

Record of Decision

Expansion and Reconfiguration of the Land Port of Entry in Downtown Calexico Calexico, California

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has published a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the following project:

Expansion and Reconfiguration of the
Land Port of Entry in Downtown Calexico
Calexico, California

Purpose and Need for Action

The General Services Administration (GSA), through its Border Station Program, assists the Customs and Border Protection (CBP), a part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), by planning, designing, building, owning and leasing Land Ports of Entry (LPOE) to CBP, responsive to its mission requirements. By developing solutions to meet CBP's needs, GSA enhances the security and safety of the United States' (U.S.) borders.

Congressional mandates regarding the tracking of the entry and exit from the U.S. of vehicles and travelers at all LPOEs require DHS to develop and implement the addition of new inspection technologies and the inspection and tracking of inbound and outbound vehicles and pedestrians. GSA and CBP have identified the following basic deficiencies at the downtown Calexico LPOE border crossing:

- The existing facilities will not accommodate the installation of technologically-advanced inspection devices such as license plate readers, radiation detectors and x-ray equipment;
- The existing facilities are inadequate for maintaining employee and public safety and security;
- The existing facilities are inadequate for the proper conduct of inspection and other services;
- The existing facilities do not comply with modern seismic design requirements, posing a threat to the life safety of the employees and the public in the event of an earthquake;
- Bottlenecks at the existing facilities cause heavy vehicle traffic congestion in the city streets of Calexico, California, and Mexicali, Baja California; and
- The existing facilities exacerbate the delay experienced by the public crossing the International Border.

Increasing cross-border commerce and traffic will compound these problems.

Purpose of and Need for Action

The action to be evaluated by this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the proposed expansion and reconfiguration of the downtown Calexico LPOE. It would improve the safety, security, and operations of the LPOE; reduce vehicle and pedestrian queues; and enable the installation of technologically-advanced inspection devices.

The downtown Calexico LPOE serves privately-owned vehicle (POV), bus, and pedestrian traffic into and out of the Baja California city of Mexicali. The existing LPOE does not meet the Federal inspection services' minimum standards for processing time and overall efficiency. GSA's need is to correct these operational deficiencies, provide for more thorough inspections, improve safety for employees and the public, and reduce the delays experienced by the public.

Alternatives

GSA considered alternatives based on the purpose and need for the project. With subsequent public input, GSA developed two action alternatives that would meet the purpose and need for the project, and one no action alternative. In early 2006, scoping meetings were held with the public. The two alternatives analyzed in the Draft EIS were issued in June 2010.

Alternative A

Alternative A would expand the downtown Calexico LPOE by replacing the current LPOE facilities for pedestrian and northbound bus traffic and by building a new vehicular and bus inspection facility on the unused area to the west where the old commercial vehicle entry was located. Three parcels of land would be acquired to accommodate the new vehicular inspection facilities (Figure S-3). One (~0.6 acres) is at the southwest corner of Second Street and Imperial Avenue (currently a Duty Free store). The second (~1.8 acres) is on the west side of the New River channel southwest of the vacated commercial inspection compound. The third parcel of land (~5.0 acres) is located immediately south of Second Street and west of the vacated commercial inspection compound and the second parcel.

Alternative A consists of a set of construction, and/or demolition activities, as well as operations. It features a new headhouse, 16 northbound primary inspection lanes and space for up to 32 cars in the secondary inspection areas. The southbound vehicle primary inspection area would include 8 lanes. To accommodate southbound POV traffic, GSA would construct a platform atop a new culvert containing the channel of the New River.

The new pedestrian inspection facilities would be located on the east side of the railroad track in the location of the current main building. The flow pattern of northbound and southbound pedestrians would be the same as the current pattern. A new administration building would be located west of the railroad tracks just east of the northbound primary vehicle inspection lanes. Bus passengers would be processed through the new pedestrian processing building.

The New River channel runs through the area required for the new vehicle inspection lanes under Alternative A. Under this alternative, the New River would either be

enclosed in a culvert along its current channel, or routed into a culvert between the new vehicle inspection facility and the western site boundary. The Mexican government plans a northward extension of the underground culvert in which the New River flows through much of Mexicali. The Mexican Government is planning to develop their new port of entry over the extended culvert.

The design of the culvert under either scenario would involve enclosure of approximately 700 feet of channel. The design would be coordinated with the U.S. Army Corps. of Engineers to ensure that issues associated with flooding and erosion at the culvert outlet are sufficiently addressed. The work in the old channel would require approvals related to removal/remediation of contaminated soils and worker health and safety plans.

In order for the LPOE to remain open and operational during the proposed expansion, the construction is planned to be performed in phases. GSA continues to coordinate with the Mexican government on the design of the U.S. LPOE and the connections to the Mexican LPOE. Currently, the Mexican government is waiting for the U.S LPOE design to be selected and then will design their LPOE accordingly.

Alternative B / Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative would also expand the capacity of the downtown Calexico LPOE by constructing new facilities for pedestrian and northbound bus traffic similar to Alternative A. Under the Preferred Alternative, however, the New River would not be covered; all of the LPOE facilities would be located northeast of the New River; and there would be only five (5) southbound vehicle inspection lanes. Access to the LPOE would be the same as under Alternative A. Southbound access would be from Second Street and Cesar Chavez Boulevard. Northbound access would be from west of the railroad tracks. Northbound traffic leaving the LPOE would exit to either Imperial Avenue or Cesar Chavez Boulevard at Second Street.

Under the Preferred Alternative there would be less employee parking and fewer southbound vehicle lanes than under Alternative A.

The same two parcels of Federal government property at the downtown LPOE would be utilized under the Preferred Alternative (Figure S-4) as under Alternative A. However, less land would be acquired than for Alternative A. The parcel at the southwest corner of Second Street and Imperial Avenue would not be acquired. A portion of the land on the other side of the New River channel southwest of the vacated commercial inspection compound would be acquired, and the land immediately south of Second Street and west of the vacated commercial inspection compound would be acquired, but the parcels acquired would not be as large as for Alternative A.

