Areas where all remedial action has been taken.	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site 12 (1 acre) • Site 14 (1 acre) • Site 16 (1 acre)
5 Areas of known contamination with removal and/or remedial action underway.	117	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site 11 (11 acres – under revision as geophysical data are evaluated) • Site 17 (40 acres – vadose zone release only) • Sewer System (66 acres (20000 LF of sewer pipeline x 100 foot wide zone around pipelines = 46 acres plus 20 acres for current and former impoundment areas))
6 Areas of known contamination where required response actions have not been implemented.	0	
7 Areas that are unevaluated or that require further evaluation.	0	
TOTAL	1527.4	

Table 2B. Environmental Condition of Property (ECP) - GROUNDWATER

ECP Category	Approximate Number of Acres	Comments
1 Areas where no release or disposal of hazardous substances or petroleum products (including migration) has occurred.	1399.4	Includes agricultural lease area, taxiways, and runways
2 Areas where only release or disposal of petroleum products has occurred.	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UST Cluster 2 (GW Plume) – 1 acre • Site 11 petroleum release – 20 acres • Sewer system petroleum release – 7 acres
3 Areas of contamination below action levels.	0	
4 Areas where all remedial action has been taken.	0	
5 Areas of known contamination with removal and/or remedial action underway.	100	Site 17-Administration Area Plume (70 acres) Sewer System Releases to Groundwater (estimated at 30 acres)
6 Areas of known contamination where required response actions have not been implemented.	0	
7 Areas that are unevaluated or that require further evaluation.	0	
TOTAL	1527.4	

Several areas of groundwater contamination have been identified. Groundwater is located approximately 50 feet below ground surface beneath much of the installation. Groundwater elevations are influenced by pumping from nearby irrigation wells. The largest area of groundwater contamination, the Administration Area Plume, is located near the east-central section of the facility (shown on Figure 5).

The Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Cleanup Team (BCT) conducted meetings and/or site visits during the Year 2000 on the days shown in Table 3. Participants at BCT meetings included Navy, DTSC, RWQCB, Stanislaus County, and NASA representatives.

Table 3. BCT Meetings Conducted during Calendar Year 2000.

Date of Meeting	Comments
20 January 2000	
23 February 2000	
16 March 2000	
24 May 2000	
12 July 2000	The meeting which was held at the Stanislaus County offices included a site visit to the facility.
30 August 2000	
26 September 2000	Conference Call
25 October 2000	

Floodplains

The following information was extracted from the Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (NASA, June 1999).

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map, most of the facility is located in Flood Zone C, an area with minimal potential for flooding. On the western side of the facility, a small area adjacent to Little Salado Creek is designated as Flood Zone A, a zone that is expected to experience flooding during a 100-year storm. The remainder of the creek channel and the majority of the airfield are located in Flood Zone B, an area expected to experience flooding during a 500-year storm or flooding with average depths less than one foot from a 100-year storm. A sediment basin for irrigation runoff is located on the northeastern corner of the property. Effluent from this pond and runoff from the adjacent areas eventually discharge into the Marshall Road Basin.

Wetlands

The following information was extracted from the Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (NASA, June 1999).

There are 34.5 acres of wetlands on the facility, including 2.2 acres of former sewage impoundments at the northeastern section of the facility, a 6.8-acre siltation pond adjacent to Highway 33, 18.5 acres encompassing the Delta-Mendota Canal, 5 acres in the Little Salado Creek area, and a 2-acre wildlife area.

Natural Resources

The following information was extracted from the Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (NASA, June 1999).

The predominant type of vegetation at the site is agriculturally related, with the balance consisting primarily of maintained grassland. None of the original perennial grassland habitat remains. Irrigated crops grown on the site include sugar beets, peas, beans, tomatoes, spinach, grains, and melons. Palmate-bracted bird's beak, soft birds beak, bearded allocarva, delta coyote thistle, spiny-petaled coyote thistle, and diamond-petaled California poppy are the sensitive plant species that have a potential to occur at the site.

In February and October 1993, San Francisco State University and the Navy conducted an endangered species survey. The survey focused on the tri-colored blackbird, the blister beetle, and the giant garter snake. Because no evidence of these species was found, no federally-listed or candidate threatened or endangered species are known to inhabit the facility.

Historical Buildings

The following information was extracted from the Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (NASA, June 1999).

All buildings and structures at the facility have been evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Navy determined that the World War II buildings and structures do not qualify for listing on the National Register because of their altered appearance and setting. Moreover, NASA determined that no buildings, structures, or objects at the facility have historical significance from the Cold War perspective.

Environmental Restoration Program

IRP Sites and UST Sites are shown on Figures 2 and 3, respectively. Tables 4 and 5 provide information on the regulatory status and planned budgets for the sites. A preliminary schedule is presented as Exhibit 1, photographs of selected sites are presented as Exhibit 2, and copies of no further action decision documents are presented as Exhibit 3.

Installation Restoration Program (IRP) Sites

Eight (8) sites have been investigated under the Installation Restoration Program (IRP), and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region provide oversight for the IRP. The following paragraphs provide a brief description of each of the eight (8) IRP sites. Six (6) of the sites have achieved no further action status and two sites require further action as of late calendar year 2000.

IRP Site 10 – Rubble Disposal Area

IRP Site 10 is located in the southern section of the facility near the south end of the north-south runways. The site was reportedly used for the disposal of building demolition debris, including scrap lumber, drywall, wire, and piping, in the early 1950's. The debris was placed in a pit at the site and burned. Today, no visible evidence of the debris remains. The Final Remedial Investigation Report was completed in 1997.

Status Update: IRP Site 10 was addressed in the no action Record of Decision of October 1999. The ROD was signed by the State of California, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Navy.

IRP Site 11 – Disposal Pits Area

IRP Site 11 was used from the 1960's to approximately 1982 for the disposal of facility refuse including office trash, kitchen waste, scrap metal, and empty paint and pesticide containers. Pits were excavated at the site, refuse was placed in the pits and was burned. Additionally, the *Initial Assessment Study* of 1984 reported that ordnance material from the practice bombing ranges was burned and disposed of at a separate pit at Site 11. No visual evidence of the pits remains except one elongated surface depression at one former pit site. The approximate area of the disposal pits is 6 acres. Low levels of extractable petroleum hydrocarbons were detected in groundwater monitoring wells at Site 11.

Status Update: A Remedial Investigation was completed at IRP Site 11 in 1996. Field investigations included soil borings, sampling of groundwater, and soil gas sampling. Groundwater monitoring activities were conducted for several quarters. Geophysical surveys were conducted during November 2000 in order to delineate disposal pit boundaries, and the survey investigation area encompassed approximately 11 acres. The feasibility study is in the process of being revised in late calendar year 2000.

IRP Site 12 – Auto Maintenance Shop Area

IRP Site 12 included the facility's auto maintenance garage, the waste bowser area, vehicle parts wash rack pad, and a pesticide mixing area. Building 138 is located within the site boundary. Low levels of extractable petroleum hydrocarbons were detected in the soil. The Final Remedial Investigation Report was completed in 1997.

Underground Storage Tank (UST) 138, a 3,000-gallon gasoline storage tank, was removed from the site in 1994 and UST Site 138 was addressed under the UST program. Another tank (UST 138A) that was previously removed, may have been the source of petroleum hydrocarbon contamination near the wash rack. Petroleum hydrocarbon-impacted soils were removed by excavating to a depth of approximately 20 feet below ground surface.

Status Update: IRP Site 12 was addressed in the no action Record of Decision of October 1999. The ROD was signed by the State of California, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Navy.

IRP Site 13 – TACAN Transformer Spill Area

IRP Site 13 includes a concrete pad with three transformers located adjacent to Building 143, the TACAN transmitter building. A release of oil from a transformer occurred during a transformer fire in 1962. No polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB)-impacted soils were identified during soil sampling conducted during the SI. Pesticides and metals concentrations were evaluated and were found to be comparable to concentrations in nearby agricultural fields. The Final Remedial Investigation Report was completed in 1997.

Status Update: IRP Site 13 was addressed in the no action Record of Decision of October 1999. The ROD was signed by the State of California, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Navy.

IRP Site 14- Fire Training Area

IRP Site 14, an unlined pit that was used during the period from approximately 1943 through 1987, comprises an area of approximately ½ acre. During a typical fire training exercise, approximately 200 to 300 gallons of jet fuel, often mixed with used crankcase oil and solvents, were ignited; the fire was extinguished with water. Contaminated soils were excavated from the site in 1991. The Final Remedial Investigation Report was completed in 1997.

Status Update: IRP Site 14 was addressed in the no action Record of Decision of October 1999. The ROD was signed by the State of California, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Navy.

IRP Site 16 – Pesticide Rinse Area

IRP Site 16, the pesticide rinse area, comprises an area of approximately 1/2 acre, where pesticides were mixed and spray containers were cleaned at a concrete pad. Building 150, a pump building for the former water supply system, is located within the site. Elevated levels of arsenic were identified in soils, and soils were removed from the site. The Final Remedial Investigation Report was completed in 1997.

Status Update: IRP Site 16 was addressed in the no action Record of Decision of October 1999. The ROD was signed by the State of California, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Navy.

IRP Site 17 – Demolished Hangars Area

IRP Site 17, the former site of two aircraft hangars and a maintenance building, comprises an area of approximately 11 acres. A release of carbon tetrachloride to groundwater was identified during the RI and was evaluated during subsequent investigations and pilot studies. Pilot studies utilizing bioventing, soil vapor extraction (SVE), air sparging, groundwater extraction, and groundwater injection were conducted during 1998 and 1999. Carbon tetrachloride was identified in the vapor stream during the SVE pilot study at a maximum concentration of 14 parts per million by volume (ppmv) and in discrete soil gas samples at concentrations of more than 10,000 parts per billion by volume (ppbv). The carbon tetrachloride release to groundwater extends to a depth of approximately 260 feet.

Groundwater is located approximately 50 feet below ground surface, and a vertically downward gradient, possibly attributable to pumping from nearby irrigation wells, has been identified. The nearest irrigation wells are located several hundred feet from IRP Site 17.

During July 2000, water samples were collected from seven wells in the IRP Site 17/UST Cluster 1 vicinity, and solvents (acetone, MEK, MIBK) and ethylene dibromide were identified in some of the samples. The results of the July 2000 sampling event indicated that the chlorinated solvent plume and other non-chlorinated solvents had commingled with the petroleum release associated with UST Cluster 1. The BCT determined that the IRP Site 17 plume should be expanded to include the releases associated with UST Cluster 1, and the combined plume is known as the Administration Area Plume. The Administration Area Plume includes the groundwater releases from IRP Site 17, UST Site 117, and UST Cluster 1, and the area of the plume is estimated at 70 acres.

