

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Joint Task Force Red Hill and Defense Logistics Agency

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) FOR RED HILL DEFUELING AND FUEL RELOCATION FROM JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, HONOLULU, HAWAII

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508) implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Department of the Navy (DON) NEPA regulations (32 CFR Part 775), Joint Task Force Red Hill (JTF-RH) and Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) give notice that an Environmental Assessment/Overseas Environmental Assessment (EA/OEA) has been prepared and an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) is not required for Red Hill Defueling and Fuel Relocation from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH), Honolulu, Hawaii. This action will be implemented as set out in Alternative 3. The Fleet Logistics Center, Pearl Harbor and Navy Region Hawaii are cooperating agencies for this action.

Proposed Action: JTF-RH and DLA propose the gravity-based defueling of Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility (RHBFSF) underground storage tanks and associated pipelines, and relocation of the flowable fuel by tanker ship. The Proposed Action would include relocation of up to all of the flowable fuel to other United States Department of Defense (DoD) fuel supply locations in the Pacific region and/or sale of the fuel to commercial entities utilizing DoD contracting authorities.

Purpose and Need: The purpose of the proposed gravity-based defueling and fuel relocation action is to drain the RHBFSF tanks and relocate the fuel in compliance with State of Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) Emergency Orders, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 2023 Administrative Consent Order, and United States Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Lloyd J. Austin III's order on March 7, 2022 to defuel and permanently close the RHBFSF.

Defueling RHBFSF is needed to protect local water supplies from further contamination. Additionally, the DoD needs to defuel the facility as a first step in the process of full closure and remediation of RHBFSF.

Alternatives Considered: The EA/OEA analyzes the potential environmental impacts of the No Action Alternative (Alternative 1) and two action alternatives (Alternatives 2 and 3). Both the No Action Alternative and the two action alternatives utilize existing infrastructure at RHBFSF and JBPHH to remove the fuel from RHBFSF and load it onto tanker ships. The No Action Alternative and the two action alternatives include removal of flowable fuel from the associated pipelines (i.e., unpacking). Distribution of residual amounts of fuel products that do not flow under the force of gravity, such as fuel within low points of the facility and pipelines and sludge (unrecoverable tank bottoms), is not included in the scope of environmental analysis of this EA/OEA.

Alternative 1, the No Action Alternative, is the distribution of flowable fuel from RHBFSF to JBPHH customers at regular demand rates for routine use. As the facility would no longer receive any resupply of fuel, this alternative would ultimately remove all flowable fuel from RHBFSF. Under the No Action Alternative, it is estimated that flowable fuel would remain in the tanks at RHBFSF for approximately ten to fourteen months after DOH approval of the gravity-based defueling operation.

Alternative 2 is the relocation of the approximately 106 million gallons of flowable fuel from RHBFSF to existing locations within the DoD fuel supply chain by ocean transit. The fuel removal operation involves gravity flow of the fuel from RHBFSF through existing DoD piping and associated infrastructure to a fuel loading pier at JBPHH. A maximum of eleven refined product tanker ship transits are required to receive and transport the flowable fuel from RHBFSF. After exiting Pearl Harbor, tanker ship transits one through ten would transit within existing commercial shipping lanes to one or more (up to nine) existing DoD fuel support points throughout the Pacific. The fuel deliveries to these locations would occur in lieu of routine or planned fuel supply deliveries.

Potential receiving locations for the ten fuel deliveries include:

- Campbell Industrial Park, West Oahu, Hawaii
- Point Loma, California
- Selby, California
- Vancouver, Washington
- Manchester, Washington
- Sasebo, Japan
- Subic Bay, Philippines
- Port of Singapore
- Darwin, Australia

The quantity of fuel and number of deliveries to each location depends on DoD fuel inventory needs at the time of defueling.

Alternative 3 is the commercial sale of a portion of the approximately 106 million gallons of flowable fuel from RHBFSF combined with the relocation of the remaining portion of the fuel to existing locations within the DoD fuel supply chain by ocean transit. A maximum of eleven tanker ships are required to receive and relocate the flowable fuel from RHBFSF.