The land on the other side of the New River channel southwest of the old commercial LPOE would be developed as part of the bridge and roadway across the New River for southbound traffic and as an impound area for seized vehicles. The 5.0 acre parcel of land immediately south of Second Street and west of the vacated commercial inspection compound would be developed for employee parking.

In order for the LPOE to remain open and operational during the proposed expansion, the construction is planned to be performed in phases.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, operation of the downtown Calexico LPOE would continue at the present facility. This alternative would not require the acquisition of any new land.

No construction or demolition would take place. Operations would continue with a staff of approximately 165 employees. Under the No Action Alternative, the LPOE would still undergo maintenance and minor improvements and upgrades within its current footprint and configuration. The improvements and upgrades could include repaving, some new inspection technology, improved utility systems, and other replacement-in-kind actions.

This alternative would not meet GSA's purpose and need. The size and configuration of the facility would result in continued deficiencies in operational efficiency and safety. Northbound queuing times would remain the same or increase. Access and egress routes would not be aligned with planned future Mexican facilities.

The evaluation of the No Action Alternative is required by NEPA and the associated implementing regulations.

Environmental Consequences

This section summarizes the environmental effects (both positive and negative) of Alternative A, Alternative B, and the No Action Alternative. Alternative A would involve a larger scope of construction and operations than those that would be implemented under Alternative B, the Preferred Alternative. The activities under Alternative B are similar to those in Alternative A, but involve a slightly smaller footprint and a smaller scope of construction and operations. Therefore, the impacts resulting from Alternative B would be a subset of those resulting from Alternative A. The impacts for Alternative B are discussed below in comparison with those of the larger scope Alternative A. The impacts of the No Action Alternative are also presented. Table S-1 presents a summary matrix of the potential impacts from the alternatives.

Geology and Soils

There are no unique geological features in the vicinity of the downtown Calexico LPOE. Sand and gravel are the only known mineral resources near the site. However, no sand or gravel mining occurs on or near the site. The proposed facility design would take local seismic risk into consideration to avoid/mitigate potential damage to project components. The regional building codes for the Imperial Valley area include measures to mitigate seismic risk. Soil disturbance impacts during the construction of the project would be minimized through placement of erosion control measures.

Impacts to soils within the project site would be low to moderate, transitory, and overall positive for long-term stabilization. Clean engineering fill would be used to replace any removed soil and for any required changes in foundation levels.

Water Resources

Stormwater runoff generated on the project site would be directed to catch basins onsite to promote retention and desiltation before discharge to the New River. No impacts would be expected offsite from stormwater runoff at the project site as no runoff would cause any adverse effects to adjacent properties. No groundwater would be used for the project under either alternative. All domestic water is supplied by the City of Calexico. There would be no impact to the quantity of groundwater from the project. As with the current facility, the facilities would connect to the City of Calexico sewer system. No significant impacts to groundwater quality are anticipated.

The total amount of impervious surface area would increase from 13 acres to 16 acres. The channel of the New River would not be changed or covered.

Land Use

The main facility at the current downtown Calexico LPOE would be replaced with structures and facilities that would continue its current land use. The proposed project includes new structures and facilities on the currently unused vacated commercial inspection compound. The operations of these new facilities and ancillary structures would be consistent with the past use of the site.

Two parcels of land would be acquired and would be used for realigning access to and egress from the LPOE. The land use for the new parcels would not change. The new ingress and egress patterns for the Calexico LPOE are being designed to mitigate impact to the current traffic patterns in the City of Calexico

The growth pattern in the local area would not likely change as a result of construction and operation of the project, as the businesses located in the vicinity already profit from traffic using the LPOE. There could be some movement of businesses from current locations as more southbound traffic begins to use Cesar Chavez Boulevard to access the International Border.

The reconfiguration, construction, and operation of the Calexico LPOE would not result in significant impact to land use.

Biological Resources

Construction of the project would disturb up to 16 acres of previously disturbed land, and permanently remove approximately 1 acre of plant communities, lawns, and shrubbery. This vegetation would be replaced with structures and ancillary facilities.

The project would result in short-term effects on wildlife due to displacement or direct mortality associated with construction and maintenance of project facilities, and long-term effects from loss of habitat from permanent project facilities. The potential small losses of wildlife caused by construction activities would be insignificant in a regional context.

The project would have little, if any, adverse impact on fish or aquatic habitat in the New River. There are no managed fisheries in the polluted New River. Sediment from construction activities should not affect water quality in the river as construction-related runoff would be controlled by berms or other structures. The channel of the New River

would not be changed, therefore there would be no adverse affect on hatcheries or fish stocking in southern California.

No special-status plants were identified or are expected to occur in the region of influence. The project would not result in significant impacts to special-status plants. A single, adult burrowing owl was observed onsite. Burrowing owls could be adversely impacted if still present at the downtown Calexico LPOE at the time the proposed construction begins. Mitigative actions could include passive relocation or construction of artificial owl nests either at the LPOE or another site.

Cultural Resources

No resources were found that were considered eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Currently, no ethnographic resources are known; however, consultation is ongoing. If additional sites are determined eligible, mitigation measures would be applied to the sites that could be impacted by project activities, as determined in consultation with interested Tribes and the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

Construction would take place in areas that have already been developed and disturbed. Therefore there would be no additional visual effect or impact to cultural resources within or outside the inventoried areas. Measures would be implemented to prevent impacts to cultural resources outside the approved work areas.

Visual Resources

The impacts to the existing scenic integrity (degree of intactness or wholeness of the natural landscape) would be slight because the existing visual resources are already altered from their natural state, and the visual changes introduced would not substantially modify the overall urban visual character of the area. Some of the facilities would be set at an angle to the general trend of other buildings in the vicinity of the LPOE; landscaping would mitigate the impact.