Status Update: The feasibility study is in the process of being revised as of late calendar year 2000. A time-critical removal action to extract contaminated groundwater from a suspected source area – a former dry well within the UST Cluster 1 boundary – was implemented in late calendar year 2000.

IRP Site 18 – Firing Range

IRP Site 18 includes two areas: an area adjacent to Little Salado Creek where live ammunition was found (two 20-millimeter shells) and an earthen berm, located adjacent to the northeast side of the northwest-southeast runway, that was used as a range. The berm, which is identified as an airplane target range on historical installation maps, has been removed. A Remedial Investigation was conducted to evaluate the residual metals concentrations at the berm area, and metals concentrations were found to be comparable to background levels. The Final Remedial Investigation Report was completed in 1997.

Status Update: IRP Site 18 was addressed in the no action Record of Decision of October 1999. The ROD was signed by the State of California, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Navy.

Former and Current Sewer System

The sewer investigation includes the former sewage treatment plant located near the NASA modular structures, more than 5,000 feet of sewer trunk lines, several lateral lines, the original sewage impoundments and septic tanks, and the processing tank and settling ponds near the northern end of the installation. The draft sewer investigation report, issued in 1999, identified releases of petroleum hydrocarbons and metals in soil, soil gas, and/or groundwater samples collected at various locations.

Status Update: Geophysical surveys were conducted in the vicinity of the former septic tanks and other sewage plant structures during November 2000. Videographic surveying activities along sections of the sewer pipeline are planned to be conducted during January 2001. Releases to soil and groundwater will be further evaluated during calendar year 2001.

The current and former sewage system facilities will be included with IRP Site 11 and these facilities are tentatively identified as Site 11 A.

Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program Sites

Seventeen (17) UST or Former UST Sites have been identified and addressed in the UST Program at the facility. The Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region provides oversight for the UST Program projects. Eight (8) UST sites have achieved no further action status, and remediation activities are in progress at nine (9) UST sites as of late calendar year 2000.

UST Cluster 1 Tanks CL-1, CL-2, and CL-3

Three concrete 50,000-gallon storage tanks were located at UST Cluster 1. The tanks were used for storage of jet fuel (JP4 and JP5) and possibly Avgas, were taken out of service by 1990, and were removed from the site in 1994. The tank excavation was approximately 19 to 22 feet deep, and the excavation was filled with pea gravel and clean soil following the removal of the tanks. Petroleum hydrocarbons and benzene are present in the vadose zone and in the ground water at this site. Acetone, MEK, MIBK, and ethylene dibromide were identified in the groundwater beneath UST Cluster 1 during the July 2000 sampling activities. A suspected source of the acetone and other contaminants is a former dry well located west of former tank CL-2.

The impacted groundwater extends to an approximate depth of 150 feet below ground surface. Groundwater is located approximately 50 feet below ground surface, and a vertically downward gradient, possibly attributable to pumping from nearby irrigation wells, has been identified.

Status Update: Fifty-four vapor extraction wells were constructed in early 2000, and soil vapor extraction (SVE) testing activities began in August 2000. Forty-seven (47) of the vapor extraction wells had been tested as of 8 December 2000. Groundwater sampling that was conducted prior to the implementation of the SVE tests resulted in the identification of non-chlorinated solvents in the groundwater beneath UST Cluster 1. The groundwater beneath UST Cluster 1 is being addressed as part of the Administration Area Plume, an Installation Restoration Program site.

UST Cluster 2 Tanks CL-7, CL-8, and CL-9

Three concrete 210,000-gallon storage tanks were located at UST Cluster 2. The tanks were used for storage of jet fuel (JP4 and JP5) and were removed from the site in 1994. The tank excavation was approximately 22 to 24 feet deep, and the excavation was filled with pea gravel and clean soil following the removal of the tanks. Residual petroleum hydrocarbons were identified in the soils and groundwater beneath the former tank excavations.

Status Update: A soil vapor extraction/bioventing system and an air sparging treatment system were constructed during 1999 for remediation of the release at UST Cluster 2. System start-up activities were conducted during early calendar year 2000, and the systems operated for approximately 4 months until June 2000. Verification of residual levels of petroleum hydrocarbons in soil and groundwater is planned for late calendar year 2000.

UST CL-40

UST CL-40, a 1,500-gallon tank, was removed in 1991. Releases to the vadose zone were identified during investigations conducted from 1991 – 1999. UST CL-40 is located within the investigation boundary of UST Cluster 1, and the site overlies the Administration Area Plume which is being addressed under the Installation Restoration Program.

Status Update: Data evaluation and planning for closure were in progress as of late calendar year 2000.

UST 109

UST 109, a 1,000-gallon fuel oil tank located on the northern side of Building 109, was removed from the site in 1988. Twelve bioventing wells and twelve monitoring points were installed at the site for a passive bioventing pilot test in 1997. The maximum petroleum hydrocarbon concentration as diesel at UST Site 109 is approximately 11,195 milligrams per

kilogram at a depth of approximately 20 feet. One groundwater monitoring well is located at the site.

Status Update: Groundwater was sampled in early November 2000 and soil sampling activities were completed 30 November 2000. The evaluation of data and potential testing and/or remediation activities will continue in the year 2001.

UST 117

UST 117, a 1,200-gallon gasoline tank, was removed in 1988. Releases to the vadose zone and to the groundwater were identified during investigations conducted from 1989 through 1999. UST Site 117 overlies the Administration Area Plume, which is being addressed under the Installation Restoration Program.

Status Update: Data evaluation and planning for closure were in progress as of late calendar year 2000.

USTs CL-4, CL-5, and CL-6

USTs CL-4, CL-5, and CL-6 were fuel recovery tanks associated with the large fuel storage tanks at UST Cluster 1. Each tank had a capacity of 2,500 gallons. The tanks were removed in April 1991, a closure report was submitted to the RWQCB in July 1998, and closure was achieved on 28 September 1998.

Status Update: No further action status was achieved on 28 September 1998.

UST CL-101

UST CL-101, a 2,000-gallon fuel storage tank, was located adjacent to the control tower (Building 101). The steel tank was removed in April 1991, a closure report was submitted to RWQCB in July 1998, and closure was achieved on 28 September 1998.

Status Update: No further action status was achieved on 28 September 1998.

UST CL-102

UST CL-102, a 370-gallon fuel storage tank, was located adjacent to the radio receiving station (Building 102). The steel tank was removed in August 1994 and a closure report was submitted to the RWQCB in July 1998.

Status Update: No further action status was achieved on 28 September 1998.

USTs CL-138 and CL-138A

UST CL-138 and UST CL-138A were located within the investigation boundary of IRP Site 12 – the Auto Maintenance Shop Area. UST CL-138, a 3,000-gallon fuel tank located near the wash rack at Building 138, was removed in 1994 along with adjacent fuel pump and pump island. The site was investigated, a closure report was submitted to the RWQCB in July 1998, and closure was achieved on 28 September 1998.

UST CL-138A was removed previously and the tank site was investigated during the remedial investigation of IRP Site 12.

Status Update: No further action status was achieved for UST CL-138 on 28 September 1998 and no further action status was achieved for UST CL-138A in October 1999 when the no action Record of Decision for IRP Site 12 was signed.

UST CL-147

UST CL-147, a 1,000-gallon steel fuel storage tank, was removed in April 1991. A site investigation was conducted, a closure report was submitted to the RWQCB in July 1998, and closure was achieved on 28 September 1998.

Status Update: No further action status was achieved on 28 September 1998.

Basewide Environmental Restoration Programs

Closure of Abandoned Irrigation Wells

Historical records of water supply wells were acquired and reviewed. The California Department of Water Resources data and other records show several former and recently used irrigation and fire protection water supply wells that are located on or near the facility. Several existing wells extend through the Corcoran Clay layer. A work plan for the closure of two inactive water supply wells was completed in November 2000. A videographic survey of one inactive water supply well was completed in November 2000.

Surveys

Land surveys are planned for several areas in order to update the environmental restoration program and environmental condition of property maps.

Routine Groundwater Monitoring Program

Routine groundwater monitoring activities were conducted in November 2000. Twenty-two (22) wells at various sites, including IRP Sites 11 and 17, UST Clusters 1 and 2, and UST Sites 109 and 117, were sampled.

Environmental Restoration Program Highlights for the Year 2000

- Management of the environmental restoration program projects was transferred from Engineering Field Activity, West to Southwest Division in early 2000.
- BRAC Cleanup Team meetings were conducted on a routine basis.
- BRAC Cleanup Team site tour was conducted in July 2000.
- SVE and air sparging operations were conducted at UST Cluster 2.
- Vapor extraction wells were constructed and SVE testing activities were conducted at UST Cluster 1.
- Routine groundwater monitoring activities were conducted.
- Automated water level indicators were installed at selected groundwater wells.
- Time-critical removal actions were implemented to remove contaminated groundwater from the vicinity of a former dry well at UST Cluster 1.
- Videographic surveys of sections of sewer pipelines were conducted.
- Geophysical surveys of disposal areas at IRP Site 11 were conducted.

Execution:

- Procurement of services for revised Feasibility Study Report for Site 17 was completed.
- Procurement of services for revised Feasibility Study Report for Site 11 was initiated.
- Procurement of services for routine groundwater monitoring activities was completed.

Planned Goals for 2001

- Procurement of services for Proposed Plans and Records of Decision for Sites 11 and 17.
- Procurement of services for remediation and/or verification activities along the sewer pipeline, as necessary, and at the former sewage plant structures, as necessary.

Field Activities:

- Conduct routine groundwater monitoring activities.
- Verify extent of groundwater plume at IRP Site 17.
- Verify extent of disposal areas at Site 11.
- Verify conditions at various sewage system components.
- Conduct corrective actions at UST Cluster 1, UST Cluster 2, UST Site 109, UST 117, and UST Site CL-40.
- Conduct time-critical removal action for groundwater extraction at UST Cluster 1.

