

## Summary

GSA has published a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that analyzes the potential impacts from the proposed modernization and expansion of the existing Otay Mesa Land Port of Entry (LPOE). The FEIS describes the reason the project is being proposed, the alternatives being considered, the potential impacts of each of the alternatives on the existing environment, and avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures. As the lead agency in this undertaking, GSA is acting on behalf of its major tenant at this facility, the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Customs and Border Protection (CBP). An electronic copy of the FEIS can be found online at: <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/regions/welcome-to-the-pacific-rim-region-9/land-ports-ofentry/otay-mesa-land-port-of-entry/otay-mesa-environmental-review>.

## Project Background

Otay Mesa is located approximately 17 miles southeast of downtown San Diego, just north of the US border and the Baja California Peninsula of Mexico. The Otay Mesa LPOE is one of the ten busiest LPOEs in the country and is the busiest commercial port on the California/Mexico border, but has current deficiencies in its effectiveness. Ever-increasing traffic loads and new security initiatives require capacity and new inspection technology to be installed and implemented at existing facilities.

## Proposed Alternatives

The FEIS considers two **“action” alternatives** and one **“no action” alternative**. The two **“action” alternatives** would consist of renovation and expansion activities at the existing Otay Mesa LPOE and could include:

- Additional primary inspection and exit booths and a new commercial annex building for enrollment and processing capabilities;
- Relocation of the hazardous materials docks;
- Modifications to inspections stations and work areas; and
- Construction and operation of secondary inspection areas, holding rooms, and the expansion of pedestrian and commercial lanes.

The **“no action” alternative** assumes that modernization and expansion of the LPOE would not occur and that a new facility would not be constructed adjacent to the existing LPOE. The LPOE would continue to operate under current conditions.



## Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences of the Final EIS

The affected environment is the current physical, biological, social and economic environment of the area surrounding the Otay Mesa LPOE that could be impacted by the Project. Resource areas studied in the EIS include land use; utilities/infrastructure; hazardous waste and materials; transportation and traffic; noise; socioeconomics; environmental justice and protection of children; visual resources and aesthetics; cultural resources; geology, seismicity and soils; air quality and greenhouse gas emissions; biological resources; and water resources.

The impacts analysis section of the Final EIS considers how the condition of a resource area would change as a result of implementing each of the alternatives considered. The Final EIS describes the types of impacts that would occur as a result of the Project.

### Types of Impacts

**Direct effects** – Caused by the action; occur at the same time and place.

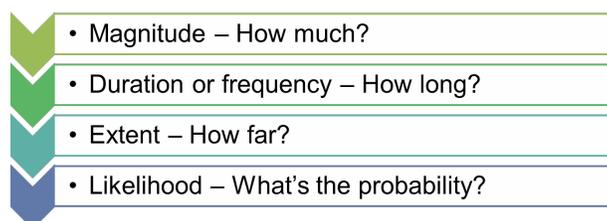
**Indirect effects** – Caused by the action; occur later in time/further away.

**Adverse impacts** – Negative or harmful effect on the resource.

**Beneficial impacts** – Positive effect or helpful change to resource.

### Significance Criteria

The significance of the impacts that could occur is assessed using four parameters: magnitude (none, negligible, minor, moderate, major), duration (intermittent, temporary, short-term, medium-term, long-term, permanent), extent (limited, localized, large) and likelihood of occurrence (none, low, medium, high). Using the same criteria to describe the size and significance of impacts for each resource area allows for comparison of the impacts between resources.



## Summary of Project Impacts

Impacts that would occur from implementation of the Preferred Alternative, Reduced Build Alternative and the No Action Alternative are summarized below. Unless otherwise noted, impacts would be adverse, highly likely to occur, and the same at both the GSA and USDA sites.

**Land Use:** Impacts from the Preferred Alternative would be beneficial, minor to moderate, long term, and localized. Impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be beneficial, long term, negligible and of limited extent at the LPOE site and would be the same as the Preferred Alternative at the USDA site. Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no impacts at the LPOE site; impacts at the USDA site would be the same as under the Preferred Alternative.

**Utilities and Infrastructure:** Impacts from the Preferred Alternative would be moderate, short term and localized during construction and minor, long term and localized at new facilities during operation. Operational impacts would be negligible at existing facilities. Under the Reduced Build Alternative, impacts to the LPOE site would be negligible; impacts at the USDA site would be similar to the Preferred Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, long-term utility consumption would be negligible but higher than under the action alternatives.

**Hazardous Waste and Materials:** Impacts from the Preferred Alternative would be medium, short term, limited in extent, with a low likelihood of occurrence during construction. Impacts from the removal of asbestos and lead would be beneficial, moderate, long term and localized. During operation, impacts at the facilities would be minor, long term and limited in extent with a low likelihood of occurrence. Impacts from the Reduced Build Alternative would be negligible, intermittent and limited in extent with a low likelihood of

occurrence during construction. Impacts during operation would be the same as the Preferred Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, impacts would be similar to current operations.

**Transportation and Traffic:** Impacts from the Preferred Alternative would be minor, short term and localized during construction. Impacts would be beneficial, major, long term and localized during operations. Under the Reduced Build Alternative, impacts would be similar to the Preferred Alternative during construction but would be slightly less in magnitude from reduced construction and demolition. Impacts during operations would be similar to the Preferred Alternative but less beneficial due to less of a reduction in vehicle wait times. Under the No Action Alternative, impacts would be negligible, short term and limited in extent during construction of the USDA site. Operation of the USDA site would have minor, long term and localized impacts under the No Action Alternative.

**Noise:** Impacts from the Preferred Alternative would be moderate, short and long term and localized. Impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be similar but less in magnitude than the Preferred Alternative. During operations, impacts at the LPOE would be similar to current conditions. Operational impacts at the USDA site would be the same as under the Reduced Build Alternative.