Infrastructure

Existing utilities at the Calexico LPOE would need to be extended and undergo minor relocations to serve the new facility design. The primary water source for the facility would be provided by the City of Calexico. The projected water usage is expected to increase over 200 percent. The availability of water supply is sufficient. No impacts to water supply infrastructure would be anticipated.

The electrical use and natural gas use would increase by 60 percent. The increase in electrical usage and natural gas usage from the new facility would not impact capacity in the region. The new facility would be designed for greater energy conservation than the current facility.

The new facilities would connect to the existing sewer service lines outside the LPOE. No new pumping facilities would be needed. The amount of sewer service is estimated to double. The overall availability of the City of Calexico wastewater treatment capacity would not be impacted.

Traffic

The project will be phased in such a way that the LPOE will remain operational throughout the construction period. Effects to existing traffic would be minimal during construction using this phased approach.

Most border traffic would be rerouted from the existing crossing facility to the new one at the vacated commercial LPOE to the west of SR-111. This rerouting is expected to increase traffic on Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Second Street. The inspection times, queuing, and delays associated with southbound traffic are related to inspection of outbound vehicles by the United States, inbound inspections by the Mexican government and blockage of the 2nd Street railroad crossing by freight trains undergoing inspection. While the proposed project would allow for improvement of traffic due to expansion of the U.S. southbound traffic inspection capacity, it would not affect the Mexican government's inspection process. Southbound traffic queues would still back up onto the streets of Calexico.

Upon completion of the project, the number of northbound primary inspection lanes would be increased from 10 to 16, providing for increased vehicle inspection efficiency and shorter queues and waiting times. Increasing the number of lanes to 16 would increase the peak inspection rate up to 1,216 cars per hour. This inspection rate would reduce inspection times for current rates of traffic to a few minutes. The actual clustering of arrivals within each hour would result in slightly higher waiting times. For weekly averaged hourly peak traffic rates projected for 2015, the 16 lane inspection capacity would be adequate for all projected hourly traffic volumes including the projected peak of 1,178 cars per hour.

Air Quality

The proposed expansion would provide for improved northbound inspection efficiency and pedestrian safety at the LPOE, and decreased queuing time with corresponding decreases in idling vehicle emissions. The emission rates would decrease compared to current projected rates by 2015 and even further for 2035 despite projected increases in traffic. Almost all of the decrease can be attributed to lower queue times. The projected emissions would also improve over time due to anticipated improvements in vehicle pollution-control systems. The southbound traffic is roughly equivalent to the northbound in terms of numbers and types of vehicles; however, the wait time is less. The emissions numbers would be less than those for northbound traffic. Both action alternatives would help to mitigate the current emissions of pollutants from idling cars at the LPOE.

The Project is included in the Imperial County 2007 Transportation Plan. The Project is also included in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) adopted the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan. The predicted CO concentrations for the action alternatives would be below the 1-hour and 8-hour NAAQS and CAAQS for CO. Therefore, no exceedances of the CO standard are predicted and thus, the Preferred Alternative would not cause a violation of this air quality standard. The Preferred Alternative would be in conformance for federal PM10 and PM2.5 standards. No associated adverse air quality impacts would occur.

Noise

Although noise would be produced during construction activities for the project, this is expected to be short term (i.e., limited to the months during active construction). The noise created during the construction activities would exceed the EPA guidelines for short periods of time. However, this is not considered a significant impact due to the limited period of noise generation during each day combined with the limited period of the construction activity overall. The noise from the construction activity under either action alternative would not create significant or long-term effects.

Operation of the project would result in noise from vehicles starting, stopping, running at low speeds, and idling. Inspection activities generate a relatively small amount of noise including speaking, opening and closing of building doors, and closing of car doors and trunks.

Human Health and Safety

The level of risk to construction workers increases in relation to the amount of new construction required. All applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and California Division of Occupational Safety and Health codes for health and safety would be implemented for all identified and anticipated hazards to worker health and safety, providing for basic standards of worker health and safety. The residual health and safety impacts of construction to workers would be small and insignificant because there would be no worker hazards beyond limits set by health and safety regulatory agencies and no threat to human life and/or property.

Potential health impacts to the public from construction of the project include fugitive dust typical of construction sites and noise. Dust control measures would be implemented to reduce the health risk. Public health impacts from construction activities would be short term and minimal due to low population density surrounding the components of the project.

Worker health and safety issues during operation of the proposed facility would primarily be typical industrial work-related injuries such as bruises, cuts, falls, and repetitive stress injuries. The overall design, layout, and operational protocols of the project would minimize occupational hazards and injuries. The residual health and safety impacts of operation of the proposed facility would be small and insignificant because there would be no worker hazards beyond limits set by health and safety regulatory agencies and no threat to human life and/or property.

The New River Channel would not be rerouted or covered. Therefore, there would be no fugitive dust from working in the New River channel and no associated potential impacts from any pathogens and chemical contaminants. Since the New River channel would not be rerouted or converted into a covered culvert, the current potential for contamination to site workers would remain. Since the vehicle inspectors and other workers would be closer to the unchanged New River under Alternative B than currently, the risk will increase. Workers would be closer to the source of blowing foam or dust from the nearby section of the river. The Mexicali II sewage treatment facility completed in 2008 has markedly reduced the New River's fecal coliform count and increased dissolved oxygen, while slightly reducing the river's flow. Workers and

members of the public would be closer to the New River under Alternative B than they are under the No Action Alternative. Public exposure would be a fraction of worker exposure due to less frequent and shorter times near the River.