**Table 4. Status of Various Environmental Restoration Program Sites
Crows Landing Flight Facility**

Site ID	Type	Status	Description of NFA Decision Document	Site Name
<i>Work in Progress</i>				
Site 11	IRP	FS		Disposal Pits Area
Site 17	IRP	FS		Demolished Hangar Area
UST 117	UST	FS		UST 117 (former 1,200-gallon tank site with release to groundwater included within the investigation boundary of Site 17)
Sewer System	IRP	FA		Former and Current Sewer System
UST Cluster 1	UST	CA		Tanks CL-1, CL-2, CL-3 (each 50,000 gallons)
UST CL-40	UST	CA		UST CL-40 (former 1,500-gallon tank site located within UST Cluster 1 investigation boundary)
UST Cluster 2	UST	CA		Tanks CL-7, CL-8, and CL-9 (each 210,000 gallons)
UST 109	UST	CA		UST 109 (former 1,000-gallon tank site)
<i>No Further Action Sites</i>				
Site 10	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Rubble Disposal Area
Site 12	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Auto Maintenance Shop Area
Site 13	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	TACAN Transformer Spill Area
Site 14	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Fire Training Area
Site 16	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Pesticide Mixing Area
Site 18	IRP	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	Firing Range
UST CL-4	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-4
UST CL-5	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-5
UST CL-6	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-6
UST CL-101	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-101
UST CL-102	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-102
UST CL-138	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-138
UST CL-138A	UST	NFA	ROD dated October 1999	UST CL-138A (located within investigation boundary of Site 12)
UST CL-147	UST	NFA	RWQCB letter dated 28 September 1998	UST CL-147

ACRONYMS:

ROD:	Record of Decision
RWQCB:	Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region
FA:	Further Action
CA:	Corrective Action
FS:	Feasibility Study Phase
NFA:	No Further Action
RA:	Remedial Action

Table 5. Estimated Costs for Completion of Response Actions

Site ID	Site Description	Remaining Tasks	Estimated Cost to Complete (\$000)
Site 11	Disposal Pits Area	FS, Proposed Plan, ROD, RD, RA	\$6,000
Sewer System (Included with Site 11 as Site 11A)	Former and Current Sewer System	Investigation, Removal Actions (if required)	Included with Site 11
Site 17	Demolished Hangar Area	FS, Proposed Plan, ROD, RD, RA	\$7,000
UST 117	UST 117 (included within the investigation boundary of Site 17)	FS, Proposed Plan, ROD, RD, RA	Included in Site 17
UST Sites	UST Cluster 1: Tanks CL-1, CL-2, CL-3 (each 50,000 gallons) UST CL-40 (located within UST Cluster 1) UST 109 UST Cluster 2: Tanks CL-7, CL-8, and CL-9 (each 210,000 gallons)	Remediation	\$1,000 (Vadose Zone) GW Remediation at UST Cluster 1 is included in Site 17
TOTAL			\$14,000

References and/or Sources of Information:

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. 1999. Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility. June.

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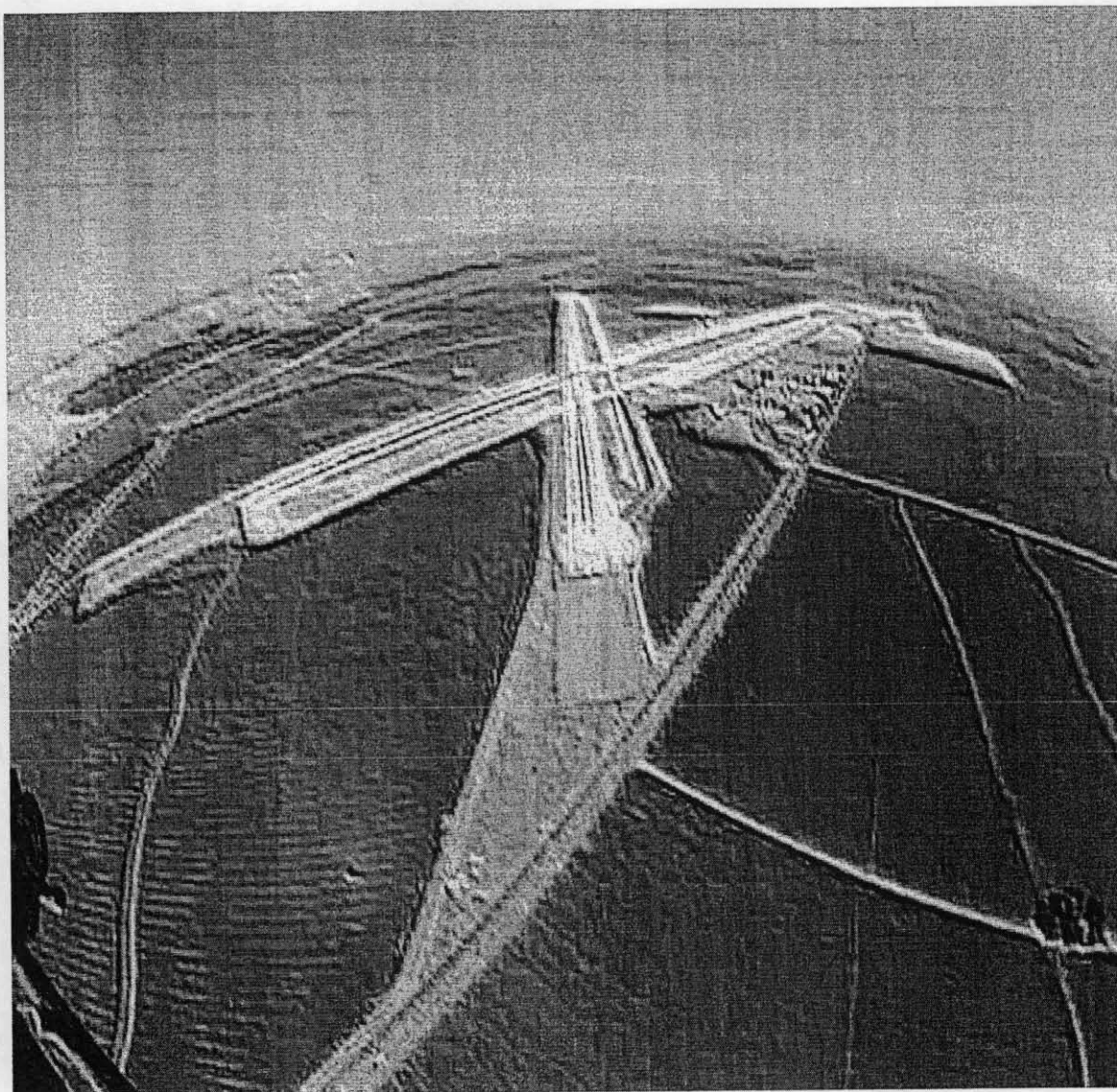
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**APPENDIX D
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR TRANSFER OF NASA CROWS LANDING
FLIGHT FACILITY**

Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility



NASA Ames Research Center
June 1999

Environmental Assessment for Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility

Lead Agency: NASA Ames Research Center

Cooperating Agency: General Services Administration

Proposed Action: Transfer of NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility to the General Services Administration as Excess Property

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Executive Summary	<i>i</i>
List of Acronyms	<i>ii</i>
List of Abbreviations	<i>ii</i>
List of Figures	<i>iii</i>
List of Tables	<i>iii</i>
1.0 Purpose and Need	<i>1</i>
2.0 Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives	<i>2</i>
2.1. Proposed Action: Transfer NASA Crows Landing to the Government Services Administration as Excess Property	<i>2</i>
2.2. Alternative 1: Transfer NASA Crows Landing to Stanislaus County	<i>2</i>
2.3. Alternative 2: No Action	<i>2</i>
3.0 Existing Environment	<i>2</i>
3.1. Geology & Hydrogeology	<i>2</i>
3.1.1. Regional Geology & Hydrogeology	<i>2</i>
3.1.2. Local Geology & Hydrogeology	<i>5</i>
3.2. Land Use	<i>6</i>
3.2.1. Airfield Operations	<i>6</i>
3.2.2. Support Facilities	<i>6</i>
3.2.3. Agriculture	<i>9</i>
3.3. Infrastructure	<i>9</i>
3.3.1. Utilities	<i>9</i>
3.3.2. Transportation	<i>9</i>
3.4. Social Environment	<i>10</i>
3.4.1. Community Demographics	<i>10</i>
3.4.2. Housing	<i>10</i>
3.4.3. Recreation	<i>10</i>
3.4.4. Schools	<i>10</i>
3.4.5. Medical Services	<i>10</i>
3.4.6. Facility Support Services	<i>11</i>
3.4.7. Labor Force and Income	<i>11</i>
3.5. Noise	<i>11</i>
3.6. Air Quality	<i>11</i>
3.6.1. Air Quality Standards	<i>11</i>
3.6.2. Emission Sources	<i>11</i>
3.7. Floodplains	<i>12</i>
3.8. Water Quality	<i>12</i>
3.8.1. Surface Water	<i>12</i>
3.8.2. Groundwater	<i>14</i>
3.9. Biological Resources	<i>14</i>
3.9.1. Wetlands	<i>14</i>
3.9.2. Vegetation	<i>14</i>
3.9.3. Wildlife	<i>14</i>

3.10. Cultural Resources	15
3.10.1. Archaeological Resources	15
3.10.2. Historic Buildings and Structures	15
3.11. Solid Waste	15
3.12. Toxic Substances	16
3.12.1. Asbestos	16
3.12.2. Lead Paint	16
3.12.3. Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)	16
3.12.4. Pesticides	16
3.13. Health and Safety	16
3.13.1. Airfields	16
3.13.2. Contaminated Sites	17
4.0 Environmental Impacts	18
4.1. Proposed Action	18
4.1.1. Geology & Hydrogeology	18
4.1.2. Land Use	18
4.1.3. Infrastructure	18
4.1.4. Social Environment	18
4.1.5. Noise	18
4.1.6. Air Quality	18
4.1.7. Floodplains	19
4.1.8. Water Quality	19
4.1.9. Biological Resources	19
4.1.10. Cultural Resources	19
4.1.11. Solid Waste	19
4.1.12. Toxic Substances	19
4.1.13. Health and Safety	19
4.2. Alternative 1	20
4.3. Alternative 2	20
5.0 Mitigation and Monitoring	20
6.0 List of Agencies and Individuals Contacted	21
7.0 List of Preparers	21
8.0 Comments and Responses	22
8.1. Oral Comments and Responses	22
8.1.1. Comment	22
8.1.2. Response	22
8.2. Written Comments and Responses	22
8.2.1. Comment	22
8.2.2. Response	22
9.0 List of References	23

Executive Summary

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Ames Research Center proposes to transfer NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility to the General Services Administration (GSA) through the standard Federal government process for excess property. By transferring the property, NASA will reduce costs. Currently, there are no operations being conducted at the facility.