With Alternative 3, up to ten tanker loads of fuel from RHBFSF may be commercially sold in accordance with Section 2922e of Title 10, United States Code, which authorizes the sale of certain fuel sources. Sale of fuel would need to coincide with the defueling schedule. Therefore, the amount of fuel sold will be determined by commercial interest and purchasers' ability to receive the fuel at the time of gravity-based defueling. The portion of fuel that is not sold will be relocated from RHBFSF to existing locations within the DoD fuel supply chain by ocean transit. Relocation of fuel will be accomplished using the same process as Alternative 2. Potential DoD fuel supply chain receiving locations and maximum number of tanker transits to each location are the same as Alternative 2.

Under both Alternatives 2 and 3, an eleventh tanker or barge would be staged at the JBPHH fueling pier for approximately two to five weeks to receive flowable tank bottoms and fuel from the underground surge tanks and pipeline unpacking process (estimated to be 2 million gallons of fuel or a portion thereof). Fleet Logistic Center, Pearl Harbor will sample and test this fuel to determine whether it meets specifications for DoD requirements and it will then be sold or relocated.

All three alternatives incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the safe use transfer and relocation of fuel from RHBFSF that reduce potential environmental impacts by avoiding, minimizing, or eliminating impacts.

Environmental Effects: No significant direct, indirect, or cumulative environmental impact would occur from the Proposed Action. Certain environmental resource areas including cultural resources, geological resources, terrestrial biological resources, visual resources, land use, utilities, airspace, noise, road transportation, socioeconomics, environmental justice, and climate change/resiliency were not analyzed in detail in this EA/OEA because the Proposed Action would not be likely to result in environmental impacts on these resources or impacts would be negligible. Potential environmental impacts on public health and safety, water resources, marine biological resources, hazardous materials and waste, and air quality and greenhouse gases were analyzed in detail and are summarized here.

Public Health and Safety

A minimal increase of demand for emergency services may result from the addition of approximately ten workers per shift during the defueling and tanker ship loading operations with Alternatives 2 and 3. Demand would be extremely small and not likely to have measurable impacts to existing service capacity. Tanker loading would be accomplished by a team of trained military and civilian workers from FLC and Port

Operations. The use of BMPs, training, and adherence to occupational safety and health regulations, standards, and instructions would reduce the likelihood and severity of a potential workplace accident.

Alternatives 2 and 3 would add up to four vessel movements per week (i.e., two round-trip transits) in Pearl Harbor. The additional vessels would account for an approximate ten percent increase in vessel traffic during the period of defueling operations. BMPs including notifying the Harbormaster in advance of tanker arrival/departure, maintaining communications with the Harbormaster, and use of tugboats to assist tankers would reduce the risk of vessel accidents. Overall, with the use of BMPs and adherence to procedures, Alternatives 2 and 3 would have less than significant effects to public health and safety.

Water Resources

The potential for spills within the RHBFSF, pipelines, and Underground Pump House (UGPH) during the defueling operation would be reduced through repairs and training. The potential for possible releases to occur would be less under Alternatives 2 or 3, which would defuel the tanks in approximately three to four months from the time DOH authorizes defueling, as compared to the longer period of time to defuel (ten to fourteen months) under the No Action Alternative.

Under Alternatives 2 and 3, use of tanker ships may marginally increase potential for spills to affect marine waters around Oahu, in international waters, and at receiving locations. Vessel fueling at the JBPHH pier would follow standard operating procedures and BMPs to reduce the risk of spills. Although rare, a tanker ship spill has the potential to be a high-volume, extended duration (i.e., catastrophic) release of fuel into the marine environment. Tanker ships would be double-hulled in accordance with the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) which reduces the potential for spills into the environment from accidental grounding and allision/collision. Tanker operators are required to follow applicable environmental and safety regulations which further reduces the likelihood of catastrophic spills. Fuel deliveries to receiving locations would be in lieu of regular deliveries, resulting in no overall risk increase from unloading the fuel from RHBFSF. Overall, with the use of BMPs for tanker fuel transfer/loading and adherence to provisions of the DOH order, Alternatives 2 and 3 would have less than significant effects to water resources.