Socioeconomics

The project would not cause any noticeable change in existing demographic characteristics within Imperial County. Construction of the project is anticipated to span a period of 24 months requiring a range of 40 to 60 employees, depending on the construction phase. The current permanent workforce is 165 employees. Up to 352 new, permanent employees are foreseen to be required to operate the expanded facility. To be conservative, these workers are assumed to relocate to the area from outside Imperial County. The project would not create a noticeable change in population or employment, or create significant strains on housing availability or community services within the region of influence (ROI).

Environmental Justice

The siting of the Calexico LPOE would not change; therefore, the populations remain the same. Three resource areas, traffic, air quality, and socioeconomics, are particularly relevant in discussion of environmental justice. Though the project would generate traffic and resultant effects to air quality, construction of the project is anticipated to improve traffic flow and air quality from the present conditions. No environmental justice impacts to minorities are anticipated. For purposes of the environmental justice analysis, both the City of Calexico and Imperial County meet the criteria for identification as low-income populations. The discussion of environmental justice impacts presented for minority populations above is applicable to low-income populations in this case. Likewise, no environmental justice impacts are anticipated under either action alternative.

General Services Administration Decision

The General Services Administration has selected the preferred alternative, Alternative B, for the Expansion and Reconfiguration of the Land Port of Entry in Downtown Calexico.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

The No Action Alternative, which involves no changes to and no new impacts to the environment would have the least overall environmental impact of all the alternatives. However, the No Action Alternative would have the greatest impact to traffic and air quality as the existing problems would continue to worsen. After considering all the environmental factors, the GSA has determined that the preferred alternative has the least overall environmental impacts of the two action alternatives, and represents the best solution to the existing traffic and air quality issues.

GSA Mission, Economic and Technical Considerations Weighed in Reaching This Decision

This project is the culmination of several years of bi-national planning and coordination. The GSA continues to coordinate with the Mexican government regarding the design of

the U.S. LPOE and the connections to the Mexican LPOE. Currently, the Mexican government is waiting for the U.S LPOE design to be selected and then will finalize the design for their LPOE accordingly. A Presidential Permit application has been prepared. This EIS and the Presidential Permit application have been coordinated with the Department of State.

The GSA has coordinated with the U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), which works with its Mexican counterpart, CILA (Comision Internacional de Limites y Aguas), and other local, State, and federal Mexican agencies to coordinate sanitation, water quality, flood control, and border demarcation for any proposed project along the border.

The GSA has been coordinating with the City of Calexico, Imperial County, and Caltrans as well as the Mexican government throughout the EIS process to address transportation issues and traffic flow through the LPOE. GSA will continue to coordinate with these parties during the final design of the selected alternative.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

All practicable means of avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating substantial, adverse environmental consequences of the selected alternative were NOT adopted, though the attached program of mitigation, monitoring, and enforcement will be carried out. Some measures that would avoid, minimize, or mitigate identified adverse environmental consequences of the selected alternative have been modified to better integrate with the Preferred Alternative or were determined not to be feasible or consistent with existing laws, regulations and authorities applicable to GSA, particularly with regard to the availability of, and authority to expend, funds.

Geology and Soils (Subchapter 3.2 in the Final EIS)

The design of the proposed facility would take the substantial local seismic risk into consideration to avoid/mitigate potential damage to project components and personnel.

A comprehensive geotechnical evaluation will be conducted for this Project. This evaluation will include subsurface exploration, laboratory testing, and field inspection/verification by the Project geotechnical engineer, and will be intended to further evaluate surface and subsurface geotechnical conditions and provide detailed information regarding the engineering characteristics of earth materials present within the study area. From these data, specific recommendations will be generated for applicable geotechnical issues to ensure conformance with associated regulatory and design requirements. The following types of standard design and construction measures may be considered in the noted geotechnical evaluation, along with additional or revised recommendations identified during detailed investigations. Implementation of these or other appropriate measures, in conformance with applicable regulatory requirements, will avoid, minimize or mitigate any potential impacts related to geologic, soil, seismic, or topographic conditions.

Potential impacts related to seismically-induced ground rupture or related effects (if applicable) may be addressed through measures such as:

1. Conformance with applicable seismic design criteria from sources including the International Building Code;
2. Implementation of design efforts for ground rupture hazards (e.g., inclusion of buffer zones or set-backs from on-site faults) if determined appropriate during detailed geotechnical investigation; and
3. Use of properly engineered fill and reinforced concrete and masonry.

Potential impacts related to seismic ground acceleration may be addressed through measures such as the use of:

4. Applicable seismic design criteria from sources including the IBC;
 5. Proper fill composition, moisture content, placement, and compaction parameters;
 6. Appropriate foundation and pavement design;
 7. Reinforced concrete and masonry; and
 8. Appropriate structure and utility design.
9. Potential liquefaction and seismically-induced settlement effects may be addressed through efforts such as:
10. Conformance with applicable seismic design criteria from sources including the IBC;
 11. Removal and recompaction or replacement of materials susceptible to liquefaction and/or seismic settlement with properly engineered fill;
 12. In-place soil and/or structural modifications such as compaction grouting, soil mixing, dynamic compaction, or driving piles below liquefiable layers; and
 13. Use of positive surface drainage and/or subdrains in appropriate areas to avoid saturation of surficial deposits.
14. Potential impacts related to landslide/slope stability hazards originating in off-site areas (if applicable) may be addressed through efforts such as selective facility locations (i.e., to avoid hazard-prone areas), and/or the use of protective barriers (e.g., perimeter walls or fences).
15. Expansive or compressive characteristics in surficial materials (if present) may be addressed through efforts such as:
16. Removal and recompaction or replacement of unsuitable soils with properly engineered fill.
 17. Selective placement and/or capping of expansive soils.
 18. Use of subdrains and moisture conditioning in areas of expansive soils.
 19. Soil mixing and use of specially designed foundations or slabs in areas of expansive deposits.
 20. Use of in-place soil modifications in areas of compressible soils (as described above for liquefaction/seismic settlement).
 21. Surcharging of compressible materials left in place to accelerate consolidation rates.