The property transfer would occur in two phases. Phase I, to occur as soon as practicable, would include the uncontaminated parcels of land at the facility. The remaining parcels would be released once NASA, the Navy, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) determine that remedial actions for contaminated sites within these parcels are complete or have been demonstrated to be operating successfully.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) documents the environmental consequences of the proposed action and the following alternatives: (1) transfer of the property directly to Stanislaus County; and (2) "No Action". The No Action alternative involves continuing NASA ownership of Crows Landing Flight Facility.

This EA addresses only those impacts associated with the transfer of property to GSA. It does not address impacts related to future land use, which has not yet been determined. Once future land uses are proposed, GSA will address their impacts in subsequent review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

List of Acronyms

ACM	Asbestos Containing Material
AICUZ	Air Installation Compatible Use Zone
AST	Aboveground Storage Tank
BGS	Below Ground Surface
BRAC	Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CVRWQCB	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
dB	Decibel
DDD	Dichlorodiphenyldichloroethane
DDE	Dichlorodiphenyldichloroethene
DDT	Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EA	Environmental Assessment
EBS	Environmental Baseline Survey
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GSA	General Services Administration
IRP	Installation Restoration Program
MCL	Maximum Contaminant Level
NALF	Naval Auxiliary Landing Field
NAS	Naval Air Station
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NPS	Non-point source
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PCBs	Polychlorinated Biphenyls
RCD	West Stanislaus Resource Conservation District
STOL	Short take-off and Landing
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
UST	Underground Storage Tank

List Of Abbreviations

ha	hectare
km	kilometer
m	meter

List of Figures

Figure 1-1	NASA Crows Landing Location Map
Figure 1-2	Parcel Delineations, NASA Crows Landing
Figure 3-1	NASA Crows Landing, Regional Hydrogeologic Cross Section
Figure 3-2	Land Use at NASA Crows Landing
Figure 3-3	AICUZ, NALF Crows Landing

List of Tables

Table 1-1	Parcel Delineations
Table 3-1	IRP Sites

1.0 Purpose and Need

Based on a recommendation of the 1991 Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC), Congress decided that Naval Air Station (NAS), Moffett Field would no longer be operated by the active duty Navy. Therefore, custodial responsibility for Moffett NAS was transferred to NASA Ames Research Center in July 1994. At the same time, NASA assumed custody of the Crows Landing Naval Auxiliary Landing Field (NALF, see Figure 1-1). This transfer included all land, buildings, facilities, and infrastructure. Subsequently, Moffett NAS and NALF Crows Landing were renamed Moffett Federal Airfield and NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility (herein referred to as "Crows Landing").

Since accepting this property, NASA research operations at Crows Landing have been terminated. Because the agency continues to incur maintenance costs for the facility with no benefit, NASA proposes to divest itself of Crows Landing.

To facilitate this divestiture, NASA completed an Environmental Baseline Survey (EBS). Based on the EBS, the property transfer is proposed to occur in two phases. Phase I, to occur as soon as practicable, would include the following uncontaminated parcels of land: 2, 14, and 15 (see Figure 1-2, Table 1-1). The uncontaminated portion of Parcel 1, located to the west of the property transfer boundary line, would also be transferred in Phase I. Phase II would include the remainder of Parcel 1 in addition to Parcels 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 16, which have been deemed inappropriate for transfer at this time due to known or potential contamination. These parcels will be released once NASA, the Navy, DTSC, and the CVRWQCB determine that remedial actions for contaminated sites within these parcels are complete or have been demonstrated to be operating successfully.

Table 1-1: Parcel Delineations

Parcel Number	Description
Parcel 1	Agricultural Outlease Area
Parcel 2	Runway and Taxiway Areas located west of property transfer boundary (see Figure 1-2)
Parcel 3	Former and current sewer treatment systems
Parcel 4	Underground Storage Tank (UST) Cluster 2
Parcel 5	UST 109
Parcel 6	UST 117
Parcel 7	Demolished Hangars Area
Parcel 8	UST Cluster 1
Parcel 9	Auto Maintenance Shop Area
Parcel 10	Pesticide Rinse Area
Parcel 11	Fire Training Area
Parcel 12	Rubble Disposal Area
Parcel 13	Disposal Pits Area
Parcel 14	Firing Range Area
Parcel 15	TACAN Transformer Oil Spill Area
Parcel 16	Administration Area

2.0 Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.1. Proposed Action: Transfer NASA Crows Landing to the Government Services Administration as Excess Property

NASA proposes to transfer Crows Landing to GSA through the standard Federal government excess process. NASA initiates this process by declaring the property as excess. Subsequently, GSA facilitates transfer to another entity.

2.2. Alternative 1: Transfer NASA Crows Landing to Stanislaus County

In response to its formal letter of interest submitted on April 3, 1996, NASA considered transferring Crows Landing directly to Stanislaus County. Several bills were drafted in Congress to initiate this action. Although this alternative meets NASA's objective, it is not known whether the bill will be voted into law.

2.3. Alternative 2: No Action

Under the no action alternative, NASA would continue to incur the costs associated with maintaining Crows Landing. However, without a research mission at the site, this alternative is not in the best interest of NASA.

3.0 Existing Environment

3.1. Geology & Hydrogeology

The following information was obtained largely from Tetra Tech (1998).

3.1.1. Regional Geology & Hydrogeology

NASA Crows Landing is located in the San Joaquin Valley, which is a topographic and structural basin bounded to the east by the Sierra Nevada mountains and to the west by the Coast Range. The valley is filled with a thick sequence of marine and continental sedimentary rocks overlying a basement complex of Sierra Nevada granite rocks on the east and metamorphosed sediments and igneous rocks of the Franciscan Formation on the west. The thickness of sediments is thought to exceed 12,000 feet [3858 meters (m)] in the western part of the valley, including the area beneath Crows Landing.

Geologic units comprising the groundwater reservoir in the Crows Landing area include surficial deposits of the Pleistocene and Holocene age and the underlying Tulare Formation of Pliocene and Pleistocene age. The alluvial deposits are primarily overlapping alluvial fans composed of interbedded clay, silt, sand, and gravel, derived from the Coast Ranges to the west. The alluvial deposits are thought to be a maximum of 100 feet (30.5 m) thick.

The Tulare Formation is composed of beds and lenses of clay, sand and gravel derived from the Coast Ranges to the west and the Sierra Nevada to the east. The Corcoran Clay is a lacustrine deposit (lake bed sediments) that underlies much of the San Joaquin Valley. The unit is also referred to as the E-clay in some areas or the "blue clay" in many local well drilling reports. The Corcoran Clay acts as a confining bed separating a primarily unconfined aquifer above from a confined aquifer below.

The Tulare Formation is thought to be about 500 to 600 feet (152.4 to 182.9 m) thick near Crows Landing. The base of the formation cannot easily be distinguished from underlying units, but is generally considered to coincide with the base of the fresh groundwater reservoir. The top of the Corcoran Clay is about 230 to 270 feet (70.1 to 82.3 m) below ground surface (bgs) and averages about 65 feet (19.8 m) thick.

Groundwater reservoirs include a lower, confined water-bearing zone in the Tulare Formation below the Corcoran Clay, and an upper, primarily unconfined water-bearing zone contained in the Tulare Formation and alluvial deposits above the Corcoran Clay (see Figure 3-1). In the northwestern part of San Joaquin Valley, the regional trend of horizontal groundwater movement in both the upper and lower water-bearing zones is east to northeast, from the Coast Ranges to the San Joaquin River.

There has been no recent seismic activity near the facility. Furthermore, there are no known major active faults within the Central Valley. However, California is located in one of the most seismically active regions in the United States. The Hayward and Calaveras faults are located approximately thirty miles to the west. Additionally, minor faults known as the Ortigalita, Greenville, and Vernalis are located approximately 20 miles [32.2 kilometers (km)] to the west. Although these faults have not been active recently, they have a potential to cause a moderate earthquake that could be felt at Crows Landing.

Ground shaking caused by an earthquake occurring at a significant distance has the potential to induce structural damage at the site. In particular, older masonry buildings without reinforcement are at the greatest risk. However, the majority of buildings are metal frame or poured concrete, making significant earthquake damage unlikely. Moreover, liquefaction of the soil is improbable because of its high clay content.

3.1.2. Local Geology & Hydrogeology

According to a recent National Cooperative Soil Survey conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Crows Landing consists primarily of very deep, well-drained medium to fine textured alluvial soils. Soil Series include Capay, Vernalis, Stomar, and Zacharias and are classified by the NRCS as Land Capability Class I and II (Prime Farmland). These soils have few limitations for most crops grown in the area.

Logs for soil borings completed at the site indicate that three principal lithologies dominate in the subsurface beneath the base. These principal lithologies include sandy silt with clay, silty fine-grained sand, and medium-grained sand. Coarse-grained sand and pebble-sized gravel occur less frequently. Individual lithologic units are not continuous across sites and generally cannot be traced even between closely spaced borings.

Approximately 55 groundwater-monitoring wells and the base water supply well are used to monitor groundwater quality and flow characteristics at the facility. Currently, depth to groundwater ranges from approximately 35 feet to 58 feet (10.7 to 17.7 m) bgs. Water levels beneath the base vary seasonally by several feet in response to precipitation and irrigation well pumping. Overall, however, groundwater levels have decreased approximately 20 feet (6.1 m) since 1988.

Due to pumping of irrigation wells, groundwater flow patterns in the upper water-bearing zone near the southern and western sides of the site are usually reversed relative to the northeasterly regional pattern across the main part of the base. In the summer, the water table depression caused by these wells enlarges. In addition, groundwater mounding may occur as a result of irrigation water percolating to the upper water-bearing zone. Groundwater near the northeastern corner of the base usually flows to the east or northeast throughout the year, coinciding with the expected regional flow pattern.

3.2. Land Use

The following information was obtained largely from Tetra Tech (1998) and NASA (1993).

NASA Crows Landing is located in Stanislaus County, CA, approximately 80 miles southeast of San Francisco (see Figure 1-1). The facility encompasses 1,528 acres [618.4 hectares (ha)] on the west side of the San Joaquin River Valley and is located between Highway 33 and Interstate 5, two miles north of the town of Crows Landing and four miles south of Patterson. Access to the station is provided by Bell Road, located south of Marshall Road. Primary land use at the site is related to airfield operations, support facilities, and agriculture (see Figure 3-2).