**Socioeconomics:** Overall short-term, negligible to minor, medium to large extent adverse impacts would be expected from the Preferred Alternative, with a high likelihood of occurrence. Under the Reduced Build Alternative the types of impacts would be the same as under the Preferred Alternative, though both adverse and beneficial impacts would be reduced in magnitude. Under the No Action Alternative, long-term, minor, large extent adverse impacts would be expected with a high likelihood of occurrence.

**Environmental Justice and Protection of Children's Health and Safety:** Overall short- and long-term, negligible to minor, medium extent adverse impacts would be expected from the Preferred Alternative, with a high likelihood of occurrence. Under the Reduced Build Alternative, the types of impacts would be the same as under the Preferred Alternative, though both adverse and beneficial impacts would be reduced in magnitude. No disproportionate, adverse or beneficial effects to minority or youth populations are anticipated in the short or long term under the No Action Alternative.

**Visual Resources:** Impacts from the Preferred Alternative would be moderate, short term and localized during construction. Operational impacts would be either beneficial or adverse, depending on the perception of the viewer, and would be moderate, long term and localized. Under the Reduced Build Alternative, construction impacts would be similar but slightly reduced in magnitude compared to the Preferred Alternative. Operational impacts would be the same as under the Preferred Alternative. Construction at the USDA site would create adverse or beneficial, moderate, long term and localized impacts.

**Cultural Resources:** Impacts would be the same under all alternatives. If archaeological resources are discovered during construction (the likelihood of this is anticipated to be low), impacts would be minor, permanent, and limited in extent. Impacts would be adverse if the resource was destroyed and beneficial if the resource was perceived as having value to the public. There would be no impacts to historic resources.

**Geology, Seismicity and Soils:** There would be no impacts to geology/geologic hazards from any alternative. Under all alternatives, impacts to topography would be negligible, long term and limited in extent. Impacts would be minor to moderate, long term to permanent and localized from construction where soils are substantially covered by impervious surfaces. Negligible to minor, short term impacts of limited extent are expected where soils are disturbed by vehicle and foot traffic. Beneficial, minor, long term impacts of limited extent are expected where soils are revegetated and re-stabilized.

**Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Impacts to air quality from construction under the Preferred Alternative would be minor, short term and localized. There would be an overall negligible contribution to climate change from GHG emissions. Operational impacts would be beneficial, moderate, long term and localized due to the lower GHG emissions that would result from reduced vehicle idle time. Construction impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be similar but would result in slightly lower GHG emissions. Operational impacts under both the Reduced Build and the No Action Alternative would be minor, long term and localized. Vehicle idle time would continue to increase as improvements to commercial inspection lanes would not occur. Construction impacts under the No Action Alternative would involve slightly lower GHG emissions than the Reduced Build Alternative.

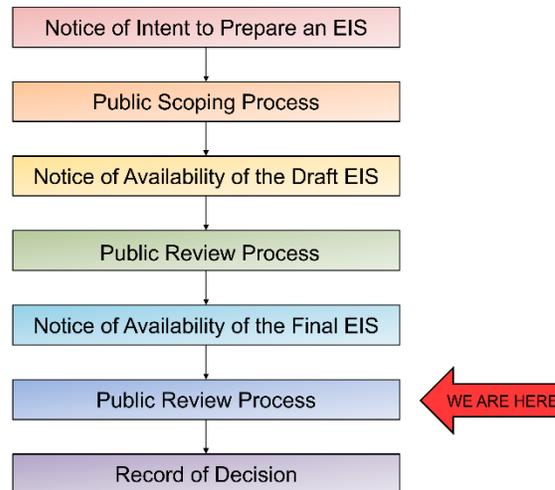
**Biological Resources:** Under both the Preferred Alternative and Reduced Build Alternative, impacts would be minor, short and long term and localized due to vegetation loss/disturbance during construction. Impacts

to wildlife and migratory birds would be similar but of slightly larger magnitude and extent. Operational impacts on vegetation would be beneficial, negligible, long term and limited in extent from revegetation of disturbed areas. Operational impacts to wildlife/migratory birds would be negligible, long term and localized from increased disturbance. There would be no impacts on Federally listed species or critical habitat. Mitigation could less any impacts that may occur. The No Action Alternative would have less construction and operational impacts than either action alternative.

**Water Resources:** Impacts would be the same under all alternatives and would be minor, short term and localized, stemming from storm events greater than the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile rainfall event due to stormwater runoff.

## The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process and Final EIS Comments

We are currently in the Public Review Process of the Final EIS.



FEIS comments may be submitted by email or mail. Please reference the Otay Mesa Final EIS in the subject line.

- By email, send to: [Osmahn.Kadri@gsa.gov](mailto:Osmahn.Kadri@gsa.gov)
- By mail, send to: General Services Administration  
Osmahn Kadri, NEPA Project Manager  
50 United Nations Plaza, 3345 Mailbox #9  
San Francisco, CA 94102

The comment period for the Final EIS ends March 15, 2019. After this date, GSA will prepare the Record of Decision (ROD).

### Next Steps

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, the GSA may

1. Give environmental approval to the Project by signing a ROD no sooner than 30 days after the FEIS is issued. In the ROD, GSA will explain all the factors that were considered in reaching its final decision, including the environmental factors. GSA will identify the environmentally preferable alternative or alternatives and may select one of the alternatives or a combination of alternatives analyzed in the EIS.
2. Undertake additional environmental studies, or
3. Abandon the Project.

If the Project is given environmental approval and funding is appropriated, the GSA could design and construct all or part of the Project.

### Further Information

For further information, contact Osmahn Kadri, NEPA Project Manager, General Services Administration at (415) 522-3617.