22. Settlement monitoring in areas of compressible soils.
23. Potential impacts related to oversized materials may be addressed through efforts such as off-site removal/disposal, selective burial in deeper fills, or crushing.

Water Resources (Subchapter 3.3 in the Final EIS)

During construction, a GSA quality assurance representative will inspect the construction site at regular intervals to ensure contractor compliance with all Best Management Practices (BMPs) specified in the stormwater erosion and sedimentation control plan included in contract specification documents.

Impacts related to hydrology and floodplain will be addressed by appropriate design, sizing, and location of proposed storm drain facilities, incorporation of applicable recommendations from detailed geotechnical investigations, and consideration of the location and extent of proposed retention/infiltration basins with respect to potential surficial saturation issues.

GSA will construct a bridge across the New River to carry southbound vehicles into Mexico. The regulatory division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has provided GSA a letter indicating that a Section 404 permit will not be required for that construction, considering that the work will not enter or otherwise disturb the river's wet zone. The project does not involve the New River in any other respect.

Implementation of the following (or other similar) measures, in conformance with applicable regulatory requirements, will avoid, minimize or mitigate any potential impacts related to water quality and storm water runoff. These measures for short- and long-term water quality impacts are subject to modification based on the final Project design and engineering information. Regardless, the final design and project will reflect and comply with all applicable laws and standards.

Short Term Construction

A. Erosion and Sedimentation

1. Construction-related erosion and sedimentation impacts will be addressed through conformance with the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) - stormwater discharge permit and related City standards, as previously described. This will include implementing an authorized Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to address (among other issues) erosion and sedimentation concerns. While specific erosion and sediment control measures will be determined as part of the Project design and SWPPP process, standard BMPs from sources such as the Project Water Quality Technical report (WQTR) will likely be applicable include the following:
2. Use a phased construction schedule to limit the extent of grading at any given time to the smallest feasible area.
3. Preserve existing vegetation wherever feasible.
4. Implement a "weather triggered" (i.e., 40 percent or greater chance of rain) action plan to inspect, repair, and/or upgrade BMPs as necessary during periods of inclement weather.

5. Avoid or minimize work and associated construction-related impact in live streams and environmentally sensitive areas to the extent practicable.
6. Implement erosion and sediment controls that are adequate to provide complete erosion and sedimentation protection for exposed portions of the site not actively worked for seven or more consecutive calendar days. Specifically, such controls may include fiber rolls, gravel bags/hay bales (e.g., at storm drain inlets), silt fence, mats or mulching, temporary sediment basins, soil binders (e.g., bonded fiber matrix), hydroseeding, street sweeping/vacuuming, energy dissipaters, stabilized construction access points/sediment stockpiles, vehicle wash sumps, sediment transport vehicle covers, and concrete washouts.
7. Implement sampling/analysis, monitoring/reporting and post-construction management/maintenance programs, as applicable, per applicable requirements
8. Provide appropriate training for personnel responsible for BMP installation and maintenance.
9. Comply with local dust control requirements.
10. Implement appropriate water conservation practices (e.g., repairing leaks and avoiding or minimizing washing of construction-related vehicles and areas).
11. Install permanent landscaping, with emphasis on native and/or drought-tolerant varieties, as soon as feasible during or after construction.
12. Implement additional BMPs as necessary to ensure adequate erosion and sediment control.

B. Construction-related Hazardous Materials

Implementation of a SWPPP will be required under applicable guidelines as previously described, and will include measures to avoid or mitigate potential impacts related to the use and potential discharge of construction-related hazardous materials. Specific BMPs associated with construction-related hazardous materials will be determined as part of the Project design and SWPPP process, as noted above for erosion/sedimentation. A number of standard measures from sources such as the Project WQTR, City standards, and additional regulatory/industry sources that will likely be applicable include the following:

13. Limit paving operations during wet weather and use sediment control devices downstream of paving activities.
14. Contain and properly dispose of paving and construction wastes or slurry (e.g., from saw cutting; concrete curing/finishing; or washouts for concrete, stucco, paint, caulking, sealants, or drywall plaster), through measures such as use of portable (and impermeable) sumps, vacuuming, chemical application controls, and off-site waste disposal in an approved location.
15. Minimize the amount of hazardous materials stored onsite, and restrict storage locations to areas at least 50 feet from storm drains and surface waters.
16. Properly maintain all construction equipment and vehicles.

17. Use covered and/or enclosed storage facilities for hazardous materials and maintain accurate and up-to-date written material inventories.
18. Store hazardous materials off the ground surface (e.g., on pallets) and in their original containers with the legibility of labels protected (or replaced if labels are damaged).
19. Use impervious liners as required to comply with applicable codes and regulations (or other applicable methods) in material storage and vehicle/equipment maintenance and fueling areas, to prevent discharge in the event of a spill.
20. Place warning/information signs in hazardous material use/storage areas to identify the types of materials present, applicable use restrictions, and containment/clean-up procedures.
21. Mark storm drains (and other appropriate locations) to discourage inappropriate hazardous material disposal.
22. Provide training for applicable employees in the proper use, handling and disposal of hazardous materials, as well as appropriate action to take in the event of a spill.
23. Implement solid waste management efforts, such as proper containment and disposal of construction debris (e.g., use of watertight dumpsters and daily trash collection/removal) and street sweeping.
24. Store absorbent and clean-up materials in appropriate on-site locations where they are readily accessible.
25. Properly locate and maintain portable wastewater facilities.
26. Use recycled or less hazardous materials wherever feasible.
27. Post regulatory agency telephone numbers and a summary guide of clean-up procedures in a conspicuous location at or near the job site trailer.
28. Monitor and maintain hazardous material use/storage facilities and operations regularly (at least weekly) to ensure proper working order.
29. Implement a Storm Water Sampling and Analysis Strategy (SWSAS) program pursuant to regulatory guidelines.