Surrounding areas are predominately agricultural with scattered small urban and farm-oriented centers. Because a large portion of the facility is actively farmed, land use at Crows Landing is compatible with the General Agricultural status designated by Stanislaus County's General Plan.

3.2.1. Airfield Operations

The Crows Landing airfield consists of two concrete runways in an "X" configuration. Runway 17/35 and Runway 12/30 are 8,000 feet (2438 m) and 7,000 feet (2134 m) long, respectively. Both runways accommodate single-tire aircraft with wheel loading up to 59,000 pounds (26,762 m).

To reduce aircraft hazards north and south of Runway 17/35, easements equaling approximately 210 acres are located at both ends of Runway 12/30. These easements prohibit construction of buildings or structures and restrict the use of land to agriculture (excluding orchards). Furthermore, the government maintains the right to remove trees and structures that may inhibit safe takeoffs and landings.

NASA ceased airfield operations at the facility in Fall 1997. Previous activities included advanced flight technology research and development, in addition to data collection for experimental aircraft. Test facilities include short take-off and landing areas (STOL), acoustic analysis arrays, and high precision laser, radar and video tracking systems.

3.2.2. Support Facilities

A control tower, administrative offices, maintenance areas, and fire/rescue facilities are located east of the runways. The north end of the facility includes a NASA satellite flight research site and test area comprised of temporary and mobile buildings. Hangar space, aircraft maintenance, and overnight lodging are not available on-site.

3.2.3. Agriculture

Approximately 1,100 acres (445.2 ha) of the remaining land at Crows Landing is leased to a private tenant for agriculture. As a condition of the lease, the tenant provides maintenance at the site including fence repair, weed and pest control, irrigation management, and debris removal.

3.3. Infrastructure

The following information was obtained largely from Tetra Tech (1998) and NASA (1993).

3.3.1. Utilities

Electricity is delivered to the site by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) via a 12 kilovolt aboveground main service feeder running parallel to Ike Crow Road. An emergency generator on the first floor of Building 101, the Control Tower, supplies power during emergencies. PG&E also supplies natural gas to the site, while Pacific Bell provides telephone service.

Due to high levels of nitrates, the base water supply does not meet applicable drinking water standards. Consequently, bottled water is furnished for drinking. The water supply is used only for activities that do not involve ingestion or skin contact, including fire suppression, irrigation, and sewer flow. Besides groundwater, the Delta-Mendota Canal, the California Aqueduct, and the San Joaquin River provide water for irrigation.

The sanitary sewer collection and disposal system at Crows Landing is composed of a concrete trunk line parallel to Bell Road and a lateral line running westward to Building 40. The sanitary sewer system runs northward to an inoperable processing tank (Imhoff tank) and three unlined settling ponds at the northern end of the installation. Observations during environmental field activities revealed that the sewer pipelines contained little or no water, indicating that current volumes are insufficient to reach the Imhoff tank.

Stormwater runoff flows through a series of ditches and pipes along the runways into Little Salado Creek. This creek, which leads to a siltation pond at the northern end of the base, is also used to collect irrigation tailwater from the surrounding farms. Water in the siltation pond is reused to irrigate fields at the northern end of the base or discharged through a culvert under Highway 33, into a storm drain along Marshall Road, and finally into the San Joaquin River.

A total of 17 underground storage tanks (USTs) and seven aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) were used at various times by NASA and the Navy at Crows Landing. All of these tanks have been removed. The only two remaining tanks are two ASTs of unknown capacity that are owned by the farmer leasing the agricultural parcel (Parcel #1). These tanks are used to store fuel for irrigation pumps.

3.3.2. Transportation

Running along the eastern side of the facility from Fink Road, past the former main gate near Ike Crow Road, and to the northern gate at Highway 33, Bell Road provides primary access to the site (see Figure 1-1). The area is also accessible from Davis Road to the west via a service road to Buildings 102 and 43. Regional access to Crows Landing is provided by Interstate 5, which runs north and south along the base of the Diablo Mountains, approximately three miles west of the airfield. Local access is provided by Highway 33 east of the base.

Two transcontinental railroads, Santa Fe and Southern Pacific, serve Stanislaus County. The county airport is located approximately 25 miles (40.2 km) northeast of the site, providing daily flights to San Francisco, San Jose, and Los Angeles. Modesto airport also provides private air services, air taxi, charter, and air cargo services. Furthermore, the Stanislaus County Transit system offers bus service to the area.

3.4. Social Environment

The following information was obtained largely from SCEDC (1991) and City of Modesto, California.

3.4.1. Community Demographics

The most populous cities within 10 miles of Crows Landing are Patterson and Newman, with 1994 populations of 9,577 and 5,668 respectively. The ethnic background is evenly divided between Hispanic and White residents. Stanislaus County's 1994 population exceeded 412,000 with approximately 180,000 residents in the City of Modesto. The projected county population in 2000 is 517,600.

3.4.2. Housing

Western Stanislaus County offers a variety of housing for sale and rent at well below the costs of more urban regions of California. This includes every type and style of housing from rural ranchettes to small starter homes and garden apartments. The median home price in the area was approximately \$125,000 in 1992.

3.4.3. Recreation

No recreational facilities are currently operating at the facility. However, several are nearby. These include two municipal parks in the City of Patterson, various facilities operated by the Patterson School District, the Frank Raines Regional Park, and a municipal swimming pool in the City of Newman.

3.4.4. Schools

The Patterson School District, which includes NASA Crows Landing, has seven facilities including one high school, one junior high, and five elementary schools. These facilities serve approximately 3,000 students. Approximately 64% of students are Hispanic, with the majority of the balance being White. A small number of Asian American and African American students also attend these schools.

California State University, Stanislaus, is located within Turlock, approximately 20 miles (32.2 km) east of the site. Modesto Junior College is also located with commuting distance.

3.4.5. Medical Services

Medical services are available at Del Puerto Hospital in Patterson. Major injuries are usually transferred for long term care to one of two major medical facilities in Modesto. Additional facilities are available in Newman and Turlock.

3.4.6. Facility Support Services

Local police provide onsite security services through an inter-agency agreement between NASA and the City of Patterson. Fire protection at the site is maintained through mutual aid agreements with the cities and towns of Patterson, Newman, Westley, and Gustine.

3.4.7. Labor Force and Income

The economy in the vicinity of Crows Landing is based primarily on agriculture, food processing, manufacturing, retail trade, and service industries. According to the Stanislaus County Economic Development Corporation, agriculture employed 14,500 people and generated one billion dollars of gross revenue in the County in 1991. The largest single employer that year was Stanislaus County government, with approximately 3,600 employees. With a significant portion of the local labor force involved in agriculture, the County experiences major seasonal employment fluctuations. Unemployment rates, such as 1990's 11.3%, are approximately twice the state average.

With no current operations, the facility's direct contribution to the local economy is negligible. However, the agricultural lessee generates on order of \$500,000 per year at the site (*U.S. Navy, April 1998*).

3.5. Noise

The following information was obtained largely from NASA (1993).

Until recently, aircraft were the primary sources of noise at the facility. Noise contours using the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) program were last updated in 1986 based on 30,000 flight operations per year (see Figure 3-3). Runway 17/35, the primary runway, had a maximum Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) of 75 dB. Since the standard noise threshold level with reference to speech, sleep, and community reaction is CNEL 65 dB, the area within the 65 to 75 CNEL contour was considered to have significant noise levels. However, due to the elimination of aircraft operations, there are currently no significant sources of noise at the facility.

3.6. Air Quality

The following information was obtained largely from Tetra Tech (1998).

3.6.1. Air Quality Standards

Both the Federal Government and the State of California have established ambient air quality standards. Under both standards, Crows Landing is located in an attainment area for all pollutants except ozone and particulate matter. The area is designated as a moderate non-attainment area for these pollutants.

3.6.2. Emission Sources

Until recently, two small stationary sources of air pollution, an unleaded gasoline storage tank and an emergency generator, existed at the site. With the removal of these sources and termination of aircraft operations, emissions from the facility are negligible.

3.7. Floodplains

The following information was obtained largely from NASA (1993) and FEMA (1989).

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map, most of the facility is located in Flood Zone C, an area with minimal potential for flooding. On the western side of the facility, a small area adjacent to Little Salado Creek is designated as Flood Zone A. This zone refers to areas that are expected to experience flooding during a 100-year storm. The remainder of the creek channel and the majority of the airfield are located in Flood Zone B, an area expected to experience flooding from a 500-year storm or flooding with average depths less than one foot from a 100-year storm.

A constructed sediment basin for irrigation tailwater runoff is located on the northeastern corner of the property. Effluent from this pond and runoff from the adjacent areas eventually discharge into the Marshall Road Basin. Since this basin was not designed as a flood control structure, close coordination with Caltrans and Stanislaus County Public Works Department is needed to manage flooding at the intersection of Highway 33 and Marshall Road during heavy rainstorms.

3.8. Water Quality

The following information was obtained largely from Tetra Tech (1998), NRCS (1996), West Stanislaus RCD (1995), NASA (1993), and U.S. Navy (1978).

3.8.1. Surface Water

Crows Landing is located approximately three miles northwest of Orestimba Creek, which drains the eastern Diablo Range. This creek eventually flows into the San Joaquin River, located approximately four miles east of the property. The Delta Mendota Canal, running through the site south of Runway 17/35, provides irrigation water to the region. The California Aqueduct, the primary canal of the California Central Valley Project, runs in a southerly direction approximately one mile west of the site along the eastern edge of the Diablo Range near Interstate 5. Little Salado Creek drains part of the Diablo Range to the west of Crows Landing and eventually flows onto the site adjacent to the Delta Mendota Canal.

Surface drainage from the property flows in a northeasterly direction. Runoff and irrigation tailwater is channeled in surface ditches, pipes, and culverts to a sediment collection basin on the northeastern corner of the property prior to its discharge into the Marshall Road Basin and subsequently the San Joaquin River.

Because 100 miles (160.9 km) of the San Joaquin River were identified as an impaired water body in the 1990 California Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Assessment, several studies were conducted to identify primary pollutant sources. These studies pinpointed the West Stanislaus area as the highest contributor of sediment borne contaminants affecting this river. Consequently, the NRCS has expressed concerns regarding irrigation-induced soil erosion resulting from agriculture at Crows Landing.

To address this issue, the Resource Conservation District (RCD) in cooperation with the NRCS established a "Demonstration Farm" at the site to evaluate use of soil amendments, conditioners, and Best Management Practices to improve soil quality and reduce non-point source (NPS) pollution. Results of this study were

published in a Clean Water Act Section 319h document: "Crows Landing 319 Demonstration Project: Evaluation of Best Management Practices in Controlling the Off-Site Movement of Pesticides and Sediment, June 1995." Efforts to control NPS pollution from Crows Landing continue.