Marine Biological Resources

Potential stressors to marine biological resources from the Proposed Action include elevated underwater noise from vessels and vessel collisions with marine species. Although not considered reasonably likely to occur, the risk of a fuel spill was also considered. The temporary, low-frequency and lower intensity sound levels of the tanker ships that would be used for Alternatives 2 and 3 would not result in an increased likelihood of acoustic injury to marine mammals, sea turtles, or fishes. Sound levels would not significantly disrupt breeding, feeding, or sheltering for any Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species encountered. The likelihood of a vessel collision with a protected marine species is extremely remote because of the low probability that individual animals would overlap in space and time with the eleven one-way tanker transits. Additionally, the relatively slow speed of the vessels further reduces the chance of ship strike with marine mammals, sea turtles, and fishes. Vessels would employ measures to avoid and reduce the potential for vessel collisions and interactions with protected species. A tanker spill during transit has a low probability of occurrence, and the response teams and BMPs available at all ports further reduce the potential for a spill during fuel loading and unloading. Overall, with the use of BMPs, Alternatives 2 and 3 would have less than significant effects to marine biological resources.

JTF-RH and DLA completed informal consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA for the Proposed Action. JTF-RH and DLA developed a Biological Evaluation (BE) to assess the potential impacts to federally listed threatened and endangered species and submitted the BE to NMFS on May 19, 2023. NMFS reviewed the BE and provided questions for further discussion and recommendations for additional BMPs. JTF-RH and DLA submitted a revised BE to NMFS on June 9, 2023. Based on the best available data and utilizing the best available science, along with the

implementation of BMPs, JTF-RH and DLA determined that the Proposed Action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect ESA-listed species or designated critical habitat in the action area. NMFS concurred with the JTF-RH and DLA determination that the Proposed Action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect ESA-listed species or designated critical habitat in the action area in a Letter of Concurrence dated August 15, 2023.

NMFS' Letter of Concurrence considered additional stressors beyond what JTF-RH and DLA considered in the BE, including stressors associated with an oil spill resulting from the Proposed Action. Based on best available information, NMFS determined that the effects of oil spill-related stressors to ESA-listed species and critical habitat due to the Proposed Action are extremely unlikely to occur, and, therefore, discountable. Thus, the stressors associated with an oil spill resulting from the Proposed Action may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect any ESA-listed species or critical habitat in the action area. The Proposed Action includes robust standard operations procedures and BMPs for prevention and response to potential fuel spills.

NMFS' analysis in their Letter of Concurrence also considered additional ESA-listed foreign species not included in the final species list or BE submitted by JTF-RH and DLA. NMFS' Letter of Concurrence explains that NMFS considered these foreign species in their analysis because impacts to these species could occur as part of the Proposed Action given that the action area and influence of stressors from the Proposed Action are within the range of these species. It is NMFS' position that if a Federal action with stressors that extend from United States (U.S.) waters or the high seas into a foreign country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) or territorial waters, the Federal action agency is obligated to meet its ESA section 7(a)(2) responsibility and consult on the action as a whole, including the effects of the action on foreign ESA-listed species. JTF-RH and DLA reaffirm that ESA section 7 consultation does not apply to species that occur only within a foreign country's EEZ or territorial waters. NMFS' addition of ESA-listed foreign species did not result in additional BMPs beyond those already included in the Proposed Action by JTF-RH and DLA. Additionally, the JTF-RH/DLA determination in the BE (i.e., may affect, but not likely to adversely affect) did not change based on the addition of ESA-listed foreign species.

Reinitiation of consultation with NMFS will be required if fuel in the eleventh tanker or barge is sold or relocated to a receiving port that was not one of the ten potential fuel receiving locations identified and assessed in the EA/OEA.

Hazardous Materials and Waste

In the event of a fuel release, workers could be exposed to the fuel during incident response and spill cleanup activities. JBPHH has spill response procedures to address potential spills and to limit their effects to human health and the environment. Spilled fuel and contaminated absorbents or debris would be managed in accordance with the waste management plan. Propeller wash from tanker ships and tugboats could temporarily resuspend contaminated sediments in Pearl Harbor. BMPs limiting the disturbance of sediments, including low ship speed and use of tugboats to assist tanker ships through Pearl Harbor, would minimize environmental exposure to the extent that no significant adverse effects related to contaminated sediments are expected to occur. With the use of BMPs, Alternatives 2 and 3 would result in a less than significant increase to the potential for human or environmental exposure to hazardous materials or waste.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases

Emissions from tanker ship transits would be temporary and would not significantly affect air quality at JBPHH or any of the receiving locations. Ports in California (Point Loma and Selby) are non-attainment for some air pollutants. However, emissions at those sites from the Proposed Action would fall below de minimis levels and Records of Non-Applicability for Clean Air Act General Conformity are provided in Appendix E of the EA/OEA. Tanker ship operators would follow MARPOL regulations for low sulfur fuels and the lower sulfur content fuels required within 200 nautical miles of the U.S. pursuant to the North American Environmental Control Area. Under the minimum transit case (i.e., the eleven transits with the

least emissions), the action would emit 13,994 tons of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide equivalent). Under the maximum case (i.e., the eleven transits with the most emissions), the action would emit 50,792 tons, equivalent to the annual operation of 6,429 U.S. homes. Anticipated air quality impacts from Alternatives 2 and 3 are not expected to interfere with the attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), hinder a nonattainment area's progress to attainment, increase the frequency or severity of existing poor air quality, or appreciably increase human health risks from hazardous air pollutant (HAP) exposure in areas where sensitive receptors and/or public presence are expected.

Coastal Zone Management Act: JTF-RH and DLA notified the State of Hawaii Office of Planning and Sustainable Development on June 14, 2023 by email that the Proposed Action would be consistent with the de minimis Activities List under the Coastal Zone Management Act, and therefore not subject to further review by the Hawaii Coastal Zone Management Program. The Hawaii Coastal Zone Management Program acknowledged receipt of the notification on June 19, 2023.

Cumulative Impacts: Projects proposed, underway, or recently completed at RHBFSF, JBPHH, and other actions related to the action alternatives were analyzed in the EA/OEA to determine the potential for cumulative impacts from the Proposed Action. Some projects and actions considered include the construction of Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard (PHNSY) Dry Dock 5, remediation of the Pearl Harbor Sediment Site, and ongoing ship traffic in Pearl Harbor. Additive effects from the increase in vessel traffic in Pearl Harbor associated with Alternatives 2 and 3 would not significantly contribute to cumulative impacts to public health and safety, water resources, marine biological resources, hazardous materials and waste, or air quality and greenhouse gases.

Projects at potential fuel receiving locations were not considered for the cumulative impact analysis because fuel deliveries associated with the Proposed Action would occur in lieu of routine or planned fuel deliveries; therefore, effects from tanker transits and fuel unloading at these locations would not contribute to cumulative impacts.

Mitigation Measures: BMPs identified in the EA/OEA are sufficient to avoid and minimize anticipated adverse impacts from the Proposed Action. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required for the Proposed Action.

Public Outreach: JTF-RH and DLA released the Draft EA/OEA (DEA/DOEA) for public and agency comment on June 9, 2023. The DEA/DOEA was made available on the JTF-RH website. A notice of availability was published in the Honolulu Star-Advertiser on June 9, 11, and 14, 2023. The public comment period ran from June 9, 2023 to June 30, 2023.

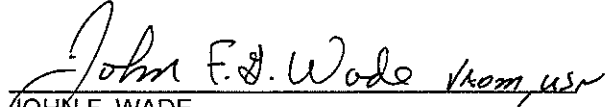
A public meeting was held on June 15, 2023 between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the Keehi Lagoon Memorial, Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Memorial Hall, 2685 N. Nimitz Hwy, Honolulu, HI 96819. Twenty-seven individuals attended the public meeting. Public meeting attendees were provided the opportunity to submit written comments or record verbal comments. Comments were also accepted online through the JTF-RH website and in writing by mail.

A total of 29 substantive comments were received during the DEA/DOEA public comment period. All substantive comments were fully considered by JTF-RH and DLA during preparation of the Final EA/OEA and prior to rendering a decision on the Proposed Action. Comments received resulted in minor clarifications to the Proposed Action and analyses. Public comments and responses are included in Appendix A of the EA/OEA.

Finding: Based on the analysis presented in the EA/OEA, which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of NEPA and DON policies and procedures (32 CFR Part 775), and in coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and Hawaii CZM Program, JTF-RH and DLA find that the Proposed Action as set out in Alternative 3 will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment. Therefore an EIS/OEIS will not be prepared.

Electronic copies of the EA/OEA and FONSI are available on the JTF-RH webpage:
<https://www.pacom.mil/JTF-Red-Hill/FONSI/>.

28 Aug 23
Date


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