C. Demolition-related Debris Generation

30. Preliminary demolition-related BMPs and City standards that are likely applicable include the following:
31. Recycle appropriate (i.e., non-hazardous) construction debris for on- or off-site use whenever feasible.
32. Use dust-control measures such as watering to reduce particulate generation for pertinent locations/activities (e.g., concrete removal).
33. Use appropriate erosion prevention and sediment control measures downstream of all demolition activities.

34. Conform with applicable requirements related to the removal, handling, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials generated during demolition, including efforts such as implementing appropriate sampling and monitoring procedures; proper containment of contaminated materials during construction; providing protective gear for workers handling contaminated materials; ensuring acceptable exposure levels; and ensuring safe and appropriate handling, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials.

D. Disposal of Extracted Groundwater

While individual BMPs to address potential water quality concerns from disposal of extracted groundwater will be determined based on site-specific parameters, they may include the following types of standard measures derived from the NPDES Permit text and the previously referenced regulatory/industry sources:

35. Use erosion prevention and sediment catchment devices (similar to those described above for erosion and sedimentation).
36. Test extracted groundwater for appropriate contaminants prior to discharge if contamination is suspected.
37. Treat extracted groundwater prior to discharge as required to provide conformance with applicable discharge criteria (e.g., through methods such as filtration, aeration, adsorption, disinfection, and/or conveyance to a municipal wastewater treatment plant).
38. Remove contaminated groundwater for off-site treatment and disposal by a licensed operator in conformance with applicable legal requirements.

Long-term Operation and Maintenance

A. Site Design/Low Impact Development (LID) BMPs

The use of site design/LID measures is intended to mimic predevelopment hydrologic conditions by effectively capturing, filtering, storing, evaporating, detaining, and/or infiltrating runoff close to its source. Potential site design/LID BMPs identified in the Project WQTR and/or the noted regulatory/industry sources that may be applicable to the Preferred Alternative include the following:

39. Implement runoff control through the use of on-site infiltration basins designed to accommodate a 2-year, 24-hour storm event (refer to Subchapter 3.7, Hydrology and Floodplain, for additional discussion of proposed infiltration basins).
40. Minimize impervious areas through efforts such as: (1) incorporating additional landscaping where feasible; (2) minimizing the use of impervious surfaces within landscaped areas; and (3) using pervious paving materials in applicable locations wherever feasible (e.g., pedestrian walkways and low-vehicle traffic areas).
41. Preserve existing landscaped areas and direct runoff from impervious areas into landscaping wherever feasible; and incorporate appropriate vegetation varieties into landscape designs to maximize the potential to receive, infiltrate, and/or treat runoff from impervious areas (e.g., use of applicable tree species to increase rainfall interception and evapotranspiration).

42. Minimize soil compaction in landscaped areas by techniques such as scarification, and incorporate appropriate amendments to improve soil quality/water holding capacity and foster healthy vegetation to the extent practicable.

B. Source Control BMPs

Specific source control BMPs identified in the Project WQTR and/or the noted regulatory/industry sources that may be applicable to the Project include the following:

43. Install "no dumping" stencils, tiles, and/or signs (per current City standards) at all proposed onsite storm drain inlets and other applicable locations (e.g., drainages and building entrances) to discourage illegal contaminant disposal.
44. Provide paved, enclosed areas for trash storage, with regular maintenance (e.g., cleaning up spills) and weekly trash pick-up by a licensed waste management company.
45. Conduct weekly mechanical sweeping of applicable onsite streets and parking areas to remove accumulated particulates and associated contaminants before they are picked up by site runoff.
46. Use integrated pest management (IPM) weed/pest control measures wherever feasible, including efforts such as: (1) removing weeds by hand and avoiding the use of chemical pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers in landscaped areas to the extent practicable; (2) using pest-resistant or well-adapted native plant varieties; and (3) providing informational materials to site maintenance personnel and occupants to increase awareness and implementation of IPM measures.
47. Manage irrigation to minimize runoff through measures such as the use of automated and tailored watering schedules (i.e., to avoid over-watering), and installing moisture/pressure sensors to shut off irrigation under appropriate conditions (e.g., during/after precipitation events or in the event of broken pipes or sprinkler heads).
48. Direct flows from fire sprinkler system use, maintenance, and/or testing into the sanitary sewer system.

C. Treatment Control BMPs

Potential treatment control options identified in the Project WQTR include:

49. The use of inlet/outlet and rooftop-downspout filters.
50. The use of vegetated swales which typically consist of shallow, trapezoidal or parabolic channels lined with appropriate vegetation types (e.g., turf) that provide filtration and (to a lesser extent) infiltration as storm flows move slowly along the channel length.

D. Post-construction BMP Monitoring/Maintenance Schedules and Responsibilities

A Storm Water Management and Discharge Control Maintenance Agreement will be prepared and submitted to the City of Calexico for all pertinent BMP facilities and programs. Specifically, this agreement will: (1) identify responsible parties for BMP

funding and monitoring/maintenance efforts; and (2) describe all associated training programs, operating schedules, maintenance duties and frequencies, and other pertinent information

Biological Resources (Subchapter 3.5 in the Final EIS)

Burrowing owls could be adversely impacted; if still present at the downtown Calexico LPOE at the time the proposed construction begins. Before construction, GSA will again survey the site to determine if the previously observed single, adult burrowing owl is still present at the downtown Calexico LPOE. If present, mitigative actions would be undertaken in coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, which could include passive relocation or construction of artificial owl nests either at the LPOE or another site.

Cultural Resources (Subchapter 3.6 in the Final EIS)

Although an onsite subsurface survey of the port of entry site did not reveal any archaeological artifacts, GSA will monitor construction activities to determine if any previously unknown archaeological artifacts are disturbed. If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earth-moving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be avoided until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find.