3.8.2. Groundwater

Due to extensive agricultural land use, nitrate levels in groundwater exceed Federal and State Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs). Furthermore, in localized areas, groundwater at the site is contaminated with petroleum compounds and industrial solvents. Characterization of contamination at these parcels varies, ranging from the initial stages to almost complete. Additional characterization and other actions needed to obtain regulatory closure with the DTSC and the CVRWQCB are underway (See Sections 3.1 and 3.13.2).

3.9. Biological Resources

The following information was largely obtained from Tetra Tech (1998), NASA (1993), SFSU (1993, 1992), and WESTDIV (1978).

3.9.1. Wetlands

There are 34.5 acres (14.0 ha) of wetlands at Crows Landing. This includes 2.2 acres (0.9 ha) of sewer ponds on the northeastern portion of the property, a 6.8-acre (2.8 ha) siltation pond, 18.5 acres (7.5 ha) encompassing the Delta Mendota Canal, 5 acres in the Little Salado Creek area, and a 2-acre (0.8 ha) wildlife area created by the Boy Scouts, the Navy, the RCD, and the NRCS.

3.9.2. Vegetation

The predominant type of vegetation at the site is agriculturally related, with the balance consisting primarily of maintained grassland. None of the original perennial grassland habitat remains. Irrigated crops grown on site include sugar beets, peas, beans, tomatoes, spinach, grains, and melons. Vegetation in the wildlife area includes saltbush, vetch, quail bush, willow, curly dock, cattail, blackberry, bull sedge, Johnson grass, ripgut brome, and California oatgrass.

Grass species in landscaped areas include perennial ryegrass, alta fescue, Kentucky bluegrass, and Bermuda grass. Shrub species include star acacia, Sydney golden wattle, juniper, privet, laurel, purple leaf plum, rose, firethorn, and waxleaf ligustrum. Groundcover includes needle point ivy, English ivy, and South African daisy, and shore juniper, while evergreen elm, acacia, ash, buckeye, deodar cedar, mulberry, olive, photinia, pine, poplar, black walnut, sycamore, and willow are the predominate trees on the property.

Palmate-bracted bird's beak, soft birds beak, bearded alcarva, delta coyote thistle, spiny-petaled coyote thistle, and diamond-petaled California poppy are the sensitive plant species that have a potential to occur at the site.

3.9.3. Wildlife

Mammals commonly found at Crows Landing include desert cottontail, California ground squirrel, wood rat, muskrat, black rat, Norway rat, house mouse, red fox, opossum, California vole, deer mouse, black-tailed jackrabbit, striped skunk, coyote, raccoon, feral dog, and feral cat.

Because no native grassland remains, suitable habitat for the San Joaquin kit fox is not present at the facility, nor has any evidence of the animal been identified.

Birds at Crows Landing include red-tailed hawk, rough-legged hawk, American kestrel, American crow, common Raven, lesser goldfinch, yellow-billed magpie, western meadowlark, California quail, mourning dove, egrets, American robin, scrub jay, northern mockingbird, sparrow, and a small number of migratory birds. California species of special concern on the property include the western burrowing owl, California horned lark, white-tailed kite, northern harrier, and loggerhead shrike.

Known amphibians at the site include the Pacific tree frog, the bullfrog, and the western toad. Reptiles include the king snake and gopher snake.

In February and October of 1993, San Francisco State University and the Navy conducted an endangered species survey. The study focused on the tri-colored blackbird, the blister beetle, and the giant garter snake. Because no evidence of these species was found, no federally listed or candidate threatened or endangered species are known to inhabit the facility.

3.10. Cultural Resources

The following information was largely obtained from SAIC (1998) and Basin Research Associates, Inc. (1991).

3.10.1. Archaeological Resources

It was rumored that a pioneer cemetery once existed at Crows Landing, near the former air-traffic control tower. However, two Government Land Office Maps dated 1854 and 1856 do not indicate a cemetery in this area. In 1991, Basin Research Associates, Inc. conducted an archaeological survey of Salado Creek. The site was not systematically surveyed because the majority of the facility had been paved or subjected to ground-disturbing activities. Since no remains of ethnographic or contemporary Native American resources were observed, buried archaeological deposits are not expected to be present.

3.10.2. Historic Buildings and Structures

All buildings and structures at Crows Landing have been evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Navy determined that the World War II buildings and structures do not qualify for listing on the National Register because of their altered appearance and setting. Moreover, NASA determined that no buildings, structures, or objects at the facility have historical significance from a Cold War perspective.

3.11. Solid Waste

The following information was largely obtained from Tetra Tech (1998).

Crows Landing has no active landfills. Because of the small number of employees at the facility, minimal solid waste is generated. These wastes, primarily office trash, are placed in dumpsters and collected by a private contractor for off-site disposal. Hazardous wastes are no longer generated the facility.

3.12. Toxic Substances

The following information was largely obtained from Tetra Tech (1998,1994).

3.12.1. Asbestos

An asbestos survey was conducted at Crows Landing from June through August 1993. Asbestos is categorized in one of two ways, friable or non-friable material. Friable ACM can be pulverized by hand. Non-friable ACM must undergo destructive forces before fiber release can occur. Friable ACM was confirmed in the sprayed-on fire proofing in Buildings 137, 138, and 144. Non-friable ACM was confirmed in the white sink undercoating in Buildings 101 and 109. All friable ACM was encapsulated. Building 151 was not surveyed. Destructive sampling was not conducted during this survey. Therefore, by law, certain materials must be assumed to contain asbestos. Currently, it is unconfirmed whether the following materials in buildings at Crows Landing contain asbestos: 40, 101, 103, 143, 102, 109, 136, 137, 138, 144, 150, 164, 165.

3.12.2. Lead Paint

No comprehensive survey was conducted for lead paint at the facility. However, given the nature and age of the structures, lead paint is expected to be present.

3.12.3. Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)

In 1998, NASA conducted a comprehensive PCB survey of electrical equipment at Crows Landing. No equipment had PCB concentrations greater than 500 parts per million (ppm). Four transformers were identified as "PCB containing" (greater than 50 ppm, but less 500 ppm). No leaks associated with these transformers were discovered during a December 15, 1998 inspection.

Fifteen transformers and switches have PCB concentrations greater than 5 ppm, but less than 50 ppm. This equipment is identified as "non-PCB", but will be regulated as hazardous waste when they are ready for disposal. All other oil containing equipment contained levels less than 4.5 ppm.

3.12.4. Pesticides

Pesticides have historically been used at Crows Landing and on the adjacent lands for agricultural purposes. Pesticides detected in the San Joaquin River in excess of EPA standards include chlordane, endosulfan, and toxaphene. Organochlorine pesticide residue from dieldrin, DDT, DDE, and DDD, has also been discovered from past use.

3.13. Health and Safety

The following information was largely obtained from Tetra Tech (1998) and NASA (1993).

3.13.1. Airfields

Clear zones and accident potential zones associated with the airfield flight path were included in the AICUZ studies. The clear zone is an area directly beyond the edge of the runway that has the greatest potential risk of an accident occurring. Beyond this zone is the accident potential zone, which has a smaller accident risk. Uses within this area are restricted to passive use. No objects or structures are allowed within these areas that may interfere with landings or takeoffs.

3.13.2. Contaminated Sites

3.13.2.1. Hazardous Waste Sites

Under the Navy's Installation Restoration Program (IRP), eight sites were identified in 1984 as potential hazardous waste, disposal, or spill locations (see Table 3-1 and Figure 1-2).

Table 3-1: IRP Sites

IRP Site Number	Parcel Number	Description
IRP Site 10	Parcel 12	Rubble Disposal Area
IRP Site 11	Parcel 13	Disposal Pits Area
IRP Site 12	Parcel 9	Auto Maintenance Shop Area
IRP Site 13	Parcel 15	TACAN Transformer Oil Spill Area
IRP Site 14	Parcel 11	Fire Training Area
IRP Site 16	Parcel 10	Pesticide Rinse Area
IRP Site 17	Parcel 7	Demolished Hangars Area
IRP Site 18	Parcel 14	Firing Range Area

Note: IRP Sites 1-9 are located at Moffett Federal Airfield. IRP Site 15 and part of IRP Site 16 were incorporated into IRP Site 12.

Because this contamination poses no imminent threat to human health or the environment, Crows Landing is not a Superfund cleanup site under the CERCLA. However, the Navy has accepted responsibility for the contamination and will continue remediation activities under State cleanup programs (Navy - NASA Memorandum of Understanding 1992).

Cleanup options for contaminated sites are currently being evaluated. Remedial actions are expected to be in place by 2001.

3.13.2.2. Petroleum Sites

The Navy's IRP program does not include sites that are contaminated exclusively with petroleum and petroleum related constituents because they are specifically excluded from CERCLA. Consequently, these sites are being addressed under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and State UST programs.

All 17 USTs that were present at the site have been removed. However, contamination from fuel spills and leaks that could not be completely removed when the tanks were excavated remains at four UST sites. These include UST 109, UST 117, and UST Clusters 1 and 2 (see Figure 1-2). The nature and extent of contamination has been documented for these areas and a corrective action plan is under regulatory review. Remedial actions are expected to be in place by the year 2001.

4.0 Environmental Impacts

4.1 Proposed Action

4.1.1. Geology & Hydrogeology

The agricultural lease at Crows Landing has been renewed through the end of 1999. Consequently, the longstanding cooperative relationship between the NRCS, the RCD, the Navy, the agricultural lessee, and NASA in addressing sediment and pesticide runoff from the site is expected to continue at least through that period of time. However, the future landowner will determine whether to renew the lease after 1999. Additionally, they will influence future cooperative arrangements related to abatement of soil erosion and non-point source pollution. Impacts associated with future uses of the facility are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation.

4.1.2. Land Use

No adverse impacts related to land use are expected to result from the proposed action. Land use may be affected by future landowners. However, these impacts are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation.

4.1.3. Infrastructure

No adverse impacts related to infrastructure are expected to result from the proposed action. Infrastructure may be affected by future landowners. However, these impacts are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation.

4.1.4. Social Environment

No adverse impacts related to the social environment, including impacts to minority or low-income populations, are expected to result from the proposed action. Future uses of the facility may affect this aspect of the environment. However, these impacts are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation.