Visual Resources (Subchapter 3.7 in the Final EIS)

Implementation of the following measures will provide increased visual quality within the Project Study Area:

1. A comprehensive landscape concept plan will be developed and implemented, including landscape features such as:
2. Drought tolerant and sustainable plant palettes.
3. Street trees and landscaping will be retained to the extent practicable during Project construction.
4. Architectural treatments will be consistent throughout the proposed LPOE buildings to the extent practicable.
5. Fencing and safety railing will be provided throughout the proposed pedestrian walkways where applicable.
6. Where possible, integrate new public art into the Project.

Infrastructure (Subchapter 3.8 in the Final EIS)

1. The construction contractor will coordinate with responsible utility providers to protect systems in place or arrange for the temporary or permanent relocation of existing utility lines.
2. A Transportation Management Plan (TMP) will be implemented to provide for emergency access on roadways that will be temporarily affected during the construction period.

3. The construction contractor will contact local emergency service providers prior to the start of construction to ensure construction activities will not impede provision of emergency services within the Project area during the construction period.
4. Bollards and barriers will be used to protect structural elements from vehicle damage. Antiram barriers must be provided wherever moving vehicles approach booths or buildings.
5. Exterior windows and interior windows between high-risk areas and occupied space will be thermally tempered or laminated glass.
6. Bullet resistant glazing will be provided on ground floor windows that face inspection areas, on-coming traffic, or the border.
7. Building perimeters and doors between inspection areas will be designed to resist forced entry.
8. Building systems will be secured.
9. Utilities and feeders will not be located adjacent to vehicle pathways where practicable, or on the Mexican side of the primary inspection lanes.

Traffic (Subchapter 3.9 in the Final EIS)

By substantially reducing border wait times, the project will itself mitigate current and projected traffic problems. As further mitigation, GSA commissioned a traffic study that is being used by Caltrans and the City of Calexico in their traffic planning. Also, GSA will, as part of the project, (1) signalize the intersection of 2nd Street and Cesar Chavez Boulevard; (2) modify the signal at 2nd Street and SR-111; and (3) to the extent feasible, construct the south legs of the 2nd Street/Cesar Chavez and 2nd Street/SR-111 intersections to be functionally compatible with the City's and Caltrans' plans for those intersections. GSA may at its sole discretion implement such alternate traffic mitigations as Caltrans and the City of Calexico jointly request in lieu of some or all of the preceding items 1, 2 & 3, provided that GSA's estimated total cost of the revised mitigations does not exceed GSA's estimate of the cost of items 1, 2 & 3.

Air Quality (Subchapter 3.10 in the Final EIS)

Construction

Implementation of the following avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will reduce air quality impacts resulting from construction activities:

1. Water or dust palliative will be applied to exposed soil surfaces at the construction site(s) and equipment as frequently as necessary to control fugitive dust emissions.
2. Install wind fencing and phase grading operations where appropriate, and operate water trucks for stabilization of surfaces under windy conditions.
3. Soil binder will be spread on any unpaved roads used for construction purposes, and all construction parking areas.
4. Trucks will be washed off as they leave the construction site(s), as necessary, to control fugitive dust emissions.

5. When hauling material and operating non-earthmoving equipment limit speeds to 15 mph. Limit speed of earth-moving equipment to 10 mph.
6. Grading and earth moving will be suspended when wind gusts exceed 25 mph unless the soil is wet enough to prevent dust plumes.
7. Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained per manufacturers specifications. Low sulfur fuel will be used in all construction equipment.
8. Where suitable, utilize particulate traps and other appropriate controls to reduce emissions of diesel particulate matter and other pollutants at the construction site.
9. Track-out reduction measures such as gravel pads will be used at access points to minimize dust and mud deposits on roads affected by construction traffic.
10. Transported loads of soils and wet materials will be covered prior to transport, or adequate freeboard (space from the top of the material to the top of the truck) will be provided to reduce PM10 and deposition of particulate during transportation.
11. Dust and mud that are deposited on paved, public roads due to construction activity and traffic will be removed to decrease particulate matter.
12. To the extent feasible, construction traffic will be routed and scheduled to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along local roads during peak travel times.
13. Locate equipment and staging zones away from sensitive receptors and fresh air intake to buildings and air conditioners.

Global Climate Change

To the extent that it is applicable or feasible, the following measures will be implemented to help reduce GHG emissions and potential climate change impacts resulting from the Preferred Alternative:

14. Provide landscaping where possible, which reduces surface warming and decreases CO₂ through photosynthesis.
15. Use lighter color surfaces, such as Portland cement, which helps to reduce the albedo effect (i.e., surface reflectivity of the sun's radiation) and cool the surface.
16. Use of energy efficient lighting.
17. Limit idling times on trucks and equipment used during construction.

Human Health and Safety (Subchapter 3.12 in the Final EIS)

1. Soil sampling will be conducted in areas within the Project Study Area proposed to be disturbed and/or excavated prior to soil export, reuse, or disposal to characterize the soil for the presence of hazardous materials (e.g., metals, petroleum hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, pesticides, etc.). If contaminated soil is present appropriate abatement actions will be implemented in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.