4.1.5. Noise

Noise levels at the facility will remain at their current low levels. Consequently, no adverse impacts related to noise are expected to result from the proposed action. Future uses of the facility may affect these levels. However, these impacts are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation once future land use at the site has been determined.

4.1.6. Air Quality

No adverse impacts related to air quality are expected to result from the proposed action. Furthermore, because the action will not result in an increase of air emissions over de minimus levels in this air basin [50 tons/year (50,800 kg/year) for ozone or 70 tons/year (71,000 kg/year) for particulates], no conformity determination under Section 176 (c) of the Clean Air Act is required. Future uses of the facility may affect air quality. However, these impacts are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation.

4.1.7. Floodplains

After transferring the property, NASA would no longer coordinate with the Caltrans and Stanislaus County Public Works Department to manage flooding at the intersection of Highway 33 and Marshall Road during heavy rainstorms. Consequently, cooperative arrangements with the future landowner may be required.

4.1.8. Water Quality

4.1.8.1. Surface Water

See impacts identified under Section 4.1.1: *Geology and Hydrogeology*.

4.1.8.2. Groundwater

Because the Navy has agreed to continue with groundwater cleanup efforts, no adverse impacts related to groundwater are expected to result from the proposed action. Future uses may affect this resource. However, these impacts are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation.

4.1.9. Biological Resources

No adverse impacts related to biological resources are expected to result from the proposed action. Future uses of the facility may affect these resources. However, these impacts are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation.

4.1.10. Cultural Resources

No adverse impacts related to cultural resources are expected to result from the proposed action. Future uses of the facility may affect these resources. However, these impacts are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation.

4.1.11. Solid Waste

No adverse impacts related to solid waste are expected to result from the proposed action. Future uses of the facility may affect solid waste. However, these impacts are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation.

4.1.12. Toxic Substances

Because the future inhabitants are subject to the same management requirements as NASA, no adverse impacts related to asbestos, lead paint, and PCBs are expected to result from the proposed action. For impacts associated with pesticides, see Section 4.1: *Geology and Hydrogeology*.

4.1.13. Health and Safety

4.1.13.1. Airfield

No health and safety impacts related to the airfield are expected to result from the proposed action. Future uses of the facility may affect airfield use. However, these impacts are beyond the scope of this EA and will be addressed by GSA in subsequent NEPA documentation.

4.1.13.2. Contaminated Sites

The Navy has committed to remediating the contaminated sites to levels acceptable to the DTSC and CVRWQCB. Additionally, no parcels of land will be transferred until NASA, the Navy, DTSC, and the CVRWQCB determine that remedial actions for contaminated sites within these parcels are complete or have been demonstrated to be operating successfully. Consequently, no health and safety impacts related to sites contaminated with hazardous wastes and/or petroleum are expected to result from the proposed action.

4.2. Alternative 1

Because Stanislaus County has not formally disclosed its intended use of the property, the associated impacts cannot be determined. If and when this action is pursued, future uses of the land and the related impacts will be better defined.

4.3. Alternative 2

There are no impacts associated with the no action alternative, other than those identified in Section 3.0: Existing Conditions. In addition, NASA would incur financial costs associated with maintaining and securing the facility.

5.0 Mitigation and Monitoring

No mitigation or monitoring is proposed for the identified impacts.

6.0 List of Agencies and Individuals Contacted

General Services Administration

Tom Doszkocs

Science Applications International Corporation

Kobin Lee

Jill Moudy

Shelly Navarro

Ramsey Razik

Linda Vrabel

Stanislaus County

Ron Cherrier, Stanislaus County Public Works Department

Roger Towers, Planning Department

U.S. Navy

Mary Doyle, Western Division Naval Facilities Engineering Command

Richard Rugen, Naval Engineering Field Activity West

7.0 List of Preparers

Boeing Aerospace Operations (formerly)

Kathleen Kovar

NASA

Brian Staab

Science Applications International Corporation

Garrett Michael Turner, P.E.

8.0 Comments and Responses

The following oral and written comments on the draft version of this document were received.

8.1. Oral Comments and Responses

8.1.1. Comment

In regard to your runoff...your disposal of any water on the Navy Base. I don't think we should be flooded out or get any more drain water. [You] can put that...in the Delta Mendota [Canal],...not use it on our property. We've put up with it for...long enough.

8.1.2. Response

The proposed action will not affect the facility's physical drainage system. Thus, it will not increase the frequency or intensity of flooding events. However, once NASA transfers the property, it will no longer coordinate with appropriate agencies in mitigating flooding in the area. This will be left to the discretion of the future landowner.

8.2. Written Comments and Responses

8.2.1. Comment

Based on the information provided, the [San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution] District agrees with NASA's finding of no significant impact (FONSI) with respect to the transfer of the NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility to the General Services Administration. However, if future development of the NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility were proposed, the District would appreciate notification of such a project as well as an opportunity to comment. - Tracy Roemer Bettencourt, Environmental Planner, San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District

8.2.2. Response

Comment noted.

9.0 List of References

Basin Research Associates, December 1991. "Archeological Overview and Survey NAS Moffett Field and NALF Crows Landing."

City of Modesto, California. Internet Homepage, November 1998.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map, Community Panel Number 060384 0715 C, September 29, 1989.

NASA Ames Research Center Facilities Planning Office, February 1993. "NALF Crows Landing Existing Conditions Report."

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Department Of Agriculture, Letter to NASA, August 21, 1996.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Western Division (WESTDIV), 1987. "Natural Resources Management Plan."

San Francisco State University (SFSU), Department of Biology. November 23, 1992. "Ecology of Federal Candidate 2 Species at Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Crows Landing."

San Francisco State University (SFSU), Department of Biology; December 16, 1993. "Endangered Species Survey: Crows Landing NALF."

Stanislaus County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC), 1991. "Stanislaus County at A Glance".

Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), August 1998, "Draft Inventory and Evaluation of Cold War Era Historical Resources".

Tetra Tech EM, Inc., September 1998. "Environmental Baseline Survey, NASA Crows Landing Flight Facility."

Tetra Tech, Inc., January 1994. "Asbestos Survey at NAS Moffett Field and NALF Crows Landing".

U.S. Navy, November 1998, Lease for Agricultural Purposes.

U.S. Navy, April 21, 1998. Facsimile transmission with Richard Rugen.

U.S. Navy, June 1978. Soil and Water Conservation Plan For Agricultural Outlease at Naval Auxiliary Landing Field Crows Landing."

West Stanislaus Resource Conservation District (RCD), June 30, 1995. "Crows Landing 319 Demonstration Project: Evaluation of Best Management Practices in Controlling the Off-Site Movement of Pesticides and Sediment."

ATTACHMENT 3

B. CROWS LANDING FLIGHT FACILITY REUSE PLAN

Proposal for Stanislaus County reuse of the NASA Ames Research Center Crows Landing Flight Facility, including general aviation, NASA training, environmental remediation, agricultural production and long-range planning for business park development. The Reuse Plan is designed to facilitate and finalize transfer of ownership of the NASA Ames Research Center Crows Landing Flight Facility from the United States to Stanislaus County pursuant to HR 356. The property is located off Highway 33, between City of Newman and City of Patterson. A Mitigated Negative Declaration will be considered. APN: 027-01-13 & 27-03-22, 23, 25.

Staff Report: Kirk Ford and Richard Jantz Recommends **APPROVAL**.

*Commissioner Crivelli arrived to the dais at 6:24 p.m.

Public hearing opened.

OPPOSITION: Raul Ortega, 2018 Geneva Drive, Modesto; Steve Burke, 3108 Yorkshire Lane, Modesto; Michael Garcia, 1608 Florine, Modesto;

Nancy Olivera, 60 Colebra Terrace, San Francisco; Larry Grieb, 18301 Davis Road, Patterson.

FAVOR: None.

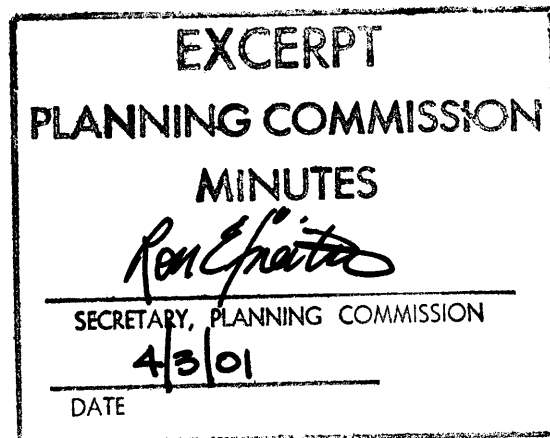
Public hearing closed.

MOTION TO DELETE ITEMS A. AND B. OF PAGE 19 AND 20 AND OTHER SIMILAR REFERENCES TO POSSIBLE LONG RANGE PLANS FOR THE SITE, REUSE PLAN

Byrd/Wetherbee, Unanimously, **APPROVED**.

MOTION TO APPROVE.

Crivelli/Souza, Unanimously, **RECOMMENDS APPROVAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AS AMENDED.**



ATTACHMENT 4

William D. Ross
 Diane C. De Felice
 Barbara J. Higgins
 Robert D. Pontelle

 Carol B. Sherman
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File No: 147/5

February 28, 2001

VIA TELECOPIER & U.S. MAIL

Mr. Kirk Ford
 Senior Planner
 Stanislaus County
 Planning & Community Development Department
 1100 H Street
 Modesto, California 95354

Re: Comments On Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration For The Crows
 Landing Flight Facility Reuse Plan

Dear Mr. Ford:

This communication, submitted under the provisions of Public Resources Code section 21177 on behalf of the West Stanislaus Fire Protection District (the "District"), comments on the legal sufficiency of the Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (the "Mitigated Negative Declaration") for the NASA Ames Research Center - Crows Landing Flight Facility Reuse Plan, Initial Study, Mitigated Negative Declaration, And Mitigation Monitoring Plan (collectively, the "Initial Study").

The District's comments relate to the failure of the Mitigated Negative Declaration to comply with the substantive and procedural requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code § 21000 *et seq.*, "CEQA"), the State regulations implementing CEQA (Tit. 14, Cal. Code Regs. §§ 15000 *et seq.*, the "CEQA Guidelines") and applicable case law interpreting CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.

I. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The County is currently preparing to assume ownership of the NASA Ames Research Center - Crows Landing Flight Facility (the "Facility"). The County has defined a phased "reuse" plan (the "Reuse Plan") for the Facility as a General Aviation Airport, with possible expansion at a later date to a corporate or executive business air facility, complete with an associated business park development. Phase One of the Reuse Plan maintains the status quo

Mr. Kirk Ford
Senior Planner
Stanislaus County
Planning & Community Development Department
February 28, 2001
Page 2

-- the County will continue to allow the Navy and NASA to sporadically use the Facility's airfield for training exercises and will continue the agricultural leases to private growers. Phase Two of the Reuse Plan converts the Facility into a general aviation airport for small aircraft, with the hope of eventual expansion to a corporate or executive business air facility with associated business park development.

The County has circulated the Mitigated Negative Declaration instead of an environmental impact report, because it claims that the Reuse Plan will have no potentially significant impacts on the surrounding environment. The Mitigated Negative Declaration states, inter alia, that the Reuse Plan will not significantly impact any biological resources, such as endangered or threatened species; utilities and service systems, including those for water provision and fire protection; or secondary effects, such as economic and practical concerns.

II. SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND OPPOSITION

The Mitigated Negative Declaration is deficient because the Initial Study's assessment of potential impacts in at least three (3) areas. First, the Biological Resources assessment concludes, based only a cursory and outdated study, that the Reuse Plan will have no impact on special status species. This assessment is inadequate in that native endangered and threatened species are common in the area, yet are not addressed in the old study. Second, the Initial Study fails to address potential economic impacts (and resulting physical effects) of the contemplated build-out under the Reuse Plan, which currently includes development of the airport and business park. Third, the Initial Study does not follow the procedures stated in CEQA Guidelines section 15229 governing military base reuse plans, and further, impermissibly defers analysis and mitigation of vital public utilities impacts to a later date.

III. APPLICABLE LAW

The basic purposes of CEQA include, inter alia, informing governmental decision makers and the public about the potential, significant environmental effects of proposed activities which may result in a physical change in the environment, and disclosing to the public the reasons why a governmental agency approved the activity in the way it did. San Joaquin Raptor/Wildlife Rescue Center v. County of Stanislaus, 42 Cal.App.4th 608, 614 (1996) ("San Joaquin Raptor"). CEQA accomplishes these goals by requiring local agencies to prepare an EIR whenever substantial evidence supports a fair argument that a proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment. Pub. Resources Code § 21151. The "fair argument" test creates a low threshold requirement for initial preparation of an EIR and reflects a preference for resolving doubts in favor of environmental review when the question is whether any such review is warranted. San Joaquin Raptor, supra, 42 Cal.App.4th at 617. Only when such substantial evidence is absent or clearly mitigated may a local

Mr. Kirk Ford
Senior Planner
Stanislaus County
Planning & Community Development Department
February 28, 2001
Page 3

agency be excused from the EIR requirement and instead issue a mitigated negative declaration for the project. Pub. Resources Code § 21064.5; CEQA Guidelines §§ 15070(a), 15371; San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society v. Metropolitan Water Dist., 71 Cal.App.4th 382, 389-390 (1999). CEQA also describes mandatory findings of significance; if any of these findings are made, an EIR must be prepared. CEQA Guidelines § 15065.

In conducting its environmental review, an agency must adequately investigate whether the proposed project will have significant effects; if it fails to do so, it will not be allowed to hide behind its own inadequate initial study by simply issuing a mitigated negative declaration and presuming the success of deferred mitigation measures. Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino, 202 Cal.App.3d 296, 311 (1988).

IV. ANALYSIS

A. The Initial Study And Mitigated Negative Declaration Do Not Discuss The Potential Economic Impacts Of The Reuse Plan.

The Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Study omit any discussion of potential economic impacts effecting the County and its taxpayers, in contravention of Friends of Davis v. City of Davis, 83 Cal.App.4th 1004 and CEQA. The County may not rely on uninformative documents in conducting its environmental analysis. Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino, *supra*, 202 Cal.App.3d at 311.

Adverse effects on economic and social concerns may be used as factors by an agency when determining whether a physical impact is significant (CEQA Guidelines §§ 15131, 15064(e)), and indeed should be considered when relevant to the anticipated physical change in the environment. Friends of Davis v. City of Davis, 83 Cal.App.4th 1004, 1020 (2000).

Here, the physical impact is the "reuse" and redevelopment of the Facility itself. Nevertheless, the Initial Study and the Mitigated Negative Declaration do not provide any analysis regarding how the County is to gain ownership of the Facility, what funding will be used to redevelop the vacant buildings and aviation equipment, or how the reuse of the Facility will affect the economics of the local area. Transformation of the Facility will necessarily require significant construction and development, all of which must be paid with funding from some source. However, the Initial Study only superficially discusses the general agri-business difficulties and the "brain drain" recently endured by the County, and then conclusorily states that the County sees the Facility as a viable business park development opportunity because a large portion of County residents would rather work near their homes than commute long distances. Initial Study, at 12-13.

Mr. Kirk Ford
Senior Planner
Stanislaus County
Planning & Community Development Department
February 28, 2001
Page 4

The Initial Study and the Mitigated Negative Declaration thus completely ignore the economic impact on the taxpayers and the County as a whole. Because any fiscal impacts are likely to manifest themselves in future physical effects (such as the expanded building and the attraction of new business), no analysis of the impact of the Reuse Plan would be complete without at least some mention of the likely economic impact of the Facility.

Further complicating this issue is California's current electrical crisis, and the proposed State buy-out of electrical utility equipment, including poles and wires, which would thereby deprive County of future property tax revenues associated with such properties. See Cal. Const., Art. XII, § 3(a); Rev. & Tax Code § 202(a)(4) (State-owned property immune from local taxation).

B. The Mitigated Negative Declaration Fails To Adequately Analyze The Impacts On Biological Resources.

Both the San Joaquin kit fox, an endangered species, and the valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a threatened species, are identified as native to the Facility area by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ("Fish and Wildlife").

Biological field surveys for relevant species must be included in the environmental documents for which they are prepared, and must be conducted in a manner that will locate rare, threatened or endangered species in the location of the study. See California Department of Fish and Game, "Guidelines for Assessing the Effects of Proposed Projects on Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plants and Natural Communities," revised May 8, 2000, ¶¶4-5. Despite these requirements, (See also, CEQA Guidelines section 15605), the Initial Study and the Mitigated Negative Declaration simply conclude that:

Because no native grassland remains [on Facility grounds], suitable habitat for the San Joaquin kit fox is not present at the facility nor has any evidence of the animal been identified.

Initial Study, at 21.

As the Initial Study provides no evidence to support this conclusion, and the 1993 field study conducted by San Francisco State University and the U.S. Navy does not include the above-referenced species, further study of this issue is necessary before rendering a conclusion that "no significant impact" on these resources will result from the proposed Reuse Plan. CEQA Guidelines § 15605.

Mr. Kirk Ford
Senior Planner
Stanislaus County
Planning & Community Development Department
February 28, 2001
Page 5

C. **The Mitigated Negative Declaration Does Not Identify "Baseline Physical Conditions." As Required For Military Base Reuse Plans.**

The CEQA Guidelines contemplate that reuse plans for former military bases, and the resulting impacts of such plans, will assess "the physical conditions present at the time when the federal decision for closure became final." CEQA Guidelines § 15229. Such conditions are referred to as "baseline physical conditions," and serve as the basis for rendering findings of impact significance. *Id.* CEQA Guidelines § 15229.

The Initial Study fails to consider or discuss the "baseline physical conditions" threshold, and, despite the contemplated conversion of the Facility to a busier general aviation airport, the Initial Study does not undertake any comparisons of the likely future impacts with those present in 1999.

D. **The Initial Study Does Not Adequately Discuss The Provision Of Public Utilities, Such As Drinking Water, Sewage Processing And Fire Protection.**

A public agency may not defer analysis of some of the environmental effects of a project to a later date when it is presently only informed to a slight degree of the ramifications of those environmental consequences. Stanislaus Natural Heritage Project v. County of Stanislaus, 48 Cal.App.4th 182, 199 (1996) ("Stanislaus Natural Heritage Project").

The Initial Study finds that the Facility's water supply does not meet applicable drinking water standards, so it is only used for irrigation, fire suppression and sewer flow. See Initial Study, at "Initial Study," CEQA Issues and checklist, Issue XVI. By its own terms, this conclusion admits the need for further public review as to the provision of necessary water and sanitation services to the facility, given the contemplated future build-out. The Initial Study also fails to consider the potential impacts created by the use of the nearby waterways and groundwater for irrigation, as well as any impacts expected by the existing sanitary sewer system that runs to an "inoperable" processing tank at the northern end of the Facility. *Id.*

Last, and of special concern to the District, the Mitigated Negative Declaration similarly defers consideration of necessary fire protection and emergency services to the Facility by concluding that County "will enter into an agreement with either West Stanislaus Fire Protection District or another suitable fire protection service, or will devise an adequate fire protection service plan to provide fire services to the site." Initial Study, at Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Mr. Kirk Ford
Senior Planner
Stanislaus County
Planning & Community Development Department
February 28, 2001
Page 6

Such deferral contravenes the holding in Stanislaus Natural Heritage Project, supra, 48 Cal.App.4th 182 and the Guidelines requirement that all mitigation measures must modify the potentially significant impacts to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur. CEQA Guidelines § 15070(b)(1). Without adequate discussion of these public utility specifics, approval of the Mitigated Negative Declaration in its present form would defeat a fundamental purpose of CEQA: "inform[ing] the public and responsible officials of the environmental consequences of their decisions." Stanislaus Natural Heritage Project, supra, 48 Cal.App.4th at 195.

V. CONCLUSION

In the absence of adequate analysis of the above-discussed issues, a fair argument may be made that the Reuse Plan will have significant effects on the environment that have not been considered by County prior to approval of the Reuse Plan. Such additional considerations may trigger the need for further environmental assessment of the Reuse Plan and, if applicable, preparation of an EIR.

The District also hereby requests that the District and its counsel be mailed any and all notices relating to the Reuse Plan, at the following addresses, pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21092.2:

Richard G. Gaiser, Fire Chief
West Stanislaus Fire Protection District
Post Office Box 565
Patterson, California 95363

and

William D. Ross, Esq.
Law Offices of William D. Ross
520 South Grand Avenue, Suite 300
Los Angeles, California 90071-2610

Mr. Kirk Ford
Senior Planner
Stanislaus County
Planning & Community Development Department
February 28, 2001
Page 7

Your consideration of these comments and modification of the Mitigated Negative Declaration consistent with the above is respectfully requested.

Very truly yours,



Robert D. Pontelle

RDP:mek

cc: Richard G. Gaiser, Chief