2. Health risk assessments will be conducted for facilities within the LPOE in which contamination has been documented to evaluate whether the levels of contaminants will pose a risk to human health.
3. Prior to commencement of excavation activities, a Site and Community Health and Safety Plan will be prepared to manage potential health and safety hazards to workers and the public.
4. Prior to commencement of excavation activities, a Soil Management Plan will be prepared to address the notification, monitoring, sampling, testing, handling, storage, and disposal of contaminated media or substances that may be encountered during construction activities.
5. Prior to commencement of excavation activities, a Groundwater Management Plan will be prepared to address the notification, monitoring, sampling, testing, handling, storage, and disposal of potentially contaminated groundwater.
6. Existing transformers and elevator equipment within the Project Study Area will be sampled for PCB content if proposed to be disturbed and/or moved during construction activities. If PCBs are present, appropriate abatement actions for their disposal will be implemented in accordance with regulatory requirements, and soil beneath transformers and/or elevators will be evaluated for evidence of releases. If present in underlying soils, appropriate abatement actions for removal and disposal will be implemented in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements. Wastes and potentially hazardous waste on the Project site, including trash, debris piles, and equipment will be removed and disposed of offsite in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
7. Prior to renovation or demolition of existing structures, surveys will be conducted to evaluate the presence, locations, and quantities of hazardous building materials (asbestos containing materials (ACMs) and lead containing substances (LCSs)). Suspect materials will be sampled and analyzed, and if present, appropriate abatement actions will be implemented in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
8. Contract specifications will include references to the potential to encounter contaminated soil, groundwater, or other regulated wastes during construction activities.

Green Building and Energy Efficiency

The action evaluated in the Environmental Impact Statement was started in 2006, at which time the LEED Silver rating was required. GSA is doing its best to achieve better, but this cannot be guaranteed. The AE has completed a preliminary site renewable energy opportunity assessment and GSA is reviewing photovoltaics as one method of increasing the LEED points to greater than a Silver rating. The following are sustainable concepts that will be incorporated into the design and construction in order to achieve LEED Silver, or better:

1. The project will significantly increase the imperviousness of the overall site. As such, it may not be possible to fully mitigate the rates of storm runoff to maintain current levels, specifically at the paved roadway areas. However, runoff from building roofs

and parking lots will be routed through bioswales for both water treatment and infiltration. Additionally, all runoff from the paved roadways will be taken through best management practice (BMP) facilities to remove pollutants.

2. The project will use reflective paving (concrete) at the vehicular inspection areas and pedestrian sidewalks. At least 25% of parking spaces will be shaded. All roofs will be either planted (green roofs) or will be cool roofs.
3. The project will use only native and drought tolerant plants. Much of the landscape design involves stepped terraces that are designed to capture rainwater to be used by the plants. The completed project will have 5 water retention/infiltration ponds. Irrigation will be underground drip irrigation and will be kept to a minimum. There will be no turf areas or other water intensive planting.
4. Water use in plumbing fixtures will be at least 30% below the 1992 Energy Policy Act fixture performance requirements. Additionally, the mechanical systems will be analyzed in relation to water use and systems selected accordingly.
5. Integrate building design features to reduce cooling loads; strategies include earth sheltering, sun shading, high performance building envelope and prioritizing north facing glass.
6. The building will use a VAV air system which is effective at reducing fan energy and outside air cooling energy. The target for energy reduction will be 21% energy reduction below ASHRAE 90.1-2004. This corresponds to 4 LEED points in energy savings.
7. Both basic and advanced commissioning of building systems will be provided per USGBC LEED commissioning requirements. Equipment commissioning to ensure optimal performance typically provides significant energy savings as well as reduction in operations and maintenance costs. Furthermore, a system for measurement and verification of energy performance will be implemented and permanently maintained as part of the building operations plan.
8. The hot water boilers for the buildings will derive supplemental heat from a solar hot water heater on top of the administration building.
9. The building envelope will use several integrated strategies to reduce thermal loading. These include south-facing earth sheltering, south and west facing facade sun shading, enhanced envelope design and high performance glazing.
10. At least 75% of construction waste will be diverted from the landfill. There will be onsite recycling during construction and materials packaging will be minimized where possible. If possible, paving and concrete from demolition will be crushed onsite for recycling or re-use onsite.
11. At least 10% by weight of building materials will be recycled and at least 10% by weight will be extracted, processed and manufactured regionally. If possible, these quantities will be increased to 20%.
12. The project will use renewable materials for at least 2.5% by value of all construction materials. All wood will be specified as FSC certified.

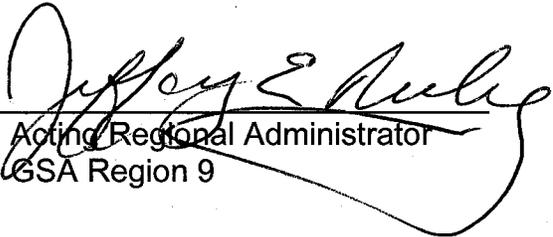
13. A construction air quality management plan will ensure that systems are protected and operated for both the health of construction workers as well as occupants in the completed building.
14. Adhesives, paints, carpets and composite woods will all be specified to be compliant with LEED standard levels of VOC emissions.
15. All buildings will be non-smoking. Janitor closets and other noxious areas will have independent exhaust systems to the exterior. Building entries will have walk-off mats.
16. Individual control of lighting and HVAC will be provided where possible and to LEED standards. Daylight and views will be provided to LEED standards where possible, though the nature of the building use may limit applicability below the LEED standard of 75% of spaces. Daylight and views to the exterior will be provided to the public to the greatest extent possible, especially at the pedestrian building. For the public waiting outside for inspection, sun shading will be provided.

Mitigation and Monitoring and Enforcement Program

A Mitigation and Monitoring and Enforcement Program (MMEP) will be implemented to ensure that the proposed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures identified above are implemented as part of the Project. The MMEP will identify the timing, responsibility, and method of implementation of the proposed measures, as well as any required monitoring and enforcement activities. As part of this program, each project contractor will be required to implement the mitigation measures arising from their project activities. These measures will be inspected and monitored to ensure compliance. Any operational mitigation measures will be implemented through the GSA Property Management Office.

The MMEP will be maintained by GSA throughout Project implementation and will be included as part of the administrative record for the Project.

Record of Decision Approval

Signature:  Date: 7/21/11
Acting Regional Administrator
GSA Region 9